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Miss O'Neill

IN THE CHARACTER OF BELVIDERA.

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IN THE CHARACTER OF BELVIDERA.

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THE

BRITISH DRAMA,

A

Collection of the most approved

Tragedies, Comedies, Operas,

& FARCES.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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London: Published by Longman &c. 1809.

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THE

BRITISH DRAMA;

A COLLECTION OF THE MOST ESTEEMED

TRAGEDIES, COMEDIES, OPERAS, AND FARCES,

IN THE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

VOLUME SECOND.

LONDON:

PUBLISHED BY JONES & COMPANY,

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INDEX

TO THE

SECOND VOLUME.

(Beginning at p. 813.)

TRAGEDIES.

	PAGE
Alexander the Great,	1052
All for Love,	1254
Alzira,	1582
Mahomet,	1466
Pizzaro,	982
Tamerlane,	884
The Earl of Essex,	1314
The Orphan of China,	1394
The Roman Father,	1174
The Siege of Damascus,	1536
Ximena,	1120
Zara,	832

COMEDIES.

	PAGE
Every Man in his Humour,	1008
He would be a Soldier,	907
Love for Love,	1199
Rule a Wife and have a Wife,	1141
The Brothers,	1331
The Careless Husband,	1352
The Chances,	1221
The City Wives' Confederacy,	1273
The Drummer,	1482
The Duenna,	1111
The Provoked Husband,	1415
The Provoked Wife,	1557
The Recruiting Officer,	1502
The Tender Husband,	954
The Way to keep Him,	1072
The West Indian,	850

FARCES.

	PAGE
All the World's a Stage,	1043
High Life below Stairs,	874
Love a la Mode,	1163

Digitized by Google

PAGE

Love in a Village, ... 1027
Miss in her Teens, ... 928
The First Floor, ... 1524
The Intriguing Chambermaid, . . . 1243
The Lame Lover, ... 1299
Who's the Dupe, ... 972

OPERAS, ETC.

Comus, ... 1380
Inkle and Yarico, ... 1448
Lionel and Clarissa, ... 813

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LIONEL AND CLARISSA:

OR,

A SCHOOL FOR FATHERS:

A COMIC OPERA,

IN THREE ACTS.

BY ISAAC BICKERSTAFF, Esq.

REMARKS.

THIS Opera was first performed at Covent Garden, in 1768; and afterwards altered and revived at Drury Lane with the new title of the *School for Fathers*, which is now usually added to its original name. The Author asserted the entire originality of his production, having borrowed neither character, language, nor incident, from any other writer. Be this as it may, the piece has considerable claims, not merely as a medium for vocal ability, but from its good sense.

Lionel and his Clarissa, whose delicacy of love is well portrayed, are sure to gain the sympathy of their younger auditors and readers.—Colonel Oldboy supports the old English strength of character, in admirable contrast with the effeminate Mr. Jessamy, who is a good caricature of the modern breed of useless triflers, neither male nor female in their ideas or pursuits, but a nauseous compound of the worst parts of both.—Diana, Sir John Flowerdale, Lady Mary Oldboy, and the other characters, are in good keeping with the general tone of this agreeable drama.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	COVENT GARDEN, 1768.	DRURY LANE, 1814.
LIONEL,	*Mr. Vernon.*	*Mr. Phillips.*
SIR JOHN FLOWERDALE,	*Mr. Aickin.*	*Mr. Powell.*
COLONEL OLDBOY,	*Mr. Parsons.*	*Mr. Dowton.*
MR. JESSAMY,	*Mr. Dodd.*	*Mr. Decamp.*
HARMAN,	*Mr. Fawcett.*	*Mr. Pyne.*
JENKINS,	*Mr. Bannister.*	*Mr. Smith.*
CLARISSA,	*Mrs. Baddeley.*	*Mrs. Dickons.*
LADY MARY OLDBOY,	*Mrs. Hopkins.*	*Mrs. Sparks.*
DIANA,	*Mrs. Wrighten.*	*Miss Kelly.*
JENNY,		*Mrs. Bland.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Chamber in COLONEL OLDBOY'S *House.*

COLONEL OLDBOY *is discovered at breakfast, reading a newspaper; at a little distance from the tea-table sits* JENKINS; *and on the opposite side* DIANA, *who appears playing on a harpsichord; a Girl attending.*

Diana. Ah, how delightful the morning,
How sweet are the prospects it yields!
Summer luxuriant adorning
The gardens, the groves, and the fields.
Be grateful to the season,
Its pleasures let's employ;
Kind nature gives, and reason
Permits us to enjoy.

Col. O. Well said, Dy, thank you, Dy.—This, Master Jenkins, is the way I make my daughter entertain me every morning at breakfast. Come here and kiss me, you slut; come here and kiss me, you baggage.

Diana. Lord, papa, you call one such names—

Col. O. A fine girl, Master Jenkins, a devilish fine girl! she has got my eye to a twinkle. There's fire for you—spirit!—I design to marry her to a duke: how much money do you think a duke would expect with such a wench?

Jenk. Why, colonel, with submission, I think there is no occasion to go out of our own country here; we have never a duke in it, I believe, but we have many an honest gentleman, who, in my opinion, might deserve the young lady.

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Col. O. So you would have me marry Dy to a country squire, eh! How say you to this, Dy? would not you rather be married to a duke?

Diana. So my husband's a rake, papa, I don't care what he is.

Col. O. A rake! you damned, confounded, little baggage; why, you would not wish to marry a rake, would you? So her husband is a rake, she does not care what he is! Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Diana. Well, but listen to me, papa—When you go out with your gun, do you take any pleasure in shooting the poor tame ducks and chickens in your yard? No, the partridge, the pheasant, the woodcock, are the game; there is some sport in bringing them down, because they are wild; and it is just the same with a husband, or a lover. I would not waste powder and shot, to wound one of your sober, pretty-behaved gentlemen; but to hit a libertine, extravagant, madcap fellow, to take him upon the wing—

Col. O. Do you hear her, Master Jenkins? Ha, ha, ha!

Jenk. Well but, good colonel, what do you say to my worthy and honourable patron here, Sir John Flowerdale? He has an estate of eight thousand pounds a year as well paid rents as any in the kingdom, and but one only daughter to enjoy it; and yet he is willing, you see, to give this daughter to your son.

Diana. Pray, Mr. Jenkins, how does Miss Clarissa and our university friend, Mr. Lionel? That is the only grave young man I ever liked, and the only handsome one I ever was acquainted with that did not make love to me.

Col. O. Ay, Master Jenkins, who is this Lionel? they say he is a damned, witty, knowing fellow; and, 'egad, I think him well enough for one brought up in a college.

Jenk. His father was a general officer, a particular friend of Sir John's, who, like many more brave men, that live and die in defending their country, left little more than honour behind him. Sir John sent this young man, at his own expense, to Oxford. During the vacation he is come to pay us a visit, and Sir John intends that he shall shortly take orders for a very considerable benefice in the gift of the family, the present incumbent of which is an aged man.

Diana. The last time I was at your house, he was teaching Miss Clarissa mathematics and philosophy. Lord, what a strange brain I have! If I was to sit down to distract myself with such studies—

Col. O. Go, hussy, let some of your brother's rascals inform their master he has been long enough at his toilet; here is a message from Sir John Flowerdale—You a brain for mathematics indeed! We shall have women wanting to head our regiments to-morrow or next day.

Diana. Well, papa, and suppose we did. I believe, in a battle of the sexes, you men would hardly get the better of us.

To rob them of strength, when wise nature thought fit,
By women to still do her duty,
Instead of a sword she endu'd them with wit,
And gave them a shield in their beauty.

Sound, sound then the trumpet, both sexes to arms
Our tyrants at once and protectors!
We quickly shall see, whether courage or charms
Decide for the Helens or Hectors. [*Exit.*

Col. O. Well, Master Jenkins! don't you think now that a nobleman, a duke, an earl, or a marquis, might be content to share his title—I say, you understand me—with a sweetener of thirty or forty thousand pounds, to pay off mortgages? Besides, there's a prospect of my whole estate; for I dare swear her brother will never have any children.

Jenk. I should be concerned at that, colonel, when there are two such fortunes to descend to his heirs, as yours and Sir John Flowerdale's.

Col. O. Why look you, Master Jenkins, Sir John Flowerdale is an honest gentleman; our families are nearly related; we have been neighbours time out of mind; and if he and I have an odd dispute now and then, it is not for want of a cordial esteem at bottom. He is going to marry his daughter to my son; she is a beautiful girl, an elegant girl, a sensible girl, a worthy girl, and—a word in your ear—damn me if I an't very sorry for her.

Jenk. Sorry, colonel?

Col. O. Ay—between ourselves, Master Jenkins, my son wont do.

Jenk. How do you mean?

Col. O. I tell you, Master Jenkins, he wont do—he is not the thing, a prig—At sixteen years old, or thereabouts, he was a bold, sprightly boy, as you should see in a thousand; could drink his pint of port, or his bottle of claret—now he mixes all his wine with water.

Jenk. Oh! if that be his only fault, colonel, he will ne'er make the worse husband, I'll answer for it.

Col. O. You know my wife is a woman of quality—I was prevailed upon to send him to be brought up by her brother, Lord Jessamy, who had no children of his own, and promised to leave him an estate—he has got the estate indeed, but the fellow has taken his lordship's name for it. Now, Master Jenkins, I would be glad to know how the name of Jessamy is better than that of Oldboy.

Jenk. Well but, colonel, it is allowed on all hands that his lordship has given your son an excellent education.

Col. O. Pshaw! he sent him to the university, and to travel forsooth; but what of that? I was abroad, and at the university myself, and never a rush the better for either. I quarrelled with his lordship about six years before his death, and so had not an opportunity of seeing how the youth went on; if I had, Master Jenkins, I would no more have suffered him to be made such a monkey of—He has been in my house but three days, and it is all turned topsy-turvey by him and his rascally servants—then his chamber is like a perfumer's shop, with wash-balls, paste, and pomatum—and do you know he had the impudence to tell me yesterday, at my own table, that I did not know how to behave myself?

Jenk. Pray, colonel, how does my lady Mary?

Col. O. What, my wife? In the old way, Master Jenkins; always complaining; ever something the matter with her head, or her back, or her legs—but we have had the devil to pay lately—she and I did not speak to one another for three weeks.

Jenk. How so, Sir?

Col. O. A little affair of jealousy—you must know my gamekeeper's daughter has had a child, and the plaguy baggage takes it into her head to lay it to me—Upon my soul, it is

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a fine, fat, chubby infant as ever I set my eyes on; I have sent it to nurse; and, between you and me, I believe I shall leave it a fortune.

Jenk. Ah, colonel, you will never give over.

Col. O. You know my lady has a pretty vein of poetry; she writ me an heroic epistle upon it, where she calls me her dear, false Damon; so I let her cry a little, promised to do so no more, and now we are as good friends as ever.

Jenk. Well, colonel, I must take my leave; I have delivered my message, and Sir John may expect the pleasure of your company to dinner.

Col. O. Ay, ay, we'll come—pox o' ceremony among friends. But wont you stay and see my son; I have sent to him, and suppose he will be here as soon as his valet-de-chambre will give him leave.

Jenk. There is no occasion, good Sir: present my humble respects, that's all.

Col. O. Well but, zounds, Jenkins, you must not go till you drink something—let you and I have a bottle of hock—

Jenk. Not for the world, colonel: I never touch any thing strong in the morning.

Col. O. Never touch any thing strong! Why one bottle wont hurt you, man; this is old, and mild as milk.

Jenk. Well but, colonel, pray excuse me.

To tell you the truth,
In the days of my youth,
As mirth and nature bid,
I lik'd a glass,
And I lov'd a lass,
And I did as younkers did.

But now I am old,
With grief be it told,
I must those freaks forbear;
At sixty-three,
'Twixt you and me,
A man grows worse for wear. [*Exit.*

Enter Mr. Jessamy, Lady Mary Oldboy, *and Maid.*

Lady M. Shut the door, why don't you shut the door there? Have you a mind I should catch my death? This house is absolutely the cave of Æolus; one had as good live in the Eddystone, or in a windmill.

Mr. J. I thought they told your ladyship that there was a messenger here from Sir John Flowerdale.

Col. O. Well, Sir, and so there was; but he had not patience to wait upon your curling-irons. Mr. Jenkins was here, Sir John Flowerdale's steward, who has lived in the family these forty years.

Mr. J. And pray, Sir, might not Sir John Flowerdale have come himself, if he had been acquainted with the rules of good breeding, he would have known that I ought to have been visited.

Lady M. Upon my word, colonel, this is a solecism.

Col. O. 'Sblood, my lady, it's none. Sir John Flowerdale came but last night from his sister's seat in the west, and is a little out of order. But I suppose he thinks he ought to appear before him with his daughter in one hand, and his rent-roll in the other, and cry, Sir, pray do me the favour to accept them.

Lady M. Nay but, Mr. Oldboy, permit me to say—

Col. O. He need not give himself so many affected airs; I think it's very well if he gets such a girl for going for; she's one of the handsomest and richest in this country, and more than he deserves.

Mr. J. That's an exceeding fine china jar your ladyship has got in the next room; I saw the fellow of it the other day at Williams's, and will send to my agent to purchase it: it is the true matchless old blue and white. Lady Betty Barebones has a couple that she gave a hundred guineas for, on board an Indiaman; but she reckons them at a hundred and twenty-five, on account of half a dozen plates, four nankeen beakers, and a couple of shaking mandarins, that the custom-house officers took from under her petticoats.

Col. O. Did you ever hear the like of this? He's chattering about old china, while I am talking to him of a fine girl. I tell you what, Mr. Jessamy, since that's the name you choose to be called by, I have a good mind to knock you down.

Mr. J. Knock me down, colonel! What do you mean? I must tell you, Sir, this is a language to which I have not been accustomed; and, if you think proper to continue to repeat it, I shall be under the necessity of quitting your house.

Col. O. Quitting my house?

Mr. J. Yes, Sir, incontinently.

Col. O. Why, Sir, am not I your father. Sir, and have I not a right to talk to you as I like? I will, sirrah. But, perhaps, I mayn't be your father, and I hope not.

Lady M. Heavens and earth, Mr. Oldboy!

Col. O. What's the matter, Madam? I mean, Madam, that he might have been changed at nurse, Madam; and I believe he was.

Mr. J. Huh, huh, huh!

Col. O. Do you laugh at me, you saucy jackanapes?

Lady M. Who's there? somebody bring me a chair. Really, Mr. Oldboy, you throw my weakly frame into such repeated convulsions—but I see your aim; you want to lay me in my grave, and you will very soon have that satisfaction.

Col. O. I can't bear the sight of him.

Lady M. Open that window, give me air, or I shall faint.

Mr. J. Hold, hold, let me tie a handkerchief about my neck first. This cursed, sharp, north wind—Antoine, bring down my muff.

Col. O. Ay, do, and his great coat.

Enter Antoine, *with Great Coat and Muff.*

Lady M. Marg'ret, some hartshorn. My dear Mr. Oldboy, why will you fly out in this way, when you know how it shocks my tender nerves?

Col. O. 'Sblood, Madam, it's enough to make a man mad.

Lady M. Hartshorn! hartshorn!

Enter Maid.

Mr. J. Colonel!

Col. O. Do you hear the puppy?

Mr. J. Will you give me leave to ask you one question?

Col. O. I don't know whether I will or not.

Mr. J. I should be glad to know, that's all, what single circumstance in my conduct, carriage, or figure, you can possibly find fault with—Perhaps I may be brought to reform—Pr'ythee let me hear from your own mouth, then, seriously what it is you do like, and what it is you do not like.

Col. O. Hum!

Mr. J. Be ingenuous, speak and spare not.

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Col. O. You would know?

Zounds, Sir! then I'll tell you without any jest,
The thing of all things, which I hate and detest;
A coxcomb, a fop,
A dainty milk-sop;
Who, essenc'd and dizen'd from bottom to top,
Looks just like a doll for a milliner's shop.
A thing full of prate,
And pride and conceit;
All fashion no weight;
Who shrugs and takes snuff;
And carries a muff;
A minikin,
Finicking,
French powder-puff!
And now, Sir, I fancy, I've told you enough. [*Exit.*

Mr. J. What's the matter with the colonel, Madam; does your ladyship know?

Lady M. Heigho! don't be surprised, my dear; it was the same thing with my late dear brother, Lord Jessamy; they never could agree: that good-natured friendly soul, knowing the delicacy of my constitution, has often said, sister Mary, I pity you.—Not but your father has good qualities; and I assure you I remember him a very fine gentleman himself. When he first paid his addresses to me, he was called agreeable Jack Oldboy, though I married him without the consent of your noble grandfather.

Mr. J. I think he ought to be proud of me; I believe there's many a duke, nay, prince, who would esteem themselves happy in having such a son—

Lady M. Yes, my dear; but your sister was always your father's favourite: he intends to give her a prodigious fortune, and sets his heart upon seeing her a woman of quality.

Mr. J. He should wish to see her look a little like a gentlewoman first. When she was in London last winter, I am told she was taken notice of by a few men. But she wants air, manner—

Lady M. And has not a bit of the genius of our family, and I never knew a woman of it but herself without. I have tried her: about three years ago, I set her to translate a little French song: I found she had not even an idea of versification; and she put down love and joy for rhyme—so I gave her over.

Mr. J. Why, indeed, she appears to have more of the Thalestris than the Sappho about her.

Lady M. Well, my dear, I must go and dress myself, though I protest I am fitter for my bed than my coach. And condescend to the colonel a little—Do, my dear, if it be only to oblige your mamma. [*Exit.*

Mr. J. Let me consider: I am going to visit a country baronet here, who would fain prevail upon me to marry his daughter: the old gentleman has heard of my parts and understanding; Miss, of my figure and address. But suppose I should not like her when I see her? Why, positively, then I will not have her; the treaty's at an end, and, sans compliment, we break up the congress. But wont that be cruel, after having suffered her to flatter herself with hopes, and showing myself to her? She's a strange dowdy, I dare believe: however, she brings provision with her for a separate maintenance.—*Antoine, apprêtez la toilet.* I am going to spend a cursed day; that I perceive already; I wish it was over; I dread it as much as a general election. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—A Study in SIR JOHN FLOWERDALE'S *House.*

Two Chairs, a Table, Globes, and Mathematical Instruments.

Enter CLARISSA, *followed by* JENNY.

Clar. Immortal powers, protect me,
Assist, support, direct me;
Relieve a heart oppress'd:
Ah! why this palpitation?
Cease, busy perturbation,
And let me, let me rest.

Jenny. My dear lady, what ails you?

Clar. Nothing, Jenny, nothing.

Jenny. Pardon me, Madam, there is something ails you indeed. Lord! what signifies all the grandeur and riches in this world, if they can't procure one content. I am sure it vexes me to the heart, so it does, to see such a dear, sweet, worthy, young lady, as you are, pining yourself to death.

Clar. Jenny, you are a good girl, and I am very much obliged to you for feeling so much on my account; but in a little time I hope I shall be easier.

Jenny. Why now, here to-day, Madam, for sartain you ought to be merry to-day, when there's a fine gentleman coming to court you; but, if you like any one else better, I am sure I wish you had him, with all my soul.

Clar. Suppose, Jenny, I was so unfortunate as to like a man without my father's approbation; would you wish me married to him?

Jenny. I wish you married to any one, Madam, that could make you happy.

Clar. Heigho!

Jenny. Madam! Madam! yonder's Sir John and Mr. Lionel on the terrace: I believe they are coming up here. Poor dear Mr. Lionel, he does not seem to be in over great spirits either. To be sure, Madam, it's no business of mine; but I believe if the truth was known, there are those in the house who would give more than ever I shall be worth, or any the likes of me, to prevent the marriage of a sartain person that shall be nameless.

Clar. What do you mean? I don't understand you.

Jenny. I hope you are not angry, Madam?

Clar. Ah! Jenny—

Jenny. Lauk! Madam, do you think, when Mr. Lionel's a clergyman, he'll be obliged to cut off his hair? I'm sure it will be a thousand pities, for it is the sweetest colour! and your great pudding-sleeves, Lord! they'll quite spoil his shape, and the fall of his shoulders. Well, Madam, if I was a lady of large fortune, I'll be hanged if Mr. Lionel should be a parson, if I could help it.

Clar. I am going into my dressing-room—It seems then Mr. Lionel is a great favourite of yours; but pray, Jenny, have a care how you talk in this manner to any one else.

Jenny. Me talk, Madam! I thought you knew me better; and, my dear lady, keep up your spirits. I'm sure I have dressed you today as nice as hands and pins can make you.

I'm but a poor servant, 'tis true, Ma'am;
But was I a lady like you, Ma'am,
In grief would I sit! The dickens a bit;
No, faith, I would search the world through,
To find what my liking could hit. [Ma'am,

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Set in case a young man,
In my fancy there ran;
It might anger my friends and relations;
But if I had regard,
It should go very hard,
Or I'd follow my own inclinations.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter SIR JOHN FLOWERDALE *and* LIONEL.

Sir J. Indeed, Lionel, I will not hear of it. What! to run from us all of a sudden this way, and at such a time too; the eve of my daughter's wedding, as I may call it; when your company must be doubly agreeable, as well as necessary to us?

Lion. Upon my word, Sir, I have been so long from the university, that it is time for me to think of returning. It is true, I have no absolute studies; but really, Sir, I shall be obliged to you, if you will give me leave to go.

Sir J. Come, come, my dear Lionel, I have for some time observed a more than ordinary gravity growing upon you, and I am not to learn the reason of it: I know, to minds serious, and well inclined, like yours, the sacred functions you are about to embrace—

Lion. Dear Sir, your goodness to me, of every kind, is so great, so unmerited! Your condescension, your friendly attentions—in short, Sir, I want words to express my sense of obligations—

Sir J. Fy, fy, no more of them. By my last letters, I find that my old friend, the rector, still continues in good health, considering his advanced years. You may imagine I am far from desiring the death of so worthy and pious a man; yet I must own, at this time, I could wish you were in orders, as you might then perform the ceremony of my daughter's marriage; which would give me a secret satisfaction.

Lion. No doubt, Sir, any office in my power, that could be instrumental to the happiness of any in your family, I should perform with pleasure.

Sir J. Why really, Lionel, from the character of her intended husband, I have no room to doubt but this match will make Clarissa perfectly happy: to be sure, the alliance is the most eligible for both families.

Lion. If the gentleman is sensible of his happiness in the alliance, Sir.

Sir J. The fondness of a father is always suspected of partiality; yet I believe I may venture to say, that few young women will be found more unexceptionable than my daughter: her person is agreeable, her temper sweet, her understanding good; and with the obligations she has to your instruction—

Lion. You do my endeavours too much honour, Sir; I have been able to add nothing to Miss Flowerdale's accomplishments, but a little knowledge in matters of small importance to a mind already so well improved.

Sir J. I don't think so; a little knowledge, even in those matters, is necessary for a woman, in whom I am far from considering ignorance as a desirable characteristic: when intelligence is not attended with impertinent affectation, it teaches them to judge with precision, and gives them a degree of solidity necessary for the companion of a sensible man.

Lion. Yonder's Mr. Jenkins: I fancy he's looking for you, Sir.

Sir J. I see him; he's come back from Colonel Oldboy's; I have a few words to say to him; and will return to you again in a minute. [*Exit.*

Lion. To be a burden to one's self, to wage continual war with one's own passions, forced to combat, unable to overcome! But see, she appears, whose presence turns all my sufferings into transport, and makes even misery itself delightful.

Enter CLARISSA.

Perhaps, Madam, you are not at leisure now; otherwise, if you thought proper, we would resume the subject we were upon yesterday.

Clar. I am sure, Sir, I give you a great deal of trouble.

Lion. Madam, you give me no trouble; I should think every hour of my life happily employed in your service; and as this is probably the last time I shall have the honour of attending you upon the same occasion—

Clar. Upon my word, Mr. Lionel, I think myself extremely obliged to you; and shall ever consider the enjoyment of your friendship—

Lion. My friendship, Madam, can be of little moment to you; but if the most perfect adoration, if the warmest wishes for your felicity, though I should never be witness of it—if these, Madam, can have any merit to continue, in your remembrance, a man once honoured with a share of your esteem—

Clar. Hold, Sir—I think I hear somebody.

Lion. If you please, Madam, we will resume our studies—Have you looked at the book I left you yesterday?

Clar. Really, Sir, I have been so much disturbed in my thoughts for these two or three days past, that I have not been able to look at any thing.

Lion. I am sorry to hear that, Madam; I hope there was nothing particular to disturb you. The care Sir John takes to dispose of your hand in a manner suitable to your birth and fortune—

Clar. I don't know, Sir;—I own I am disturbed; I own I am uneasy; there is something weighs upon my heart, which I would fain disclose.

Lion. Upon your heart, Madam! did you say your heart?

Clar. I did, Sir,—I—

Enter JENNY.

Jenny. Madam! Madam! here's a coach and six driving up the avenue: it's Colonel Oldboy's family; and I believe the gentleman is in it, that's coming to court you.—Lord, I must run and have a peep at him out of the window. [*Exit.*

Lion. Madam, I'll take my leave.

Clar. Why so, Sir?—Bless me, Mr. Lionel, what's the matter?—You turn pale.

Lion. Madam!

Clar. Pray speak to me, Sir.—You tremble.—Tell me the cause of this sudden change.—How are you?—Where's your disorder?

Lion. Oh fortune! fortune!

You ask me in vain,
Of what ills I complain,
Where harbours the torment I find;
In my head, in my heart,
It invades ev'ry part,
And subdues both my body and mind.

Each effort I try,
Ev'ry med'cine apply,
The pangs of my soul to appease:

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But doom'd to endure,
What I mean for a cure,
Turns poison, and feeds the disease. [*Exit.*

Enter DIANA.

Diana. My dear Clarissa—I'm glad I have found you alone.—For Heaven's sake, don't let any one break in upon us;—and give me leave to sit down with you a little:—I am in such a tremor, such a panic—

Clar. Mercy on us, what has happened?

Diana. You may remember I told you, that when I was last winter in London, I was followed by an odious fellow, one Harman; I can't say but the wretch pleased me, though he is but a younger brother, and not worth sixpence: and—in short, when I was leaving town, I promised to correspond with him.

Clar. Do you think that was prudent?

Diana. Madness! But this is not the worst; for what do you think, the creature had the assurance to write to me about three weeks ago, desiring permission to come down and spend the summer at my father's.

Clar. At your father's!

Diana. Ay, who never saw him, knows nothing of him, and would as soon consent to my marrying a horse-jockey. He told me a long story of some tale he intended to invent to make my father receive him as an indifferent person; and some gentleman in London, he said, would procure him a letter that should give it a face; and he longed to see me so, he said, he could not live without it; and if he could be permitted but to spend a week with me—

Clar. Well, and what answer did you make?

Diana. Oh! abused him, and refused to listen to any such thing—But—I vow I tremble while I tell it to you—just before we left our house, the impudent monster arrived there, attended by a couple of servants, and is now actually coming here with my father.

Clar. Upon my word this is a dreadful thing.

Diana. Dreadful, my dear!—I happened to be at the window as he came into the court, and I declare I had like to have fainted away.

Clar. Well, Diana, with regard to your affair—I think you must find some method of immediately informing this gentleman that you consider the outrage he has committed against you in the most heinous light, and insist upon his going away directly.

Diana. Why, I believe that will be the best way—but then he'll be begging my pardon and asking to stay.

Clar. Why then you must tell him positively you wont consent to it; and if he persist in so xtravagant a design, tell him you'll never see him again as long as you live.

Diana. Must I tell him so?

Ah! pr'ythee spare me dearest creature!
How can you prompt me to so much ill nature?
Kneeling before me,
Should I hear him implore me;
Could I accuse him,
Could I refuse him
The boon he should ask?
Set not a lover the cruel task!
No, believe me, my dear,
Was he now standing here,
In spite of my frights and alarms,
I might rate him, might scold him—
But should still strive to hold him—
And sink at last into his arms. [*Exit.*

Clar. How easy to direct the conduct of others, how hard to regulate our own! I can give my friend advice, while I am conscious of the same indiscretions in myself. Yet is it criminal to know the most worthy, most amiable man in the world, and not to be insensible to his merit? But my father, the kindest, best of fathers, will he approve the choice I have made? Nay, has he not made another choice for me? And, after all, how can I be sure that the man I love, loves me again? He never told me so; but his looks, his actions, his present anxiety, sufficiently declare what his delicacy, his generosity, will not suffer him to utter.—

Ye gloomy thoughts, ye fears perverse,
Like sullen vapours all disperse.
And scatter in the wind;

Delusive phantoms, brood of night,
No more my sickly fancy fright,
No more my reason blind;

'Tis done; I feel my soul releas'd;
The visions fly, the mists are chas'd,
Nor leave a cloud behind. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—A side view of SIR JOHN FLOWERDALE'S *House.*

Enter HARMAN *with* COLONEL OLDBOY.

Col. O. Well, and how does my old friend Dick Rantum do? I have not seen him these twelve years: he was an honest worthy fellow as ever breathed; I remember he kept a girl in London, and was cursedly plagued by his wife's relations.

Har. Sir Richard was always a man of spirit, colonel.

Col. O. But as to this business of yours, which he tells me of in his letter—I don't see much in it—An affair with a citizen's daughter—pinked her brother in a duel—Is the fellow likely to die?

Har. Why, Sir, we hope not; but as the matter is dubious, and will probably make some noise, I thought it was better to be for a little time out of the way; when hearing my case, Sir Richard Rantum mentioned you; he said he was sure you would permit me to remain at your house for a few days, and offered me a recommendation.

Col. O. And there's likely to be a brat in the case—And the girl's friends are in business—I'll tell you what will be the consequence then—They will be for going to law with you for a maintenance—but no matter, I'll take the affair in hand for you—make me your solicitor; and, if you are obliged to pay for a single spoonful of pap, I'll be content to father all the children in the Foundling-hospital.

Har. You are very kind, Sir.

Col. O. But hold—hark you—you say there's money to be had—suppose you were to marry the wench?

Har. Do you think, Sir, that would be so right after what has happened? Besides, there's a strong objection—To tell you the truth, I am honourably in love in another place.

Col. O. Oh! you are.

Har. Yes, Sir, but there are obstacles—A father—In short, Sir, the mistress of my heart lives in this very county, which makes even my present situation a little irksome.

Col. O. In this county! Zounds! then I am

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sure I am acquainted with her, and the first letter of her name is—

Har. Excuse me, Sir, I have some particular reasons—

Col. O. But look who comes yonder—Ha, ha, ha! My son, picking his steps like a dancing-master. Pr'ythee, Harman, go into the house, and let my wife and daughter know we are come, while I go and have some sport with him: they will introduce you to Sir John Flowerdale.

Har. Then, Sir, I'll take the liberty—

Col. O. But, d'ye hear, I must have a little more discourse with you about this girl: perhaps she's a neighbour of mine, and I may be of service to you.

Har. Well, remember, Colonel, I shall try your friendship.

Indulgent powers, if ever
You mark'd a tender vow,
O bend in kind compassion,
And hear a lover now!
For titles, wealth, and honours,
While others crowd your shrine,
I ask this only blessing,
Let her I love be mine. [*Exit.*

Enter Mr. Jessamy *and several Servants.*

Col. O. Why, zounds! one would think you had never put your feet to the ground before; you make as much work about walking a quarter of a mile, as if you had gone a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

Mr. J. Colonel, you have used me extremely ill, to drag me through the dirty roads in this manner; you told me the way was all over a bowling-green; only see what a condition I am in!

Col. O. Why, how did I know the roads were dirty? is that my fault? Besides, we mistook the way. Zounds, man, your legs will be never the worse when they are brushed a little.

Mr. J. Antoine! have you sent La Roque for the shoes and stockings? Give me the glass out of your pocket—not a dust of powder left in my hair, and the frissure as flat as the foretop of an attorney's clerk—get your comb and pomatum; you must borrow some powder: I suppose there is such a thing as a dressing-room in the house.

Col. O. Ay, and a cellar too, I hope, for I want a glass of wine cursedly—but hold, hold, Frank, where are you going? Stay, and pay your devoirs here, if you please; I see there's somebody coming to welcome us.

Enter Lionel, Diana, *and* Clarissa,

Lion. Colonel, your most obedient; Sir John is walking with my lady in the garden, and has commissioned me to receive you.

Col. O. Mr. Lionel, I am heartily glad to see you—come here, Frank—this is my son, Sir.

Lion. Sir, I am exceeding proud to—

Mr. J. Can't you get the powder then?

Col. O. Miss Clary, my little Miss Clary—give me a kiss, my dear—as handsome as an angel, by Heavens—Frank, why don't you come here? this is Miss Flowerdale.

Diana. O Heavens, Clarissa! Just as I said, that impudent devil is come here with my father.

Mr. J. Hadn't we better go into the house?

FINALE.

Mr. J. To be made in such a pickle!
Will you please to lead the way, Sir?

Col. O. No, but if you please you may, Sir.
For precedence none will stickle.

Diana. Brother, no politeness? Bless me!
Will you not your hand bestow?
Lead the lady.

Clar. Don't distress me;
Dear Diana, let him go.

Mr. J. Ma'am, permit me.

Col. O. Smoke the beau.

Clar. Cruel, must I, can I, bear?
Oh, adverse stars!

Lion. Oh, fate severe!
Beset, tormented,
Each hope prevented:

Col. O. None but the brave deserve the fair.
Come, Ma'am, let me lead you:
Now, Sir, I precede you.

All. Lovers must ill usage bear.
Oh, adverse stars! oh, fate severe!
None but the brave deserve the fair.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Hall at Sir John Flowerdale's *Grand staircase; two doors, from different Apartments.*

Enter Lionel, *followed by* Jenny.

Jenny. Well but, Mr Lionel, consider, pray consider now; how can you be so prodigious undiscreet as you are, walking about the hall here, while the gentlefolks are within in the parlour? Don't you think they'll wonder at your getting up so soon after dinner, and before any of the rest of the company?

Lion. For Heaven's sake, Jenny, don't speak to me: I neither know where I am, nor what I am doing; I am the most wretched and miserable of mankind.

Jenny. Poor, dear soul, I pity you. Yes, yes, I believe you are miserable enough indeed; and I assure you I have pitied you a great while, and spoke many a word in your favour, when you little thought you had such a friend in a corner.

Lion. But, good Jenny, since, by some accident or other, you have been able to discover what I would willingly hide from all the world; I conjure you, as you regard my interest, as you value your lady's peace and honour, never let the most distant hint of it escape you; for it is a secret of that importance—

Jenny. And perhaps you think I can't keep a secret; Ah! Mr Lionel, it must be hear, see, and say nothing in this world, or one has no business to live in it; besides who would not be in love with my lady? There's never a man this day alive but might be proud of it; for she is the handsomest, sweetest temper'dest, and I am sure one of the best mistresses ever poor girl had.

Lion. Oh, Jenny! she's an angel.

Jenny. And so she is indeed. Do you know that she gave me her blue silk gown to-day, and it is every crum as good as new; and, go things as they will, don't you be fretting and vexing yourself, for I am mortally sartain she would liverer see a toad than this Jessamy. Though I must say, to my thinking, he's a very likely man; and a finer pair of eyebrows and a more delicate nose, I never saw on a face.

Lion. By Heavens, I shall run mad.

Jenny. And why so? It is not beauty that always takes the fancy: moreover, to let you know, if it was, I don't think him any more to

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compare to you, than a thistle is to a carnation: and so's a sign; for, mark my words, my lady loves you as much as she hates him.

Lion. What you tell me, Jenny, is a thing I neither merit nor expect: no, I am unhappy, and let me continue so; my most presumptuous thoughts shall never carry me to a wish that may affect her quiet, or give her cause to repent.

Jenny. That's very honourable of you, I must need's say! but for all that, liking's liking, and one can't help it; and if it should be my lady's case it is no fault of yours. I am sure, when she called me into her dressing-room, before she went down to dinner, there she stood with her eyes brim full of tears, and so I fell a crying for company—and then she said she could not abide the chap in the parlour; and at the same time she bid me take an opportunity to speak to you, and desire you to meet her in the garden this evening after tea; for she has something to say to you.

Lion. Jenny, I see you are my friend; for which I thank you, though I know it is impossible to do me any service; take this ring, and wear it for my sake.

Jenny. I am very much obliged to your honour; I am your friend indeed—but, I say, you wont forget to be in the garden now; and in the mean time keep as little in the house as you can, for walls have eyes and ears; and I can tell you the servants take notice of your uneasiness, though I'm always desiring them to mind their own business.

Lion. Pray have a care, Jenny, have a care, my dear girl; a word may breed suspicion.

Jenny. Pshaw! have a care yourself; it is you that breeds suspicion, sighing and pining about; you look for all the world like a ghost; and if you don't pluck up your spirits, you will be a ghost soon; letting things get the better of you. Though to be sure when I thinks with myself, being crossed in love is a terrible thing—There was a young man in the town where I was born made away with himself upon the account of it.

Lion. Things sha'n't get the better of me, Jenny.

Jenny. No more they don't ought. And once again, I say, fortune is thrown in your dish, and you are not to fling it out; my lady's estate will be better than three livings, if Sir John could give them to you. Think of that, Mr. Lionel, think of that.

Lion. Think of what?

Oh talk not to me of the wealth she possesses,
My hopes and my views to herself I confine;
The splendor of riches but slightly impresses
A heart that is fraught with a passion like mine.
By love, only love, should our souls be cemented;
No int'rest, no motive, but that would I own;
With her in a cottage be bless'd and contented,
And wretched without her, though plac'd on a throne. [*Exit.*

Enter COLONEL OLDBOY.

Col. O. Very well, my lady, I'll come again to you presently, I am only going into the garden for a mouthful of air. Aha! my little Abigail! Here, Molly, Jenny, Betty! What's your name? Why don't you answer me, hussy, when I call you.

Jenny. If you want any thing, Sir, I'll call one of the footmen.

Col. O. The footmen! the footmen! Damn me, I never knew one of them, in my life, that wouldn't prefer a rascal to a gentleman—Come here, you slut, put your hands about my neck, and kiss me.

Jenny. Who, I, Sir?

Col. O. Ay, here's money for you; what the devil are you afraid of? I'll take you into keeping; you shall go and live at one of my tenant's houses.

Jenny. I wonder you aren't ashamed, Sir, to make an honest girl any such proposal; you that have a worthy gentlewoman, nay, a lady of your own—To be sure she's a little stricken in years; but why shouldn't she grow elderly as well as yourself?

Col. O. Burn a lady, I love a pretty girl—

Jenny. Well, then, you may go look for one, Sir; I have no pretensions to the title.

Col. O. Why, you pert baggage, you don't know me.

Jenny. What do you pinch my fingers for? Yes, yes, I know you well enough, and your charekter's well known all over the country, running after poor young creatures as you do, to ruinate them.

Col. O. What, then, people say—

Jenny. Indeed they talk very bad of you; and whatever you may think, Sir, though I'm in a menial station, I'm come of people that wouldn't see me put upon; there are those that would take my part against the proudest he in the land, that should offer any thing uncivil.

Col. O. Well, come, let me know now, how does your young lady like my son?

Jenny. You want to pump me, do you? I suppose you would know whether I can keep my tongue within my teeth.

Col. O. She doesn't like him then?

Jenny. I don't say so, Sir—Isn't this a shame now—I suppose to-morrow or next day it will be reported that Jenny has been talking; Jenny said this, and Jenny said that, and Jenny said t'other—But here, Sir, I ax you, did I tell you any such thing?

Col. O. Why, yes, you did.

Jenny. I!—Lord bless me, how can you—

Col. O. Ad, I'll mouzle you.

Jenny. Ah, ah!

Col. O. What do you bawl for?

Jenny. Ah, ah, ah!

Indeed, forsooth, a pretty youth,
To play the am'rous fool;
At such an age, methinks your rage
Might be a little cool.

Fy, let me go, Sir,
Kiss me!—No, no, Sir.

You pull me and shake me,
For what do you take me,
This figure to make me?
I'd have you to know
I'm not for your game, Sir;
Nor will I be tame, Sir.
Lord, have you no shame, Sir,
To tumble one so? [*Exit.*

Enter LADY MARY OLDBOY, DIANA, *and* HARMAN.

Lady M. Mr. Oldboy, wont you give me your hand to lead me up stairs, my dear?—Sir, I am prodigiously obliged to you; I protest I have not been so well, I don't know when: I have had no return of my bilious complaint after dinner to-day; and eat so voraciously! Did you observe, Miss? Doctor Arsenic will be quite astonished when he hears it; surely

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his new-invented medicine has done me a prodigious deal of service.

Col. O. Ah! you'll always be taking one slop or other till you poison yourself. Give me a pinch of your ladyship's snuff.

Lady M. This is a mighty pretty sort of man, Colonel, who is he?

Col. O. A young fellow, my lady, recommended to me.

Lady M. I protest he has the sweetest taste for poetry!—He has repeated to me two or three of his own things, and I have been telling him of the poem my late brother, Lord Jessamy, made on the mouse that was drowned.

Col. O. Ay, a fine subject for a poem; a mouse that was drowned in a—

Lady M. Hush, my dear colonel, don't mention it; to be sure the circumstance was vastly indelicate; but for the number of lines, the poem was as charming a morsel—Pray, Sir, was there any news when you left London? any thing about the East Indies, the ministry, or politics of any kind? I am strangely fond of politics, but I hear nothing since my Lord Jessamy's death; he used to write to me all the affairs of the nation, for he was a very great politician himself. I have a manuscript speech of his in my cabinet—He never spoke it, but it is as fine a thing as ever came from man!

Col. O. What is that crawling upon your ladyship's petticoat?

Lady M. Where! where!

Col. O. Zounds! a spider with legs as long as my arm.

Lady M. Oh, Heavens! Ah don't let me look at it! I shall faint, I shall faint! A spider! a spider! a spider! [*Runs off.*

Col. O. Hold; zounds, let her go; I knew the spider would set her galloping, with her damned fuss about her brother, my Lord Jessamy.—Harman, come here.—How do you like my daughter? Is the girl you are in love with as handsome as this?

Har. In my opinion, Sir.

Col. O. What, as handsome as Dy!—I'll lay you twenty pounds she has not such a pair of eyes.—He tells me he's in love, Dy; raging mad for love, and, by his talk, I begin to believe him.

Diana. Now, for my part, papa, I doubt it very much! though, by what I heard the gentleman say just now within, I find he imagines the lady has a violent partiality for him; and yet he may be mistaken there too.

Col. O. For shame, Dy, what mischief do you mean? How can you talk so tartly to a poor young fellow under misfortunes? Give him your hand, and ask his pardon.—Don't mind her, Harman.—For all this, she is as good-natured a little devil as ever was born.

Har. You may remember, Sir, I told you before dinner, that I had for some time carried on a private correspondence with my lovely girl; and that her father, whose consent we despair of obtaining, is the great obstacle to our happiness.

Col. O. Why don't you carry her off in spite of him then?—I ran away with my wife—ask my lady Mary, she'll tell you the thing herself.—Her old conceited lord of a father thought I was not good enough; but I mounted a garden-wall, notwithstanding their *chevaux-de-frize* of broken glass bottles, took her out of a three pair of stairs window, and brought her down a ladder in my arms.—By the way, she would have squeezed through a cat-hole to get at me.—And I would have taken her out of the tower of London, damme, if it had been surrounded with the three regiments of guards.

Diana. But surely, papa, you would not persuade the gentleman to such a proceeding as this is; consider the noise it will make in the country; and if you are known to be the adviser and abettor—

Col. O. Why, what do I care? I say, if he takes my advice he'll run away with her, and I'll give him all the assistance I can.

Har. I am sure, Sir, you are very kind: and, to tell you the truth, I have more than once had the very scheme in my head, if I thought it was feasible, and knew how to go about it.

Col. O. Feasible, and knew how to go about it! The thing's feasible enough, if the girl's willing to go off with you, and you have spirit sufficient to undertake it.

Har. O, as for that, Sir, I can answer.

Diana. What, Sir, that the lady will be willing to go off with you?

Har. No, Ma'am, that I have spirit enough to take her, if she is willing to go; and thus far I dare venture to promise, that between this and to-morrow morning I will find out whether she is or not.

Col. O. So he may; she lives but in this county; and tell her, Harman, you have met with a friend who is inclined to serve you. You shall have my post-chaise at a minute's warning; and if a hundred pieces will be of any use to you, you may command 'em.

Har. And are you really serious, Sir?

Col. O. Serious; damme, if I an't. I have put twenty young fellows in the way of getting girls that they never would have thought of:—and bring her to my house; whenever you come you shall have a supper and a bed; but you must marry her first, because my lady will be squeamish.

Diana. Well but, my dear papa, upon my word you have a great deal to answer for: suppose it was your own case to have a daughter in such circumstances, would you be obliged to any one—

Col. O. Hold your tongue, hussy, who bid you put in your oar? However, Harman, I don't want to set you upon any thing; 'tis no affair of mine to be sure; I only give you advice, and tell you how I would act if I was in your place.

Har. I assure you, Sir, I am quite charmed with the advice; and since you are ready to stand my friend, I am determined to follow it.

Col. O. You are—

Har. Positively—

Col. O. Say no more then: here's my hand.—You understand me—No occasion to talk any further of it at present.

Diana. You had better not give this advice, papa.

Col. O. Hold your tongue, hussy—Harman, if you don't carry her off, you dog, I'll never forgive you.

[*Exeunt* COLONEL OLDBOY *and* DIANA.

Har. Say'st thou so! then love renounce me, if I drive not old Truepenny's humour to the uttermost—Let me consider;—what ill consequence can possibly attend it?—The design is his own, as in part will be the execution.—He may perhaps be angry when he finds out the deceit.—Well, he deceives himself; and faults we commit ourselves we seldom find much difficulty in pardoning.

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Hence with caution, hence with fear,
Beauty prompts, and nought shall stay me;
Boldly for that prize I steer;
Rocks, nor winds nor waves, dismay me.

Yet, rash lover, look behind,
Think what evils may betide you;
Love and fortune both are blind,
And you have none else to guide you.
[*Exit.*

SCENE II.—CLARISSA's *Dressing-room.*

Enter DIANA *and* MR. JESSAMY.

Diana. Come, brother, I undertake to be mistress of the ceremony upon this occasion, and introduce you to your first audience.—Miss Flowerdale is not here, I perceive; but no matter—

Mr. J. Upon my word, a pretty elegant dressing-room this; but confound our builders, or architects, as they call themselves, they are all errant stone-masons; not one of them knows the situation of doors, windows, or chimneys; which are as essential to a room, as eyes, nose, and mouth to a countenance. Now if the eyes are where the mouth should be, and the nose out of proportion and its place, *quelle horrible physiognomie!*

Diana. My dear brother, you are not come here as a virtuoso to admire the temple; but as a votary to address the deity to whom it belongs. Show, I beseech you, a little more devotion, and tell me how you like Miss Flowerdale? don't you think her very handsome?

Mr. J. Pale;—but that I am determined she shall remedy; for, as soon as we are married, I will make her put on rouge.—Let me see; has she got any in her boxes here? *veritable toilet à l'Angloise.* Nothing but a bottle of Hungary-water, two or three rows of pins, a paper of patches, and a little bole-armoniac by way of tooth-powder.

Diana. Brother, I would fain give you some advice upon this occasion, which may be of service to you. You are now going to entertain a young lady—Let me prevail upon you to lay aside those airs, on account of which some people are impertinent enough to call you a coxcomb; for I am afraid she may be apt to think you a coxcomb too, as I assure you she is very capable of distinguishing.

Mr. J. So much the worse for me.—If she is capable of distinguishing, I shall meet with a terrible repulse. I don't believe she'll have me. [*Ironically.*

Diana. I don't believe she will, indeed.

Mr. J. Go on, sister,—ha, ha, ha!

Diana. I protest I am serious—Though I perceive you have more faith in the counsellor before you there, the looking-glass. But give me leave to tell you it is not a powdered head, a laced coat, a grimace, a shrug, a bow, or a few pert phrases, learned by rote, that constitute the power of pleasing all women.

Mr. J. You had better return to the gentleman and give him his tea, my dear.

Diana. These qualifications we find in our parrots and monkeys. I would undertake to teach Poll, in three weeks, the fashionable jargon of half the fine men about town; and I am sure it must be allowed, that pug, in a scarlet coat, is a gentleman as *degagé* and alluring as most of them.

Ladies, pray admire a figure,
Fait selon le dernier goût.
First, his hat, in size no bigger
Than a Chinese woman's shoe;
Six yards of ribbon bind
His hair *en baton* behind;
While his foretop's so high,
That in the crown he may vie
With the tufted cockatoo.
Then his waist so long and taper
'Tis an absolute thread-paper:
Maids, resist him, you that can!
Odd's life, if this is all th' affair,
I'll clap a hat on, club my hair,
And call myself a man. [*Exit.*

Enter CLARISSA.

Clar. Sir, I took the liberty to desire a few moments' private conversation with you—I hope you will excuse it—I am really greatly embarrassed. But in an affair of such immediate consequence to us both—

[MR. JESSAMY *places chairs, and seats himself.*

Mr. J. My dear creature, don't be embarrassed before me; I should be extremely sorry to strike you with any awe; but this is a species of *mauvaise honte*, which the company I shall introduce you to, will soon cure you of.

Clar. Upon my word, Sir, I don't understand you.

Mr. J. Perhaps you may be under some uneasiness lest I should not be quite so warm in the prosecution of this affair as you could wish: it is true, with regard to quality, I might do better; and, with regard to fortune, full as well—But you please me—Upon my soul, I have not met with any thing more agreeable to me a great while.

Clar. Pray, Sir, keep your seat.

Mr. J. Mauvaise honte, again. My dear, there is nothing in these little familiarities between you and me—When we are married, I shall do every thing to render your life happy.

Clar. Ah! Sir, pardon me. The happiness of my life depends upon a circumstance—

Mr. J. Oh! I understand you—You have been told I suppose of the Italian opera girl—rat people's tongues—However, 'tis true, I had an affair with her at Naples, and she is now here. But, be satisfied: I'll give her a thousand pounds, and send her about her business.

Clar. Me, Sir! I protest nobody told me—Lord! I never heard any such thing, or inquired about it.

Mr. J. Nor have they not been chattering to you of my affair at Pisa, with the Principessa del—

Clar. No, indeed, Sir.

Mr. J. Well, I was afraid they might, because in this rude country—But, why silent on a sudden?—don't be afraid to speak.

Clar. No, Sir, I will come to the subject on which I took the liberty to trouble you.—Indeed, I have great reliance on your generosity.

Mr. J. You'll find me generous as a prince, depend on't.

Clar. I am blessed, Sir, with one of the best of fathers: I never yet disobeyed him; in which I have had little merit; for his commands hitherto have only been to secure my own felicity.

Mr. J. Après, ma chère.

Clar. But now, Sir, I am under the shocking necessity of disobeying him, or being wretched for ever.

Mr. J. Hem!

Clar. Our union is impossible—therefore,

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since I cannot be your wife, let me entreat permission to make you my friend. [*Exit.*

Mr. J. Who's there?

Enter JENKINS.

Jenk. Do you call, Sir?

Mr. J. Hark you, old gentleman; who are you?

Jenk. Sir, my name is Jenkins.

Mr. J. Oh! you are Sir John Flowerdale's steward; a servant he puts confidence in.

Jenk. Sir, I have served Sir John Flowerdale many years.

Mr. J. Then, Mr. Jenkins, I shall condescend to speak to you. Does your master know who I am? Does he know, Sir, that I am likely to be a peer of Great Britain? That I have ten thousand pounds a year; that I have passed through all Europe with distinguished eclat; that I refused the daughter of Mynheer Van Slokenfolk, the great Dutch burgomaster; and that, if I had not had the misfortune of being bred a protestant, I might have married the niece of his present holiness the Pope, with a fortune of two hundred thousand piastres, Mr. Jenkins?

Jenk. I am sure, Sir, my master has all the respect imaginable—

Mr. J. Then, Mr. Tomkins, how comes he, after my showing an inclination to be allied to his family; how comes he, I say, to bring me to this house to be affronted? I have let his daughter go; but I think I was in the wrong; for a woman that insults me is no more safe than a man. I have brought a lady to reason before now for giving me saucy language; and left her male friends to revenge it, Mr. Wilkins.

Jenk. Pray, good Sir, what's the matter?

Mr. J. Why, Sir, this is the matter, Sir—your master's daughter, Sir, has behaved to me with damned insolence and impertinence; and you may tell Sir John Flowerdale, first, with regard to her, that I think she is a silly, ignorant, awkward, ill-bred, country puss, Mr. Hopkins.

Jenk. Oh! Sir, for Heaven's sake—

Mr. J. And that, with regard to himself, he is, in my opinion, an old, doting, ridiculous, country squire; without the knowledge of either men or things; and that he is below my notice, if it were not to despise him, Mr. Jenkins.

Jenk. Good lord! good lord!

Mr. J. And advise him and his daughter to keep out of my way; for, by 'gad, I will affront them in the first place I meet them—And, if your master is for carrying things further, tell him I fence better than any man in Europe, Mr. Simkins. [*Exit.*

Jenk. Tomkins! Wilkins! Hopkins! and Simkins! what does he mean?—I must go and inform Sir John of what has happened, but I will not tell him of the outrageous behaviour of this young spark; for he is a man of spirit, and would resent it. 'Egad, my own fingers itched to be at him, once or twice; and, as stout as he is, I fancy these old fists would give him a bellyful. He complains of Miss Clarissa; but she is incapable of treating him in the manner he says. Perhaps she may have behaved with some coldness towards him; and yet that is a mystery to me too.

We all say the man was exceedingly knowing,
And knowing most surely was he,
Who found out the cause of the ebbing and flowing,
The flux and reflux of the sea.

Not was he in knowledge far from it,
Who first mark'd the course of a comet;
To what it was owing,
Its coming and going,
Its wanderings hither and thither;
But the man that divines
A lady's designs,
Their cause or effect,
In any respect,
Is wiser than both put together. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—SIR JOHN FLOWERDALE'S *Garden.*

View of canal, by moonlight; statues, flowering, shrubs, &c.

Enter LIONEL, *leading* CLARISSA.

Lion. Hist—methought I heard a noise—should we be surprised together, at a juncture so critical, what might be the consequence—I know not how it is; but, at this the happiest moment of my life, I feel a damp, a tremor at my heart—

Clar. Then, what should I do? If you tremble, I ought to be terrified indeed, who have discovered sentiments, which perhaps I should have hid, with a frankness, that, by a man less generous, less noble-minded than yourself, might be construed to my disadvantage.

Lion. Oh! wound me not with so cruel an expression—You love me, and have condescended to confess it—You have seen my torments, and been kind enough to pity them—the world indeed, may blame you—

Clar. And yet, was it proclaimed to the world, what could the most malicious suggest? They could but say, that truth and sincerity got the better of forms; that the tongue dared to speak the honest sensations of the mind; that, while you aimed at improving my understanding, you engaged and conquered my heart.

Lion. And is it, is it possible?

Clar. Be calm, and listen to me: what I have done has not been lightly imagined, nor rashly undertaken: it is the work of reflection, of conviction; my love is not a sacrifice to my own fancy, but a tribute to your worth; did I think there was a more deserving man in the world—

Lion. If to dote on you more than life, be to deserve you, so far I have merit; if to have no wish, no hope, no thought, but you, can entitle me to the envied distinction of a moment's regard, so far I dare pretend.

Clar. That I have this day refused a man, with whom I could not be happy, I make no merit: born for quiet and simplicity, the crowds of the world, the noise attending pomp and distinction, have no charms for me; I wish to pass my life in rational tranquillity, with a friend whose virtues I can respect, whose talents I can admire; who will make my esteem the basis of my affection.

Lion. O charming creature! yes, let me indulge the flattering idea; formed with the same sentiments, the same feelings, the same tender passion for each other, nature designed us to compose that sacred union, which nothing but death can annul.

Clar. One only thing remember. Secure in each other's affections, here we must rest; I would not give my father a moment's pain, to purchase the empire of the world.

Lion. Command, dispose of me as you please; angels take cognizance of the vows of inno-

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cence and virtue; and I will believe that ours are already registered in Heaven.

Clar. I will believe so too.

Go, and, on my truth relying,
Comfort to your cares applying,
Bid each doubt and sorrow flying,
Leave to peace and love your breast.
Go, and may the powers that hear us,
Still, as kind protectors near us,
Through our troubles safely steer us
To a port of joy and rest. [*Exit.*

Enter SIR JOHN FLOWERDALE.

Sir J. Who's there? Lionel!

Lion. Heavens! 'tis Sir John Flowerdale.

Sir J. Who's there?

Lion. 'Tis I, Sir; I am here, Lionel.

Sir J. My dear lad, I have been searching for you this half hour, and was at last told you had come into the garden; I have a piece of news, which I dare swear will shock and surprise you; my daughter has refused Colonel Oldboy's son, who is this minute departed the house in violent resentment of her ill treatment.

Lion. Perhaps, Sir, the gentleman may have been too impetuous, and offended Miss Flowerdale's delicacy—certainly nothing else could occasion—

Sir J. Heaven only knows—I think, indeed, there can be no settled aversion, and surely her affections are not engaged elsewhere.

Lion. Engaged, Sir—No, Sir.

Sir J. I think not, Lionel.

Lion. You may be positive, Sir.—I'm sure—

Sir J. O worthy young man, whose integrity, openness, and every good quality have rendered thee dear to me as my own child; I see this affair troubles you as much as it does me.

Lion. It troubles me indeed, Sir.

Sir J. However, my particular disappointment ought not to be detrimental to you, nor shall it: I well know how irksome it is to a generous mind to live in a state of dependance, and have long had it in my thoughts to make you easy for life.

Lion. Sir John, the situation of my mind at present is a little disturbed—spare me—I beseech you, spare me; why will you persist in a goodness that makes me ashamed of myself?

Sir J. There is an estate in this county which I purchased some years ago; by me it will never be missed, and whoever marries my daughter will have little reason to complain of my disposing of such a trifle for my own gratification. On the present marriage, I intended to perfect a deed of gift in your favour, which has been for some time prepared; my lawyer has this day completed it, and it is yours, my dear Lionel, with every good wish that the warmest friend can bestow.

Lion. Sir, if you presented a pistol with design to shoot me, I would submit to it; but you must excuse me, I cannot lay myself under more obligations.

Sir J. Your delicacy carries you too far; in this I confer a favour on myself: however, we'll talk no more on this subject at present, let us walk towards the house, our friends will depart else without my bidding them adieu. [*Exeunt.*

Enter DIANA *and* CLARISSA.

Diana. So then, my dear Clarissa, you really give credit to the ravings of that French wretch, with regard to a plurality of worlds?

Clar. I don't make it an absolute article of belief, but I think it an ingenious conjecture, with great probability on its side.

Diana. And we are a moon to the moon! Nay, child, I know something of astronomy, but that—that little shining thing there, which seems not much larger than a silver plate, should perhaps contain great cities like London; and who can tell but they may have kings there and parliaments, and plays and operas, and people of fashion! Lord, the people of fashion in the moon must be strange creatures.

Clar. Methinks, Venus shines very bright in yonder corner.

Diana. Venus! O pray let me look at Venus; I suppose, if there are any inhabitants there, they must be all lovers.

Enter LIONEL.

Lion. Was ever such a wretch—I can't stay a moment in a place; where is my repose?—fled with my virtue. Was I then born for falsehood and dissimulation? I was, I was, and I live to be conscious of it; to impose upon my friend; to betray my benefactor, and lie to hide my ingratitude—a monster in a moment—No, I may be the most unfortunate of men, but I will not be the most odious; while my heart is yet capable of dictating what is honest, I will obey its voice.

Enter COLONEL OLDBOY *and* HARMAN.

Col. O. Dy, where are you? What the mischief, is this a time to be walking in the garden? The coach has been ready this half hour, and your mamma is waiting for you.

Diana. I am learning astronomy, Sir; do you know, papa, that the moon is inhabited?

Col. O. Hussy, you are half a lunatic yourself; come here; things have gone just as I imagined they would, the girl has refused your brother; I knew he must disgust her.

Diana. Women will want taste now and then, Sir.

Col. O. But I must talk to the young lady a little.

Har. Well, I have had a long conference with your father about the elopement, and he continues firm in his opinion that I ought to attempt it: in short, all the necessary operations are settled between us, and I am to leave his house to-morrow morning, if I can but persuade the young lady—

Diana. Ay, but I hope the young lady will have more sense—Lord, how can you teaze me with your nonsense. Come, Sir, isn't it time for us to go in? Her ladyship will be impatient.

Col. O. Friend Lionel, good night to you; Miss Clarissa, my dear, though I am father to the puppy who has displeased you, give me a kiss; you served him right, and I thank you for it.

FINALE.

Col. O. O what a night is here for love!
Cynthia brightly shining above;
Among the trees,
To the sighing breeze,
Fountains tinkling;
Stars a twinkling:

Diana. O what a night is here for love!
So may the morn propitious prove;

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Har. And so it will, if right I guess;
For sometimes light,
As well as night,
A lover's hopes may bless.

Diana. Farewell, my friend,
May gentle rest
Calm each tumult in your breast,
Every pain and fear remove.

Lion. What have I done?
Where shall I run,
With grief and shame at once oppress'd;
How my own upbraidings shun,
Or meet my friend distress'd?

Clar. Hark, to Philomel, how sweet,
From yonder elm.

Col. O. Tweet, tweet, tweet, tweet.

All. O what a night is here for love!
But vainly nature strives to move.
Nor nightingale among the trees,
Nor twinkling stars, nor sighing breeze,
Nor murmuring streams,
Nor Phœbus' beams,
Can charm unless the heart's at ease.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Room in COLONEL OLDBOY'S *House.*

Enter HARMAN, *booted, followed by* DIANA.

Diana. Pr'ythee, hear me.

Har. My dear, what would you say?

Diana. I am afraid of the step we are going to take; indeed I am: 'tis true, my father is the contriver of it; but really on consideration, I think I should appear less culpable if he was not so; I am at once criminal myself, and rendering him ridiculous.

Har. Do you love me?

Diana. Suppose I do, you give me a very ill proof of your love for me, when you would take advantage of my tenderness, to blind my reason: how can you have so little regard for my honour as to sacrifice it to a vain triumph? for it is in that light I see the rash action you are forcing me to commit; nay, methinks my consenting to it should injure me in your own esteem. When a woman forgets what she owes herself, a lover should set little value upon any thing she gives to him.

Har. Can you suppose then, can you imagine, that my passion will ever make me forget the veneration—And an elopement is nothing, when it is on the road to matrimony.

Diana. At best I shall incur the censure of disobedience and indiscretion; and is it nothing to a young woman what the world says of her? Ah! my good friend, be assured such a disregard of the world is the first step towards deserving its reproaches.

Har. But the necessity we are under—Mankind has too much good sense, too much good nature—

Diana. Every one has good sense enough to see other people's faults, and good nature enough to overlook their own. Besides, the most sacred things may be made an ill use of, and even marriage itself, if indecently and improperly—

Har. Come, get yourself ready: where is your band-box, hat and cloak? Slip into the garden; be there at the iron gate, which you showed me just now; and as the post-chaise comes round, I will step and take you in.

Diana. Dear Harman, let me beg of you to desist.

Har. Dear Diana, let me beg of you to go on.

Diana. I shall never have resolution to carry me through it.

Har. We shall have four horses my dear, and they will assist us.

Diana. In short—I—cannot go with you.

Har. But before me—Into the garden—Wont you? [*Exit* DIANA *on one side.*

Enter COLONEL OLDBOY, *on the other.*

Col. O. Hey-day! what's the meaning of this? Who is it went out of the room there? Have you and my daughter been in conference, Mr. Harman?

Har. Yes, faith, Sir, she has been taking me to task here very severely with regard to this affair; and she has said so much against it, and put it into such a strange light—

Col. O. A busy, impertinent baggage; 'egad, I wish I had catched her meddling, and after I ordered her not: but you have sent to the girl, and you say she is ready to go with you; you must not disappoint her now.

Har. No, no, colonel; I always have politeness enough to hear a lady's reasons, but constancy enough to keep a will of my own.

Col. O. Very well—now let me ask you—don't you think it would be proper, upon this occasion, to have a letter ready writ for the father, to let him know who has got his daughter, and so forth?

Har. Certainly, Sir; and I'll write it directly.

Col. O. You write it! you be damned! I wont trust you with it; I tell you, Harman, you'll commit some cursed blunder if you don't leave the management of this whole affair to me: I have writ the letter for you myself.

Har. Have you, Sir?

Col. O. Ay—here, read it; I think it's the thing; however you are welcome to make any alteration.

Har. [Reads.] *Sir, I have loved your daughter a great while secretly; she assures me there is no hopes of your consenting to our marriage; I therefore take her without it. I am a gentleman who will use her well: and when y u consider the matter, I dare swear you will be willing to give her a fortune. If not, you will find I dare behave myself like a man—A word to the wise—you may expect to hear from me in another style.*

Col. O. Now, Sir, I will tell you what you must do with this letter: as soon as you have got off with the girl, Sir, send your servant back to leave it at the house, with orders to have it delivered to the old gentleman.

Har. Upon my honour, I will, colonel.

Col. O. But, upon my honour, I don't believe you'll get the girl: come, Harman, I'll bet you a buck and six dozen of Burgundy, that you wont have spirit enough to bring this affair to a crisis.

Har. And I say done first, colonel.

Col. O. Then look into the court there, Sir; a chaise with four of the prettiest bay geldings in England, with two boys in scarlet and silver jackets, that will whisk you along.

Har. Boys! Colonel? Little Cupids, to transport me to the summit of my desires.

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Col. O. Ay, but for all that, it mayn't be amiss for me to talk to them a little out of the window for you. Dick, come hither; you are to go with this gentleman, and do whatever he bids you, and take into the chaise whoever he pleases, and drive like devils, do you hear; but be kind to the dumb beasts.

Har. Leave that to me, Sir—And so, my dear colonel, *bon voyage!* [*Exit.*

Enter LADY MARY OLDBOY, *and* JENNY.

Lady M. Mr. Oldboy, here is a note from Sir John Flowerdale; it is addressed to me, entreating my son to come over there again this morning. A maid brought it: she is in the anti-chamber—We had better speak to her—Child, child, why don't you come in?

Jenny. I choose to stay where I am, if your ladyship pleases.

Lady M. Stay where you are? why so?

Jenny. I am afraid of the old gentleman there.

Col. O. Afraid of me, hussy?

Lady M. Pray, colonel, have patience—Afraid—Here is something at the bottom of this—What did you mean by that expression, child?

Jenny. Why the Colonel knows very well, Madam; he wanted to be rude with me yesterday.

Lady M. Oh, Mr. Oldboy!

Col. O. Lady Mary don't provoke me, but let me talk to the girl about her business. How came you to bring this note here?

Jenny. Why, Sir John gave it to me, to deliver to my uncle Jenkins, and I took it down to his house; but while we were talking together, he remembered that he had some business with Sir John, so he desired me to bring it, because he said it was not proper to be sent by any of the common servants.

Lady M. Colonel, look in my face, and help blushing if you can.

Col. O. What the plague's the matter, my lady? I have not been wronging you now, as you call it.

Jenny. Indeed, Madam, he offered to make me his kept Madam; I am sure his usage of me put me into such a twitter, that I did not know what I was doing all the day after.

Lady M. I don't doubt it, though I so lately forgave him; but, as the poet says, his sex is all deceit. Read Pamela, child, and resist temptation.

Jenny. Yes, Madam, I will.

Col. O. Why I tell you, my lady, it was all a joke.

Jenny. No, Sir, it was no joke: you made me a proffer of money, so you did, whereby I told you, you had a lady of your own, and that though she was old you had no right to despise her.

Lady M. And how dare you, mistress, make use of my name? Is it for such trollops as you to talk of persons of distinction behind their backs?

Jenny. Why, Madam, I only said you was in years.

Lady M. Sir John Flowerdale shall be informed of your impertinence, and you shall be turned out of the family; I see you are a confident creature, and I believe you are no better than you should be.

Jenny. I scorn your words, Madam.

Lady M. Get out of the room; how dare you stay in this room to talk impudently to me?

Jenny. Very Well, Madam, I shall let my lady know how you have used me; but I sha'n't be turned out of my place, Madam, nor at a loss if I am; and if you are angry with every one that wont say you are young, I believe there is very few you will keep friends with.

I wonder, I'm sure, why this fuss should be made;
For my part I am neither asham'd nor afraid
Of what I have done, nor of what I have said.
A servant I hope is no slave;
And though, to their shames,
Some ladies call names
I know better how to behave.
Times are not so bad,
If occasion I had,
Nor my character such I need starve on't.
And for going away,
I don't want to stay;
And so I'm your ladyship's servant. [*Exit.*

Enter MR. JESSAMY.

Mr. J. What is the matter here?

Lady M. I will have a separate maintenance, I will indeed. Only a new instance of your father's infidelity, my dear. Then with such low wretches, farmers' daughters and servant wenches; but any thing with a cap on, 'tis all the same to him.

Mr. J. Upon my word, Sir, I am sorry to tell you, that those practices very ill suit the character which you ought to endeavour to support in the world.

Lady M. Is this a recompense for my love and regard? I, who have been tender and faithful as a turtle dove.

Mr. J. A man of your birth and distinction should, methinks, have views of a higher nature, than such low, such vulgar libertinism.

Lady M. Consider my birth and family too; Lady Mary Jessamy might have had the best matches in England.

Mr. J. Then, Sir, your gray hairs.

Lady M. I that have brought you so many lovely sweet babes.

Mr. J. Nay, Sir, it is a reflection on me.

Lady M. The heinous sin too—

Mr. J. Indeed, Sir, I blush for you.

Col. O. 'Sdeath and fire, you little effeminate puppy, do you know who you talk to?—And you, Madam, do you know who I am?—Get up to your chamber, or zounds! I'll make such a—

Lady M. Ah! my dear, come away from him. [*Exit.*

Col. O. Am I to be tutored and called to account?

Enter SERVANT.

How now, you scoundrel, what do you want?

Serv. A letter, Sir.

Col. O. A letter from whom, sirrah?

Serv. The gentleman's servant, an't please your honour, that left this just now in the post-chaise—the gentleman my young lady went away with.

Col. O. Your young lady, sirrah—Your young lady went away with no gentleman, you dog—What gentleman? What young lady, sirrah?

Mr. J. With your leave, Sir, I'll open the letter.

Col. O. What are you going to do, you jack-anapes? you sha'n't open a letter of mine—Dy—Diana—Somebody call my daughter to me there—[*Reads.*] *To John Oldboy, Esq.—Sir,—I have loved your daughter a great while secretly—Consenting to our marriage—*

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Mr. J. So, so.

Col. O. You villain—you dog, what is it you have brought me here?

Serv. Please your honour, if you'll have patience, I'll tell your honour—As I told your honour before, the gentleman's servant that went off just now in the post chaise, came to the gate, and left it after his master was gone. I saw my young lady go into the chaise with the gentleman.

Mr. J. Why, colonel this is your own hand.

Col. O. Call all the servants in the house, let horses be saddled directly—every one take a different road.

Serv. Why, your honour, Dick said it was by your own orders.

Col. O. My orders, rascal? I thought he was going to run away with another gentleman's daughter—Dy—Diana Oldboy.

[*Exit* SERVANT.

Mr. J. Don't waste your lungs to no purpose, Sir; your daughter is half a dozen miles off by this time.

Col. O. Sirrah, you have been bribed to further the scheme of a pickpocket here.

Mr. J. Besides, the matter is entirely of your own contriving, as well as the letter and spirit of this elegant epistle.

Col. O. You are a coxcomb, and I'll disinherit you; the letter is none of my writing; it was writ by the devil, and the devil contrived it. Diana, Margaret, my Lady Mary, William, John— [*Exit.*

Mr. J. I am very glad of this, prodigiously glad of it, upon my honour—he, he, he!—it will be a jest this hundred years. [*Bells ring violently on both sides.*] What's the matter now? O! her ladyship has heard of it, and is at her bell; and the colonel answers her. A pretty duet, but a little too much upon the *forte*, methinks: it would be a diverting thing now, to stand unseen at the old gentleman's elbow.

[*Exit.*

Re-enter COLONEL OLDBOY, *with one boot, a great coat on his arm, &c. followed by several* SERVANTS.

Col. O. She's gone, by the Lord; fairly stolen away, with that poaching, coney-catching rascal! However I wont follow her; no, damme; take my whip, and my cap, and my coat, and order the groom to unsaddle the horses; I wont follow her the length of a spur-leather. Come here, you Sir, and pull off my boot. [*Whistles.*] She has made a fool of me once, she sha'n't do it a second time; not but I'll be revenged too, for I'll never give her sixpence; the disappointment will put the scoundrel out of temper, and he'll thrash her a dozen times a day; the thought pleases me; I hope he'll do it:—what do you stand gaping and staring at, you impudent dogs? are you laughing at me? I'll teach you to be merry at my expense. [*Beats the* SERVANTS *off.*

A rascal, a hussy; zounds! she that I counted
In temper so mild, so unpractis'd in evil:
I set her on horse-back, and no sooner mounted,
Than, crack, whip, and spur, she rides post to [the devil.
But there let her run,
Be ruin'd, undone;
If I go to catch her,
Or back again fetch her,
I'm worse than the son of a gun.
A mischief possess'd me to marry;
And farther my folly to carry,
Sons and daughters I got,
And pretty ones by the Lord Harry.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II. CLARISSA'S *Dressing-room.*

Enter CLARISSA, *a Book in her hand, meeting* JENNY.

Clar. Where have you been, Jenny? I was inquiring for you—why will you go out without letting me know?

Jenny. Dear Ma'am, never any thing happened so unlucky; I am sorry you wanted me—But I was sent to Colonel Oldboy's with a letter; where I have been so used—Lord have mercy upon me—quality indeed—I say quality—pray, Madam, do you think that I looks any ways like an immodest person—to be sure I have a gay air, and I can't help it, and I loves to appear a little genteelish, that's what I do.

Clar. Jenny, take away this book.

Jenny. Heaven preserve me, Madam, you are crying.

Clar. O my dear Jenny!

Jenny. My dear mistress, what's the matter?

Clar. I am undone.

Jenny. No, Madam; no, Lord forbid!

Clar. I am indeed—I have been rash enough to discover my weakness for a man who treats me with contempt.

Jenny. Is Mr. Lionel ungrateful then?

Clar. I have lost his esteem for ever, Jenny. Since last night, that I fatally confessed what I should have kept a secret from all the world, he has scarce condescended to cast a look at me, nor given me an answer when I spoke to him, but with coldness and reserve.

Jenny. Then he is a nasty, barbarous, inhuman brute.

Clar. Hold, Jenny, hold; it is all my fault.

Jenny. Your fault, Madam! I wish I was to hear such a word come out of his mouth: if he was a minister to-morrow, and to say such a thing from his pulpit, and I by, I'd tell him it was false upon the spot. [*Knocks.*

Clar. Somebody's at the door; see who it is.

Jenny. You in fault indeed—that I know to be the most virtuousest, nicest, most delicatest—

Clar. How now?

Jenny. Madam, it's a message from Mr. Lionel. If you are alone and at leisure, he would be glad to wait upon you: I'll tell him, Madam, that you are busy.

Clar. Where is he, Jenny?

Jenny. In the study, the man says.

Clar. Then go to him, and tell him I should be glad to see him; but do not bring him up immediately, because I will stand in the balcony a few minutes for a little air.

Jenny. Do so, dear Madam, for your eyes are as red as ferrets'; you are ready to faint too; mercy on us, for what do you grieve and vex yourself?—if I was as you—mercy on me, it's very well I wasn't born a lady.

[*Exit.*

Clar. Oh!

Why with sighs my heart is swelling,
Why with tears my eyes o'erflow,
Ask me not, 'tis past the telling,
Mute, involuntary wo.

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Who, to winds and waves a stranger,
Vent'rous tempts th' inconstant seas,
In each billow fancies danger,
Shrinks at every rising breeze. [*Exit.*

Enter SIR JOHN FLOWERDALE *and* JENKINS.

Sir J. So then the mystery is discovered: but is it possible that my daughter's refusal of Colonel Oldboy's son should proceed from a clandestine engagement, and that engagement with Lionel?

Jenk. Yes, Sir, and it is my duty to tell you; else I would rather die than be the means of wounding the heart of my dear young lady; for if there is one upon earth of truly noble and delicate sentiments—

Sir J. I thought so once, Jenkins.

Jenk. And think so still: O, good Sir John, now is the time for you to exert that character of worth and gentleness which the world so deservedly has given you. You have indeed cause to be offended; but consider, Sir, your daughter is young, beautiful, and amiable; the poor youth unexperienced, sensible, and, at a time of life when such temptations are hard to be resisted: their opportunities were many, their cast of thinking the same.—

Sir J. Jenkins, I can allow for all these things; but the young hypocrites, there's the thing, Jenkins; their hypocrisy, their hypocrisy, wounds me.

Jenk. Call it by a gentler name, Sir; modesty on her part, apprehension on his.

Sir J. Then what opportunity have they had? They never were together but when my sister or myself made one of the company; besides, I had so firm a reliance on Lionel's honour and gratitude.—

Jenk. Sir, I can never think that nature stamped that gracious countenance of his, to mask a corrupt heart.

Sir J. How! at the very time that he was conscious of being himself the cause of it, did he not show more concern at this affair than I did? Nay, don't I tell you that last night, of his own accord, he offered to be a mediator in this affair, and desired my leave to speak to my daughter? I thought myself obliged to him, consented; and, in consequence of his assurance of success, wrote that letter to Colonel Oldboy, to desire the family would come here again to-day.

Jenk. Sir, as we were standing in the next room, I heard a message delivered from Mr. Lionel, desiring leave to wait upon your daughter; I dare swear they will be here presently; suppose we were to step into that closet, and overhear their conversation?

Sir J. What, Jenkins, after having lived so many years in confidence with my child, shall I become an eaves-dropper to detect her?

Jenk. It is necessary at present.—Come in, my dear master, let us only consider that we were once young like them; subject to the same passions, the same indiscretions; and it is the duty of every man to pardon errors incident to his kind. [*They go into the closet.*

Enter CLARISSA *and* LIONEL.

Clar. Sir, you desired to speak to me; I need not tell you the present situation of my heart; it is full. Whatever you have to say, I beg you will explain yourself; and if possible, rid me of the anxiety under which I have laboured for some hours.

Lion. Madam, your anxiety cannot be greater than mine: I come, indeed, to speak to you; and yet, I know not how; I come to advise you, shall I say as a friend? yes, as a friend to your glory, your felicity; dearer to me than my life.

Clar. Go on, Sir

Lion. Sir John Flowerdale, Madam, is such a father as few are blessed with; his care, his prudence, has provided for you a match—Your refusal renders him inconsolable. Listen to no suggestions that would pervert you from your duty, but make the worthiest of men happy by submitting to his will.

Clar. How, Sir, after what passed between us yesterday evening, can you advise me to marry Mr. Jessamy?

Lion. I would advise you to marry any one, Madam, rather than a villain.

Clar. A villain, Sir?

Lion. I should be the worst of villains, Madam, was I to talk to you in any other strain: nay, am I not a villain, at once treacherous and ungrateful? Received into his house as an asylum: what have I done! Betrayed the confidence of the friend that trusted me; endeavoured to sacrifice his peace, and the honour of his family, to my own unwarrantable desires.

Clar. Say no more, Sir; say no more; I see my error too late; I have parted from the rules prescribed to my sex; I have mistaken indecorum for a laudable sincerity; and it is just I should meet with the treatment my imprudence deserves.

Lion. 'Tis I, and only I, am to blame; while I took advantage of the father's security, I practised upon the tenderness and ingenuity of the daughter; my own imagination gone astray, I artfully laboured to lead yours after it: but here, Madam, I give you back those vows which I insidiously extorted from you; keep them for some happier man, who may receive them without wounding his honour or his peace.

Clar. For Heaven's sake!

Lion. Oh! my Clarissa, my heart is broke; I am hateful to myself for loving you;—yet, before I leave you for ever, I will once more touch that lovely hand—indulge my fondness with a last look—pray for your health and prosperity.

Clar. Can you forsake me?—Have I then given my affections to a man who rejects and disregards them?—Let me throw myself at my father's feet; he is generous and compassionate:—he knows your worth—

Lion. Mention it not; were you stripped of fortune, reduced to the meanest station, and I the monarch of the globe, I should glory in raising you to universal empire; but as it is—Farewel, farewel!

O dry those tears! like melted ore,
Fast dropping on my heart they fall:
Think, think no more of me; no more
The memory of past scenes recall.

On a wild sea of passion toss'd,
I split upon the fatal shelf;
Friendship and love at once are lost,
And now I wish to lose myself. [*Exit.*

Enter JENNY.

Jenny. Oh, Madam! I have betrayed you. I have gone and said something I should not have said to my uncle Jenkins; and as sure as day, he has gone and told it all to Sir John.

Clar. My father!

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Enter SIR JOHN FLOWERDALE *and* JENKINS.

Sir J. Go, Jenkins, and desire that young gentleman to come back—[*Exit* JENKINS.]—Stay where you are—[*To* CLARISSA.] But what have I done to you, my child? How have I deserved that you should treat me like an enemy! Has there been any undesigned rigour in my conduct, or terror in my looks?

Clar. Oh, Sir!

Re-enter JENKINS, *with* LIONEL.

Jenk. Here is Mr. Lionel.

Sir J. Come in—When I tell you that I am instructed in all your proceedings, and that I have been ear-witness to your conversation in this place, you will perhaps imagine what my thoughts are of you, and the measures which justice prescribes me to follow.

Lion. Sir, I have nothing to say in my own defence; I stand before you self-convicted, self-condemned, and shall submit without murmuring to the sentence of my judge.

Sir J. As for you, Clarissa, since your earliest infancy, you have known no parent but me; I have been to you at once both father and mother; and, that I might the better fulfil those united duties, though left a widower in the prime of my days, I would never enter into a second marriage—I loved you for your likeness to your dear mother, but that mother never deceived me—and there the likeness fails—you have repaid my affection with dissimulation—Clarissa, you should have trusted me. As for you, Mr. Lionel, what terms can I find strong enough to paint the excess of my friendship!—I loved, I esteemed, I honoured your father: he was a brave, a generous, and a sincere man: I thought you inherited his good qualities—you were left an orphan, I adopted you, put you upon the footing of my own son; educated you like a gentleman; and designed you for a profession, to which I thought your virtues would have been an ornament. What return you have made me, you seem to be acquainted with yourself; and therefore I shall not repeat it.—Yet, remember, as an aggravation of your guilt, that the last mark of my bounty was conferred upon you in the very instant when you were undermining my designs. Now, Sir, I have but one thing more to say to you—Take my daughter: was she worth a million, she is at your service.

Lion. To me, Sir!—your daughter—do you give her to me?—Without fortune, without friends!—without—

Sir J. You have them all in your heart; *him* whom virtue raises, fortune cannot abase.

Clar. O Sir, let me on my knees kiss that dear hand—acknowledge my error, and entreat forgiveness and blessing.

Sir J. You have not erred, my dear daughter; you have distinguished. It is I should ask pardon for this little trial of you; for I am happier in the son-in-law you have given me, than if you had married a prince—

Lion. My patron—my friend—my father—I would fain say something; but, as your goodness exceeds all bounds—

Sir J. I think I hear a coach drive into the court; it is Colonel Oldboy's family; I will go and receive them. Don't make yourself uneasy at this; we must endeavour to pacify them as well as we can. My dear Lionel, if I have made you happy, you have made me so; Heaven bless you, my children, and make you deserving of one another.

[*Exeunt* SIR JOHN FLOWERDALE *and* JENKINS.

Jenny. O dear, Madam, upon my knees, I humbly beg your forgiveness—Dear Mr. Lionel, forgive me—I did not design to discover it, indeed—and you wont turn me off, Madam, will you? I'll serve you for nothing.

Clar. Get up, my good Jenny; I freely forgive you if there is any thing to be forgiven. I know you love me; and, I am sure here is one who will join with me in rewarding your services.

Jenny. Well, if I did not know, as sure as could be, that some good would happen, by my left eye itching this morning. [*Exit.*

Lion. O bliss unexpected; my joys overpower me!
My love, my Clarissa, what words shall I find!
Remorse, desperation, no longer devour me—
He bless'd us, and peace is restor'd to my mind.

Clar. He bless'd us! O rapture! Like one I recover
Whom death had appall'd, without hope, without aid;
A moment depriv'd me of father and lover;
A moment restores, and my pangs are repaid.

Lion. Forsaken, abandon'd,
Clar. What folly! what blindness!
Lion. We fortune accus'd;
Clar. And the fates that decreed:
Both. But pain was inflicted by Heaven out of kindness,
To heighten the joys that were doom'd to succeed.
Our day was o'ercast:
But brighter the scene is,
The sky more serene is,
And softer the calm for the hurricane past. [*Exeunt.*

Enter LADY OLDBOY, MR. JESSAMY *leading her;* SIR J. FLOWERDALE, *and* COL. OLDBOY.

Lady M. 'Tis all in vain, my dear; set me down any where; I can't go a step further—I knew, when Mr. Oldboy insisted upon my coming, that I should be seized with a megrim by the way; and it's well I did not die in the coach.

Mr. J. But, pr'ythee, why will you let yourself be affected with such trifles—Nothing more common than for young women of fashion to go off with low fellows.

Lady M. Only feel, my dear, how I tremble! Not a nerve but what is in agitation; and my blood runs cold, cold!

Mr. J. Well but, Lady Mary, don't let us expose ourselves to those people; I see there is not one of the rascals about us, that has not a grin upon his countenance.

Lady M. Expose ourselves, my dear? Your father will be as ridiculous as Hudibras, or Don Quixote.

Mr. J. Yes, he will be very ridiculous indeed.

Sir J. I give you my word, my good friend and neighbour, the joy I feel upon this occasion is greatly allayed by the disappointment of an alliance with your family; but I have explained to you how things have happened—

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You see my situation; and, as you are kind enough to consider it yourself, I hope you will excuse it to your son.

Lady M. Sir John Flowerdale, how do you do? You see we have obeyed your summons; and I have the pleasure to assure you, that my son yielded to my entreaties with very little disagreement: in short, if I may speak metaphorically, he is content to stand candidate again, notwithstanding his late repulse, when he hopes for a unanimous election.

Col. O. Well but, my lady, you may save your rhetoric; for the borough is disposed of to a worthier member.

Mr. J. What do you say, Sir?

Enter LIONEL, CLARISSA, *and* JENNY.

Sir J. Here are my son and daughter.

Lady M. Is this pretty, Sir John?

Sir J. Believe me, Madam, it is not for want of a just sense of Mr. Jessamy's merit that this affair has gone off on my side: but the heart is a delicate thing; and after it has once felt, if the object is meritorious, the impression is not easily effaced; it would therefore have been an injury to him, to have given him in appearance what another in reality possessed.

Mr. J. Upon my honour, upon my soul, Sir John, I am not in the least offended at this *contre tems*—Pray, Lady Mary say no more about it.

Col. O. Tol, lol, lol, lol.

Sir J. But, my dear colonel, I am afraid, after all, this affair is taken amiss by you; yes I see you are angry on your son's account; but let me repeat it, I have a very high opinion of his merit.

Col. O. Ay! that's more than I have. Taken amiss! I don't take any thing amiss; I never was in better spirits, or more pleased in my life.

Sir J. Come, you are uneasy at something, colonel.

Col. O. Me! 'gad I am not uneasy—Are you a justice of peace? Then you could give me a warrant couldn't you? You must know, Sir John, a little accident has happened in my family since I saw you last, you and I may shake hands—Daughters, Sir, daughters! Yours has snapped at a young fellow without your approbation; and how do you think mine has served me this morning?—only run away with the scoundrel I brought to dinner here yesterday.

Sir J. I am excessively concerned.

Col. O. Now I'm not a bit concerned—No, damn me, I am glad it has happened; yet thus far, I'll confess, I should be sorry that either of them would come in my way, because a man's temper may sometimes get the better of him, and I believe I should be tempted to break her neck, and blow his brains out.

Clar. But pray, Sir, explain this affair.

Col. O. I can explain it no further—Dy, my daughter Dy, has run away from us.

Enter DIANA *and* HARMAN.

Diana. No, my dear papa, I have not run away; and, upon my knees, I entreat your pardon for the folly I have committed; but let it be some alleviation, that duty and affection were too strong to suffer me to carry it to extremity; and if you knew the agony I have been in since I saw you last—

Lady M. How's this?

Har. Sir, I restore your daughter to you; whose fault, as far as it goes, I must also take upon myself; we have been known to each other for some time; as Lady Richly, your sister, in London, can acquaint you—

Col. O. Dy, come here—Now, you rascal where's your sword; if you are a gentleman you shall fight me; if you are a scrub, I'll horsewhip you—Shut the door there, don't let him escape.

Har. Sir, don't imagine I want to escape; I am extremely sorry for what has happened, but am ready to give you any satisfaction you may think proper.

Col. O. Follow me into the garden then—Zounds! I have no sword about me—Sir John Flowerdale—lend us a case of pistols, or a couple of guns; and come and see fair play.

Clar. My dear papa!

Diana. Sir John Flowerdale—O my indiscretion—we came here, Sir, to beg your mediation in our favour.

Lady M. Mr. Oldboy, if you attempt to fight I shall expire.

Sir J. Pray, colonel, let me speak a word to you in private.

Col. O. Slugs and a saw-pit—

Mr. J. Why, Miss Dy, you are a perfect heroine for a romance—And pray who is this courteous knight?

Lady M. O Sir, you that I thought such a pretty behaved gentleman!

Mr. J. What business are you of, friend?

Har. My chief trade, Sir, is plain dealing; and, as that is a commodity you have no reason to be very fond of, I would not advise you to purchase any of it by impertinence.

Col. O. And is this what you would advise me to?

Sir J. It is, indeed, my dear old friend; as things are situated, there is in my opinion no other prudent method of proceeding; and it is the method I would adopt myself, were I in your case.

Col. O. Why, I believe you are in the right of it—say what you will for me then.

Sir J. Well! young people, I have been able to use a few arguments, which have softened my neighbour here; and in some measure pacified his resentment. I find, Sir, you are a gentleman by your connections.

Har. Sir, till it is found that my character and family will bear the strictest scrutiny, I desire no favour—And as for fortune—

Col. O. Oh! rot your fortune, I don't mind that—I know you are a gentleman, or Dick Rantum would not have recommended you. And so, Dy, kiss and be friends.

Mr. J. What, Sir, have you no more to say to the man who has used you so ill?

Col. O. Used me ill!—That's as I take it—he has done a mettled thing; and perhaps I like him the better for it; it's long before you would have spirit enough to run away with a wench—Harman, give me your hand; let's hear no more of this now—Sir John Flowerdale, what say you? shall we spend the day together, and dedicate it to love and harmony?

Sir J. With all my heart.

Col. O. Then take off my great coat.

FINALE.

Lion. Come then, all ye social powers,
Shed your influence o'er us,
Crown with bliss the present hours,
And lighten those before us.

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May the just and gen'rous kind,
Still see that you regard 'em;
And Lionels for ever find
Clarissas to reward 'em.

Clar. Love, thy godhead I adore,
Source of sacred passion;
But will never bow before
Those idols, wealth or fashion.
May, like me, each maiden wise,
From the fop defend her;
Learning, sense, and virtue prize,
And scorn the vain pretender.

Har. Why the plague should man be sad,
While in time we moulder?
Grave or gay, or vex'd or glad,
We every day grow older.
Bring the flask, the music bring,
Joy will quickly find us; [sing,
Drink and laugh, and dance and
And cast our cares behind us.

Diana. How shall I escape—so naught,
On filial laws to trample.
I'll even courtesy, own my fault,
And plead papa's example.
Parents, 'tis a hint to you,
Children oft are shameless;
Oft transgress—the thing's too true—
But are you always blameless?

Col. O. One word more before we go;
Girls and boys have patience;
You to friends must something owe,
As well as to relations.
These kind gentlemen address—
What though we forgave 'em,
Still they must be lost, unless
You lend a hand to save 'em.

Chorus. Come then, all ye social powers, &c.

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ZARA:

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY AARON HILL, Esq.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Osman, Sultan of Jerusalem.
Lusignan, last of the blood of the Christian Kings of Jerusalem.
Nerestan, Chatillon, } French Officers.
Orasmin, Minister to the Sultan.
Melidor, an Officer of the Seraglio.

Zara, Selima, } Slaves to the Sultan.

PROLOGUE.

The French, howe'er mercurial they may seem,
Extinguish half their fire, by critic phlegm:
While English writers Nature's freedom claim,
And warm their scenes with an ungovern'd flame:
'Tis strange that Nature never should inspire
A Racine's judgment with a Shakspeare's fire!
Howe'er to-night—(to promise much we're loath)
But—you've a chance, to have a taste of both.
From English plays, Zara's French author fir'd,
Confess'd his Muse beyond herself inspir'd;
From rack'd Othello's rage he rais'd his style,
And snatch'd the brand that lights this tragic pile;
Zara's success his utmost hopes outflew,
And a twice twentieth weeping audience drew.
As for our English friend, he leaves to you,
Whate'er may seem to his performance due;
No views of gain his hopes or fears engage,
He gives a child of leisure to the stage;
Willing to try, if yet, forsaken Nature,
Can charm, with any one remember'd feature.
Thus far, the author speaks—but now the player,
With trembling heart, prefers his humble prayer.
To-night, the greatest venture of my life,
Is lost or sav'd, as you receive—a wife:
If time, you think, may ripen her to merit,
With gentle smiles, support her wav'ring spirit.
Zara, in France, at once an actress rais'd,
Warm'd into skill, by being kindly prais'd:
O! could such wonders here from favour flow,
How would our Zara's heart with transport glow!
But she, alas! by juster fears oppress'd,
Begs but your bare endurance, at the best,
Her unskill'd tongue would simple Nature speak,
Nor dares her bounds, for false applauses, break,
Amidst a thousand faults, her best pretence
To please—is unpresuming innocence.
When a chaste heart's distress your grief demands,
One silent tear outweighs a thousand hands.
If she conveys the pleasing passions right,
Guard and support her, this decisive night;
If she mistakes—or, finds her strength too small,
Let interposing pity—break her fall.
In you it rests, to save her, or destroy,
If she draws tears from you, I weep—for joy.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—Zara *and* Selima.

Sel. It moves my wonder, young and beauteous Zara,
Whence these new sentiments inspire your heart!
Your peace of mind increases with your charms;
Tears now no longer shade your eyes' soft lustre:
You meditate no more those happy climes
To which Nerestan will return to guide you.
You talk no more of that gay nation now,
Where men adore their wives, and woman's power

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Draws reverence from a polish'd people's softness: [queens!
Their husbands' equals, and their lovers'
Free without scandal; wise without restraint;
Their virtue due to nature, not to fear.
Why have you ceas'd to wish this happy change?
A barr'd seraglio!—sad, unsocial life! [ror;
Scorn'd, and a slave! All this has lost its ter-
And Syria rivals, now, the banks of Seine!
Zar. Joys which we do not know, we do not wish.
My fate's bound in by Sion's sacred wall:
Clos'd from my infancy within this palace,
Custom has learn'd, from time, the power to please.
I claim no share in the remoter world,
The sultan's property, his will my law;
Unknowing all but him, his power, his fame;
To live his subject is my only hope:
All else an empty dream.——
Sel. Have you forgot [ship
Absent Nerestan, then? whose generous friend-
So nobly vow'd redemption from your chains!
How oft have you admir'd his dauntless soul!
Osman, his conqueror, by his courage charm'd,
Trusted his faith, and on his word releas'd him:
Though not return'd in time—we yet expect him.
Nor had his noble journey other motive,
Than to procure our ransom.—And is this,
This dear, warm hope, become an idle dream?
Zar. Since after two long years he not returns, [power.
'Tis plain his promise stretch'd beyond his
A stranger and a slave, unknown, like him,
Proposing much, means little;—talks and vows,
Delighted with a prospect of escape:
He promis'd to redeem ten Christians more,
And free us all from slavery!—I own
I once admir'd th' unprofitable zeal,
But now it charms no longer.—
Sel. What, if yet,
He, faithful, should return, and hold his vow;
Would you not then——
Zar. No matter—Time is past,
And every thing is chang'd——
Sel. But whence comes this?
Zar. Go—'twere too much to tell thee Zara's fate:
The sultan's secrets, all, are sacred here:
But my fond heart delights to mix with thine.
Some three months past, when thou, and other slaves,
Were forc'd to quit fair Jordan's flowery bank;
Heaven, to cut short the anguish of my days,
Rais'd me to comfort by a powerful hand:
This mighty Osman!——
Sel. What of him?
Zar. This sultan,
This conqueror of the Christians, loves—
Sel. Whom?
Zar. Zara!—— [me;
Thou blushest, and I guess thy thoughts accuse
But, know me better——'twas unjust suspicion.
All emperor as he is, I cannot stoop
To honours that bring shame and baseness with 'em:
Reason and pride, those props of modesty,
Sustain my guarded heart, and strengthen virtue;
Rather than sink to infamy, let chains
Embrace me with a joy, such love denies:
No—I shall now astonish thee;—his greatness
Submits to own a pure and honest flame.
Among the shining crowds, which live to please
His whole regard is fix'd on me alone: [him,
He offers marriage; and its rites now wait
To crown me empress of this eastern world.
Sel. Your virtue and your charms deserve it all:
My heart is not surpris'd, but struck to hear it.
If to be empress can complete your happiness,
I rank myself, with joy, among your slaves.
Zar. Be still my equal——and enjoy my blessings;
For, thou partaking, they will bless me more.
Sel. Alas! but Heaven! will it permit this marriage?
Will not this grandeur, falsely call'd a bliss,
Plant bitterness, and root it in your heart?
Have you forgot you are of Christian blood?
Zar. Ah me! What hast thou said, why wouldst thou thus
Recall my wavering thought? Howk now I what, [ness,
Or whence I am? Heaven kept it hid in dark-
Conceal'd me from myself, and from my blood.
Sel. Nerestan, who was born a Christian here, [rents;
Asserts, that you, like him, had Christian pa-
Besides——that cross, which from your infant years [som,
Has been preserv'd, was found upon your bo-
As if design'd by Heaven, a pledge of faith
Due to the God you purpose to forsake!
Zar. Can my fond heart, on such a feeble proof,
Embrace a faith, abhorr'd by him I love?
I see too plainly custom forms us all;
Our thoughts, our morals, our most fix'd belief,
Are consequences of our place of birth:
Born beyond Ganges I had been a pagan,
In France a Christian, I am here a Saracen:
'Tis but instruction, all! Our parents' hand
Writes on our heart the first faint characters,
Which time, re-tracing, deepens into strength,
That nothing can efface, but death or Heaven!—
Thou wert not made a prisoner in this place,
'Till after reason, borrowing force from years,
Had lent its lustre to enlighten faith:—
For me, who in my cradle was their slave,
Thy Christian doctrines were too lately taught me:
Yet, far from having lost the reverence due,
This cross, as often as it meets my eye,
Strikes through my heart a kind of awful fear!
I honour, from my soul, the Christian laws,
Those laws, which, softening nature by humanity,
Melt nations into brotherhood;—no doubt,
Christians are happy; and 'tis just to love them.
Sel. Why have you, then, declar'd yourself their foe?
Why will you join your hand with this proud Osman's,
Who owes his triumph to the Christians' ruin?
Zar. Ah!—who could slight the offer of his heart?
Nay;—for I mean to tell thee all my weakness;
Perhaps I had, ere now, profess'd thy faith,
But Osman lov'd me—and I've lost it all:—
I think on none but Osman—my pleas'd heart,
Fill'd with the blessing, to be lov'd by him,
Wants room for other happiness. Place thou
Before thy eyes, his merit and his fame,
His youth, yet blooming but in manhood's dawn; [power!
How many conquer'd kings have swell'd his
Think too, how lovely! how his brow becomes

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This wreath of early glories!—Oh, my friend!
I talk not of a sceptre, which he gives me:
No—to be charm'd with that were thanks too humble!
Offensive tribute, and too poor for love!
'Twas Osman won my heart, not Osman's crown:
I love not in him aught besides himself.
Thou think'st perhaps, that these are starts of passion; [him,
But had the will of Heaven less bent to bless
Doom'd Osman to my chains, and me to fill
The throne that Osman sits on—ruin and wretchedness
Catch and consume my wishes, but I would—
To raise me to myself, descend to him.

Sel. Hark! the wish'd music sounds—'Tis he—he comes— [*Exit* SELIMA.

Zar. My heart prevented him, and found him near: [hour
Absent two whole long days, the slow-pac'd
At last is come, and gives him to my wishes.
[*A grand march.*

Enter OSMAN, *reading a paper, which he re-delivers to* ORASMIN; *with Attendants.*

Osm. Wait my return—or, should there be a cause
That may require my presence, do not fear
To enter; ever mindful, that my own
[*Exit* ORAS. *&c.*
Follows my people's happiness.—At length,
Cares have releas'd my heart—to love and Zara.

Zar. 'Twas not in cruel absence, to deprive
Of your imperial image—every where [me
You reign triumphant: memory supplies
Reflection with your power; and you, like Heaven,
Are always present—and are always gracious.

Osm. The sultans, my great ancestors, bequeath'd [not;
Their empire to me, but their taste they gave
Their laws, their lives, their loves, delight not me:
I know, our prophet smiles on am'rous wishes,
And opens a wide field to vast desire;
I know, that at my will I might possess;
That, wasting tenderness in wild profusion,
I might look down to my surrounded feet,
And bless contending beauties. I might speak,
Serenely slothful, from within my palace,
And bid my pleasure be my people's law.
But sweet as softness is, its end is cruel;
I can look round, and count a hundred kings,
Unconquer'd by themselves, and slaves to others:
Hence was Jerusalem to Christians lost;
But Heaven, to blast that unbelieving race,
Taught me to be a king, by thinking like one.
Hence from the distant Euxine to the Nile,
The trumpet's voice has wak'd the world to war;
Yet, amidst arms and death, thy power has reach'd me;
For thou disdain'st, like me, a languid love;
Glory and Zara join—and charm together.

Zar. I hear at once, with blushes and with joy,
This passion, so unlike your country's customs.

Osm. Passion, like mine, disdains my country's customs;
The jealousy, the faintness, the distrust,
The proud superior coldness of the east.
I know to love you, Zara, with esteem;
To trust your virtue, and to court your soul.
Nobly confiding, I unveil my heart,
And dare inform you, that 'tis all your own:
My joys must all be yours; only my cares
Shall lie conceal'd within, and reach not Zara.

Zar. Oblig'd by this excess of tenderness,
How low, how wretched was the lot of Zara!
Too poor with aught, but thanks, to pay such blessings!

Osm. Not so—I love—and would be lov'd [again!
Let me confess it, I possess a soul,
That what it wishes, wishes ardently.
I should believe you hated, had you power
To love with moderation: 'tis my aim,
In every thing, to reach supreme perfection.
If, with an equal flame, I touch your heart,
Marriage attends your smile—But know, 'twill make
Me wretched, if it makes not Zara happy.

Zar. Ah, Sir! if such a heart as gen'rous Osman's
Can, from my will, submit to take its bliss,
What mortal ever was decreed so happy!
Pardon the pride, with which I own my joy;
Thus wholly to possess the man I love!
To know, and to confess his will my fate!
To be the happy work of his dear hands!
To be—

Enter ORASMIN.

Osm. Already interrupted! What?
Who?—Whence?

Oras. This moment, Sir, there is arriv'd
That Christian slave, who, licens'd on his faith,
Went hence to France—and, now return'd, prays audience.

Zar. [*Aside.*] Oh, Heaven!

Osm. Admit him—What?—Why comes he not?

Oras. He waits without. No Christian dares approach [vacies.
This place, long sacred to the Sultan's pri-

Osm. Go—bring him with thee—monarchs, like the sun,
Shine but in vain, unwarming, if unseen;
With forms and rev'rence, let the great approach us;
Not the unhappy;—every place alike,
Gives the distress'd a privilege to enter.—
[*Exit* ORAS.
I think with horror on these dreadful maxims,
Which harden kings insensibly to tyrants.

Re-enter ORASMIN *with* NERESTAN.

Ner. Imperial Sultan! honour'd, even by
See me return'd, regardful of my vow, [foes!
And punctual to discharge a Christian's duty.
I bring the ransom of the captive Zara,
Fair Selima, the partner of her fortune,
And of ten Christian captives, pris'ners here.
You promis'd, Sultan, if I should return,
To grant their rated liberty:—Behold,
I am return'd, and they are yours no more.
I would have stretch'd my purpose to myself,
But fortune has deny'd it;—my poor all
Sufficed no further, and a noble poverty
Is now my whole possession.—I redeem
The promis'd Christians; for I taught 'em hope;
But, for myself, I come again your slave,
To wait the fuller hand of future charity.

Osm. Christian! I must confess thy courage charms me:
But let thy pride be taught, it treads too high,
When it presumes to climb above my mercy.
Go ransomless thyself, and carry back
Their unaccepted ransoms, join'd with gifts,
Fit to reward thy purpose; instead of ten,
Demand a hundred Christians; they are thine:
Take 'em, and bid 'em teach their haughty country,

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They left some virtue among Saracens.—
Be Lusignan alone excepted—He,
Who boasts the blood of kings, and dares lay claim
To my Jerusalem—that claim his guilt!
Such is the law of states; had I been vanquish'd,
Thus had he said of me. I mourn his lot,
Who must in fetters, lost to day-light, pine,
And sigh away old age in grief and pain.
For Zara—but to name her as a captive,
Were to dishonour language;—she's a prize
Above thy purchase;—all the Christian realms,
With all their kings to guide 'em, would unite
In vain, to force her from me—Go, retire—

Ner. For Zara's ransom, with her own consent,
I had your royal word. For Lusignan—
Unhappy, poor, old man—

Osm. Was I not heard?
Have I not told thee, Christian, all my will?
What if I prais'd thee!—This presumptuous virtue,
Compelling my esteem, provokes my pride;
Be gone—and when to-morrow's sun shall rise
On my dominions, be not found too near me.
[*Exit* NERESTAN.

Zar. [*Aside.*] Assist him, Heaven!

Osm. Zara, retire a moment—
Assume, throughout my palace sovereign empire,
While I give orders to prepare the pomp
That waits to crown the mistress of my throne.
[*Leads her out, and returns.*
Orasmin! didst thou mark th' imperious slave?
What could he mean?—he sigh'd—and, as he went,
Turn'd and look'd back at Zara!—didst thou mark it?

Oras. Alas! my sovereign master! let not jealousy
Strike high enough to reach your noble heart.

Osm. Jealousy, saidst thou? I disdain it:—No!
Distrust is poor; and a misplac'd suspicion
Invites and justifies the falsehood fear'd.—
Yet, as I love with warmth—so, I could hate!
But Zara is above disguise and art—
My love is stronger, nobler than my power.
Jealous!—I was not jealous!—If I was,
I am not—no—my heart—but, let us drown
Remembrance of the word, and of the image;
My heart is fill'd with a diviner flame.—
Go, and prepare for the approaching nuptials.
Zara to a careful empire joins delight.
I must allot one hour to thoughts of state,
Then, all the smiling day is love and Zara's.
[*Exit* ORASMIN.
Monarchs, by forms of pompous misery press'd,
In proud, unsocial misery, unbless'd,
Would, but for love's soft influence, curse their throne,
And, among crowded millions, live alone.
[*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

NERESTAN *and* CHATILLON.

Chat. Matchless Nerestan! generous and great! [slaves!
You, who have broke the chains of hopeless
You Christian saviour! by a Saviour sent!
Appear, be known, enjoy your due delight;
The grateful weepers wait to clasp your knees,
They throng to kiss the happy hand that sav'd 'em:
Indulge the kind impatience of their eyes,
And, at their head, command their hearts for ever.

Ner. Illustrious Chatillon! this praise o'erwhelms me:
What have I done beyond a Christian's duty;
Beyond what you would, in my place, have done?

Chat. True—it is every honest Christian's duty;
Nay, 'tis the blessing of such minds as ours,
For others' good to sacrifice our own—
Yet, happy they, to whom Heaven grants the power,
To execute, like you, that duty's call.
For us—the relics of abandon'd war,
Forgot in France, and, in Jerusalem,
Left to grow old in fetters,—Osman's father
Consign'd us to the gloom of a damp dungeon,
Where, but for you, we must have groan'd out life, [more.
And native France have bless'd our eyes no

Ner. The will of gracious Heaven, that soften'd Osman,
Inspir'd me for your sakes:—But, with our joy,
Flows, mix'd, a bitter sadness—I had hop'd
To save from their perversion, a young beauty,
Who, in her infant innocence, with me,
Was made a slave by cruel Noradin;
When, sprinkling Syria with the blood of Christians,
Cæsarea's walls saw Lusignan surpris'd,
And the proud crescent rise in bloody triumph.
From this seraglio having young escap'd,
Fate, three years since, restor'd me to my chains;
Then, sent to Paris on my plighted faith,
I flatter'd my fond hope with vain resolves,
To guide the lovely Zara to that court
Where Lewis has establish'd virtue's throne;
But Osman will detain her—yet, not Osman;
Zara herself forgets she is a Christian,
And loves the tyrant Sultan!—Let that pass:
I mourn a disappointment still more cruel;
The prop of all our Christian hope is lost!

Chat. Dispose me at your will—I am your own.

Ner. Oh, Sir, great Lusignan, so long their captive,
That last of an heroic race of kings;
That warrior, whose past fame has fill'd the world;
Osman refuses to my sighs for ever!

Chat. Nay, then we have been all redeem'd in vain;
Perish that soldier who would quit his chains,
And leave his noble chief behind in fetters.
Alas! you know him not as I have known him; [remov'd
Thank Heaven that plac'd your birth so far
From those detested days of blood and wo:
But I, less happy, was condemn'd to see
Thy walls, Jerusalem, beat down—and all
Our pious fathers' labours lost in ruins!
Heaven! had you seen the very temple rifled,
The sacred sepulchre itself profan'd,
Fathers with children mingled, flame together,
And our last king oppress'd with age and arms,
Murder'd, and bleeding o'er his murder'd sons!
Then Lusignan, sole remnant of his race,
Rallying our fated few amidst the flames,
Fearless, beneath the crush of falling towers,
The conquerors and the conquer'd, groans and death!

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Dreadful—and, waving in his hand a sword,
Red with the blood of infidels, cried out,
This way, ye faithful Christians! follow me.——
Ner. How full of glory was that brave retreat!
Chat. 'Twas Heaven, no doubt, that sav'd and led him on; [guide:
Pointed his path, and march'd our guardian
We reach'd Cæsarea—there the general voice
Chose Lusignan, thenceforth to give us laws;
Alas! 'twas vain—Cæsarea could not stand
When Sion's self was fallen! we were betray'd;
And Lusignan condemn'd, to length of life,
In chains, in damps, and darkness, and despair:
Yet great, amidst his miseries, he look'd,
As if he could not feel his fate himself,
But as it reach'd his followers. And shall we,
For whom our generous leader suffer'd this,
Be vilely safe, and dare be bless'd without him?
Ner. Oh! I should hate the liberty he shar'd not.
I knew too well the miseries you describe,
For I was born amidst them. Chains and death,
Cæsarea lost, and Saracens triumphant, [on.
Were the first objects which my eyes e'er look'd
Hurried, an infant, among other infants
Snatch'd from the bosoms of their bleeding mothers,
A temple sav'd us, till the slaughter ceas'd;
Then were we sent to this ill-fated city,
Here, in the palace of our former kings,
To learn, from Saracens, their hated faith,
And be completely wretched.——Zara, too,
Shar'd this captivity; we both grew up
So near each other, that a tender friendship
Endear'd her to my wishes: My fond heart—
Pardon its weakness—bleeds to see her lost,
And, for a barbarous tyrant, quit her God!
Chat. Such is the Saracens too fatal policy!
Watchful seducers, still, of infant weakness:
Happy that you so young escap'd their hands. [terest,
But let us think——May not this Zara's in-
Loving the Sultan, and by him belov'd,
For Lusignan procure some softer sentence?
The wise and just, with innocence may draw
Their own advantage from the guilt of others.
Ner. How shall I gain admission to her presence?
Osman has banish'd me—but that's a trifle;
Will the seraglio's portals open to me?
Or, could I find that easy to my hopes,
What prospect of success from an apostate?
On whom I cannot look without disdain;
And who will read her shame upon my brow.
The hardest trial of a generous mind
Is to court favours from a hand it scorns.
Chat. Think it is Lusignan we seek to serve.
Ner. Well—it shall be attempted—Hark! who's this?
Are my eyes false; or, is it really she?

Enter ZARA.

Zar. Start not, my worthy friend: I come to seek you;
The Sultan has permitted it; fear nothing:——
But to confirm my heart which trembles near you,
Soften that angry air, nor look reproach;
Why should we fear each other, both mistaking?
Associates from our birth, one prison held us
One friendship taught affliction to be calm,
Till Heaven thought fit to favour your escape.
And call you to the fields of happier France;
Thence, once again, it was my lot to find you
A pris'ner here, where, hid amongst a crowd
Of undistinguish'd slaves, with less restraint,
I shar'd your frequent converse;——
It pleas'd your pity, shall I say your friendship;
Or rather, shall I call it generous charity?
To form that noble purpose to redeem
Distressful Zara—you procur'd my ransom,
And with a greatness that out-soar'd a crown,
Return'd yourself a slave to give me freedom;
But Heaven has cast our fate for different climes:
Here, in Jerusalem, I fix for ever; [tune,
Yet, among all the shine that marks my for-
I shall with frequent tears remember yours;
Your goodness will for ever sooth my heart,
And keep your image still a dweller there:
Warm'd by your great example to protect
That faith, that lifts humanity so high,
I'll be a mother to distressful Christians.
Ner. How!—You protect the Christians! you, who can
Abjure their saving truth, and coldly see
Great Lusignan, their chief, die slow in chains!
Zar. To bring him freedom you behold me here;
You will this moment meet his eyes in joy.
Chat. Shall I then live to bless that happy hour?
Ner. Can Christians owe so dear a gift to Zara?
Zar. Hopeless, I gather'd courage to entreat
The Sultan for his liberty—amaz'd,
So soon to gain the happiness I wish'd!
See where they bring the good old chief grown dim
With age, by pain and sorrows hasten'd on.
Chat. How is my heart dissolv'd with sudden joy!
Zar. I long to view his venerable face,
But tears, I know not why, eclipse my sight.
I feel, methinks, redoubled pity for him;
But I, alas! myself have been a slave;
And when we pity woes which we have felt,
'Tis but a partial virtue.
Ner. Amazement!—Whence this greatness in an infidel?

Enter LUSIGNAN, *led in by two Guards.*

Lus. Where am I? From the dungeon's depth what voice
Has call'd me to revisit long-lost day? [me,
Am I with Christians?—I am weak—forgive
And guide my trembling steps. I'm full of years;
My miseries have worn me more than age,
Am I in truth at liberty? [*Seating himself.*
Chat. You are; [yours.
And every Christian's grief takes end with
Lus. O light! O, dearer far than light, that voice!
Chatillon, is it you? my fellow martyr!
And shall our wretchedness, indeed have end?
In what place are we now?—my feeble eyes,
Disus'd to day-light, long in vain to find you.
Chat. This was the palace of your royal fathers:
'Tis now the son of Noradin's seraglio.
Zar. The master of this place, the mighty Osman,
Distinguishes, and loves to cherish virtue.
This generous Frenchman, yet a stranger to you,

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Drawn from his native soil, from peace and rest,
Brought the vow'd ransoms of ten Christian [slaves,
Himself contented to remain a captive: [own,
But Osman, charm'd by greatness like his
To equal what he lov'd, has given him you.
Lus. So generous France inspires her social sons!
They have been ever dear and useful to me—
Would I were nearer to him——Noble Sir,
[NERESTAN *approaches.*
How have I merited, that you for me
Should pass such distant seas to bring me blessings,
And hazard your own safety for my sake?
Ner. My name, Sir, is Nerestan; born in Syria,
I wore the chains of slavery from my birth;
Till quitting the proud crescent for the court
Where warlike Lewis reigns, beneath his eye
I learn'd the trade of arms:—the rank I held
Was but the kind distinction which he gave
To tempt my courage to deserve regard. [me,
Your sight, unhappy prince, would charm his eye;
That best and greatest monarch will behold
With grief and joy those venerable wounds,
And print embraces where your fetters bound
All Paris will revere the cross's martyr; [you.
Paris, the refuge still of ruin'd kings!
Lus. Alas! in times long past, I've seen its glory:
When Philip the victorious liv'd, I fought
A-breast with Montmorency and Melun,
D'Estaing, De Neile, and the far-famous Courcy;— [of war!
Names which were then the praise and dread
But what have I to do at Paris now?
I stand upon the brink of the cold grave;
That way my journey lies—to find, I hope,
The King of kings, and ask the recompense
For all my woes, long-suffer'd for his sake——
You generous witnesses of my last hour,
While I yet live assist my humble prayers,
And join the resignation of my soul.
Nerestan! Chatillon!—and you, fair mourner,
Whose tears do honour to an old man's sorrows!
Pity a father, the unhappiest sure [ber—
That ever felt the hand of angry Heaven!
My eyes, though dying, still can furnish tears;
Half my long life they flow'd, and still will flow! [hopes,
A daughter and three sons, my heart's proud
Were all torn from me in their tenderest years— [ber—
My friend Chatillon knows, and can remem-
Chat. Would I were able to forget your wo.
Lus. Thou wert a pris'ner with me in Cæsarea,
And there beheld'st my wife and two dear sons
Perish in flames.
Chat. A captive and in fetters,
I could not help 'em.
Lus. I know thou could'st not—
Oh, 'twas a dreadful scene! these eyes beheld it—
Husband and father, helpless I beheld it—
Denied the mournful privilege to die!
Oh, my poor children! whom I now deplore;
If ye are saints in Heaven, as sure ye are,
Look with an eye of pity on that brother,
That sister whom you left!—If I have yet,
Or son, or daughter:—for in early chains,
Far from their lost and unassisting father,
I heard that they were sent with numbers
To this seraglio; hence to be dispers'd [more,
In nameless remnants o'er the east, and spread
Our Christian miseries round a faithless world.
Chat. 'Twas true—For in the horrors of that day, [cradle;
I snatch'd your infant daughter from her
But finding every hope of flight was vain,
Scarce had I sprinkled, from a public fountain,
Those sacred drops which wash the soul from sin,
When from my bleeding arms, fierce Saracens
Forc'd the lost innocent, who smiling lay,
And pointed, playful, at the swarthy spoilers!
With her, your youngest, then your only son,
Whose little life had reach'd the fourth sad year, [tunes,
And just given sense to feel his own misfor-
Was order'd to this city.
Ner. I, too, hither,
Just at that fatal age, from lost Cæsarea,
Came in that crowd of undistinguish'd Christians.—
Lus. You!—came you thence?—Alas! who knows but you
Might heretofore have seen my two poor children. [*Looking up.*
Hah, Madam! that small ornament you wear,
Its form a stranger to this country's fashion,
How long has it been yours?
Zar. From my first birth, Sir—
Ah, what! you seem surpris'd!—why should this move you?
Lus. Would you confide it to my trembling hands?
Zar. To what new wonders am I now re-
Oh, Sir, what mean you? [serv'd?
Lus. Providence and Heaven!
Oh, failing eyes, deceive ye not my hope?
Can this be possible?—Yes, yes—'tis she.
This little cross—I know it, by sure marks!
Oh! take me, Heaven! while I can die with joy—
Zar. Oh, do not, Sir, distract me!—rising thoughts,
And hopes, and fears, o'erwhelm me!
Lus. Tell me, yet,
Has it remain'd for ever in your hands?
What—both brought captives from Cæsarea hither?
Zar. Both, both—
Oh, Heaven! have I then found a father?
Lus. Their voice! their looks!
The living images of their dear mother!
O God! who seest my tears, and know'st my thoughts,
Do not forsake me at this dawn of hope——
Strengthen my heart, too feeble for this joy.
Madam! Nerestan!—Help me, Chatillon! [*Rising.*
Nerestan, hast thou on thy breast a scar,
Which, ere Cæsarea fell, from a fierce hand,
Surprising us by night, my child receiv'd?
Ner. Bless'd hand!—I bear it.—Sir, the mark is there!
Lus. Merciful Heaven!
Ner. [*Kneeling.*] Oh, Sir!—Oh, Zara, kneel.——
Zar. [*Kneeling.*] My father!—Oh!——
Lus. Oh, my lost children!
Both. Oh!
Lus. My son! my daughter! lost in embracing you, [dream.
I would now die, lest this should prove a
Chat. How touch'd is my glad heart to see their joy!
Lus. They shall not tear you from my arms—my children!

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Again, I find you—dear in wretchedness:
Oh, my brave son—and thou, my nameless daughter!
Now dissipate all doubt, remove all dread;
Has Heaven, that gives me back my children—given em, [me?
Such as I lost 'em?—Come they Christians to
One weeps, and one declines a conscious eye!
Your silence speaks—too well I understand it.

Zar. I cannot, Sir, deceive you—Osman's laws
Were mine—and Osman is not Christian.——

Lus. Her words are thunder bursting on my head;
Were't not for thee, my son, I now should die.
Full sixty years I fought the Christians' cause,
Saw their doom'd temple fall, their power destroy'd:
Twenty, a captive in a dungeon's depth,
Yet never for myself my tears sought Heaven;
All for my children rose my fruitless prayers:
Yet, what avails a father's wretched joy?
I have a daughter gain'd, and Heaven an enemy. [faith,
Oh, my misguided daughter—lose not thy
Reclaim thy birth-right—think upon the blood
Of twenty Christian kings, that fills thy veins;
'Tis heroes' blood—the blood of saints and martyrs!
What would thy mother feel, to see thee thus!
She, and thy murder'd brothers!—think, they call thee: [arms,
Think that thou seest 'em stretch their bloody
And weep to win thee from their murderer's bosom.
Even in the place where thou betray'st thy God,
He died, my child to save thee.—Turn thy eyes,
And see; for thou art near his sacred sepulchre; [trod!
Thou canst not move a step, but where he
Thou tremblest—Oh! admit me to thy soul;
Kill not thy aged, thy afflicted father;
Take not thus soon again the life thou gav'st him: [God——
Shame not thy mother—nor renounce thy
'Tis past—Repentance dawns in thy sweet eyes;
I see bright truth descending to thy heart,
And now, my long-lost child is found for ever.

Ner. Oh, doubly bless'd! a sister, and a soul,
To be redeem'd together!

Zar. Oh, my father!
Dear author of my life! inform me, teach me,
What should my duty do?

Lus. By one short word,
To dry up all my tears, and make life welcome,
Say thou art a Christian——

Zar. Sir—I am a Christian——

Lus. Receive her, gracious Heaven! and bless her for it.

Enter ORASMIN.

Oras. Madam, the Sultan order'd me to tell you,
That he expects you instant quit this place,
And bid your last farewell to these vile Christians.
You captive Frenchmen, follow me; for you,
It is my task to answer.——

Chat. Still new miseries! [happy!
How cautious man should be, to say, I'm

Lus. These are the times, my friends, to try our firmness,
Our Christian firmness——

Zar. Alas, Sir! Oh!

Lus. Oh, you!—I dare not name you!
Farewell—but, come what may, be sure remember
You keep the fatal secret: for the rest,
Leave all to Heaven——be faithful, and be bless'd. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

OSMAN *and* ORASMIN.

Osm. Orasmin, this alarm was false and groundless;
Lewis no longer turns his arms on me;
The French, grown weary by a length of woes,
Wish not at once to quit their fruitful plains,
And famish on Arabia's desert sands.
Their ships, 'tis true, have spread the Syrian seas:
And Lewis, hovering o'er the coast of Cyprus,
Alarms the fears of Asia—But I've learn'd,
That steering wide from our unmenac'd ports,
He points his thunder at the Egyptian shore.
There let him war and waste my enemies;
Their mutual conflicts will but fix my throne.—
Release those Christians—I restore their freedom; [me:
'Twill please their master, nor can weaken
Transport 'em at my cost, to find their king;
I wish to have him know me: carry thither
This Lusignan, whom, tell him, I restore,
Because I cannot fear his fame in arms;
But love him for his virtue and his blood.
Tell him, my father, having conquer'd twice,
Condemn'd him to perpetual chains; but I
Have set him free that I might triumph more.

Oras. The Christians gain an army in his name.

Osm. I cannot fear a sound.—

Oras. But Sir——should Lewis——

Osm. Tell Lewis and the world—it shall be so:
Zara propos'd it, and my heart approves:
Thy statesman's reason is too dull for love!
Why wilt thou force me to confess it all?
Though I to Lewis send back Lusignan,
I give him but to Zara—I have griev'd her;
And ow'd her the atonement of this joy.
Thy false advices, which but now misled
My anger to confine those helpless Christians,
Gave her a pain; I feel for her and me:
But I talk on, and waste the smiling moments.
For one long hour I yet defer my nuptials;
But, 'tis not lost that hour! 'twill be all hers!
She would employ it in a conference
With that Nerestan, whom thou know'st——that Christian!

Oras. And have you, Sir, indulged that strange desire?

Osm. What mean'st thou? They were infant slaves together;
Friends should part kind, who are to meet no more.
When Zara asks, I will refuse her nothing:
Restraint was never made for those we love.
Down with those rigours of the proud seraglio;
I hate its laws—where blind austerity
Sinks virtue to necessity.—My blood
Disclaims your Asian jealousy; I hold
The fierce, free plainness of my Scythian ancestors,
Their open confidence, their honest hate,
Their love unfearing, and their anger told.

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Go—the good Christian waits—conduct him to her;
Zara expects thee—What she wills, obey.
[*Exit* OSMAN.

Orus. Ho! Christian enter!——wait a moment here.

Enter NERESTAN.

Zara will soon approach—I go to find her.
[*Exit* ORASMIN.

Ner. In what a state, in what a place, I leave her!
Oh, faith! Oh, father! Oh, my poor lost sister!
She's here——

Enter ZARA.

Thank Heaven, it is not, then, unlawful
To see you, yet once more, my lovely sister!
Not all so happy!——We, who met but now,
Shall never meet again——for Lusignan——
We shall be orphans still, and want a father.

Zar. Forbid it, Heaven!

Ner. His last sad hour's at hand——
That flow of joy, which follow'd our discovery,
Too strong and sudden for his age's weakness,
Wasting his spirits, dried the source of life,
And nature yields him up to time's demand.
Shall he not die in peace?—Oh! let no doubt
Disturb his parting moments with distrust;
Let me, when I return to close his eyes,
Compose his mind's impatience too, and tell him,
You are confirm'd a Christian!—

Zar. Oh! may his soul enjoy, in earth and Heaven,
Eternal rest; nor let one thought, one sigh,
One bold complaint of mine recall his cares!
But you have injur'd me, who still can doubt.—
What! am I not your sister? and shall you
Refuse me credit? You suppose me light;
You, who should judge my honour by your own,
Shall you distrust a truth I dar'd avow,
And stamp apostate on a sister's heart!

Ner. Ah! do not misconceive me—If I err'd,
Affection, not distrust, misled my fear;
Your will may be a Christian, yet not you;
There is a sacred mark—a sign of faith,
A pledge of promise, that must firm your claim;
Wash you from guilt, and open Heaven before you.

Zar. I swear by Heaven, and all its holy host,
Its saints, its martyrs, its attesting angels,
And the dread presence of its living author,
To have no faith but yours!—to die a Christian!
Now, tell me what this mystic faith requires.

Ner. To hate the happiness of Osman's throne,
And love that God, who, through his maze of woes,
Has brought us all, unhoping, thus together.
For me—I am a soldier, uninstructed,
Nor daring to instruct, though strong in faith:
But I will bring th' ambassador of Heaven,
To clear your views, and lift you to your God.
Be it your task to gain admission for him.——
But where? from whom?—Oh! thou immortal Power!
Whence can we hope it, in this cure'd seraglio?
Who is this slave of Osman? Yes, this slave!
Does she not boast the blood of twenty kings?
Is not her race the same with that of Lewis?
Is she not Lusignan's unhappy daughter?
A Christian, and my sister? yet a slave,
A willing slave!—I dare not speak more plainly.

Zar. Cruel! go on—Alas you do not know me.
At once a stranger to my secret fate,
My pains, my fears, my wishes, and my power:
I am—I will be Christian——will receive
This holy priest with his mysterious blessing;
I will not do nor suffer aught unworthy
Myself, my father, or my father's race.——
But, tell me——nor be tender on this point,—
What punishment your Christian laws decree,
For an unhappy wretch, who, to herself
Unknown, and all abandon'd by the world,
Lost and enslav'd, has, in her sovereign master,
Found a protector, generous as great,
Has touch'd his heart, and given him all her own?

Ner. The punishment of such a slave should be,
Death in this world——and pain in that to come.

Zar. I am that slave—strike here—end save my shame.

Ner. Destruction to my hopes!—Can it be you?

Zar. It is—Ador'd by Osman, I adore him:
This hour the nuptial rites will make us one.

Ner. What! marry Osman!—Let the world grow dark,
That the extinguish'd sun may hide thy shame!
Could it be thus, it were no crime to kill thee.

Zar. Strike, strike—I love him—yes, by Heaven, I love him.

Ner. Death is thy due—but not thy due from me:
Yet, were the honour of our house no bar——
My father's fame, and the too gentle laws
Of that religion which thou hast disgrac'd——
Did not the God thou quitt'st hold back my arm——
Not there—I could not there—but, by my soul,
I would rush, desperate, to the Sultan's breast,
And plunge my sword in his proud heart who damns thee.
Oh, shame! shame! shame! at such a time as this,
When Lewis, that awak'ner of the world,
Beneath the lifted cross makes Egypt pale,
And draws the sword of Heaven to spread our faith;
Now to submit to see my sister doom'd
A bosom-slave to him whose tyrant heart
But measures glory by the Christians' wo.
Yes—I will dare acquaint our father with it;
Departing Lusignan may live so long,
As just to hear thy shame, and die to 'scape it.

Zar. Stay—my too angry brother—stay—perhaps,
Zara has resolution great as thine:
'Tis cruel—and unkind.——Thy words are crimes;
My weakness but misfortune. Dost thou suffer?
I suffer more;—Oh! would to Heaven this blood
Of twenty boasted kings would stop at once,
And stagnate in my heart!—It then no more
Would rush in boiling fevers thro' my veins,
And ev'ry trembling drop be fill'd with Osman.

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How has he loved me! how has he oblig'd me!
I owe thee to him. What has he not done,
To justify his boundless power of charming?
For me, he softens the severe decrees
Of his own faith; and is it just that mine
Should bid me hate him, but because he loves me?
No——I will be a Christian——but preserve
My gratitude as sacred as my faith;
If I have death to fear for Osman's sake,
It must be from his coldness, not his love.

Ner. I must at once condemn and pity thee;
I cannot point thee out which way to go,
But Providence will lend its light to guide thee. [ceive,
That sacred rite, which thou shalt now re-
Will strengthen and support thy feeble heart,
To live an innocent, or die a martyr.
Here, then, begin performance of thy vow;
Here, in the trembling horrors of thy soul,
Promise thy king, thy father, and thy God,
Not to accomplish these detested nuptials,
Till first the reverend priest has clear'd your eyes, [Heaven.
Taught you to know, and given you claim to
Promise me this——

Zar. So bless me, Heaven! I do.——
Go—hasten the good priest, I will expect him;
But first return—cheer my expiring father,
Tell him I am, and will be all he wishes me:
Tell him, to give him life 'twere joy to die.

Ner. I go—Farewell—farewell, unhappy sister. [*Exit* NERESTAN.

Zar. I am alone—and now be just, my heart,
And tell me, wilt thou dare betray thy God?
What am I? What am I about to be?
Daughter of Lusignan—or wife to Osman?
Am I a lover most, or most a Christian?
Would Selima were come: and yet 'tis just,
All friends should fly her who forsakes herself.
What shall I do?—What heart has strength to bear [Heaven!
These double weights of duty?—Help me,
To thy hard laws I render up my soul:
But, oh! demand it back—for now 'tis Osman's.

Enter OSMAN.

Osm. Shine out, appear, be found, my lovely Zara!
Impatient eyes attend—the rites expect thee;
And my devoted heart no longer brooks
This distance from its soft'ner:—all the lamps
Of nuptial love are lighted, and burn pure,
As if they drew their brightness from thy blushes.
The holy mosque is fill'd with fragrant fumes,
Which emulate the sweetness of thy breathing:
My prostrate people all confirm my choice,
And send their souls to Heaven in prayers for blessings.
Thy envious rivals, conscious of thy right,
Approve superior charms, and join to praise thee;
The throne that waits thee, seems to shine more richly,
As all its gems, with animated lustre,
Fear'd to look dim beneath the eyes of Zara.
Come, my slow love: the ceremonies wait thee;
Come, and begin from this dear hour my triumph.

Zar. Oh, what a wretch am I! Oh, grief! Oh, love!

Osm. Come——come——

Zar. Where shall I hide my blushes?

Osm. Blushes—here, in my bosom, hide 'em.

Zar. My Lord!

Osm. Nay, Zara—give me thy hand, and come——

Zar. Instruct me, Heaven!
What I should say—Alas! I cannot speak.

Osm. Away—this modest, sweet, reluctant trifling
But doubles my desires, and thy own beauties.

Zar. Ah, me!

Osm. Nay—but thou shouldst not be too cruel.

Zar. I can no longer bear it—Oh, my lord—

Osm. Ha!—What?—whence?—how?

Zar. My lord, my sovereign!
Heaven knows this marriage would have been a bliss
Above my humble hopes:—yet, witness love!
Not from the grandeur of your throne, that bliss,
But from the pride of calling Osman mine.
Would you had been no emperor, and I
Possess'd of power and charms deserving you;
That slighting Asia's thrones I might alone
Have left a proffer'd world, to follow you
Through deserts, uninhabited by men,
And bless'd with ample room for peace and love:
But, as it is——these Christians—— [love:

Osm. Christians! What!
How start two images into thy thoughts,
So distant——as the Christians and my love!

Zar. That good old Christian, reverend Lusignan,
Now dying, ends his life and woes together.

Osm. Well, let him die—What has thy heart to feel,
Thus pressing and thus tender, from the death
Of an old wretched Christian?—Thank our prophet,
Thou art no Christian.—Educated here,
Thy happy youth was taught our better faith:
Sweet as thy pity shines, 'tis now mistimed.
What! though an aged sufferer dies unhappy,
Why should his foreign fate disturb our joys?

Zar. Sir, if you love me, and would have me think
That I am truly dear——

Osm. Heaven! if I love!

Zar. Permit me——

Osm. What?

Zar. To desire——

Osm. Speak out.

Zar. The nuptial rites
May be deferr'd till——

Osm. What!—Is that the voice
Of Zara?

Zar. Oh, I cannot bear his frown.

Osm. Of Zara!

Zar. It is dreadful to my heart,
To give you but a seeming cause for anger;
Pardon my grief——Alas! I cannot bear it;
There is a painful terror in your eye
That pierces to my soul——hid from your sight
I go to make a moment's truce with tears,
And gather force to speak of my despair.
[*Exit disordered.*

Osm. I stand immoveable, like senseless marble;
Horror had frozen my suspended tongue;
And an astonish'd silence robb'd my will
Of power to tell her that she shock'd my soul.
Spoke she to me?—Sure I misunderstood her.
Could it be me she left?—What have I seen!

Enter ORASMIN.

Orasmin, what a change is here!—She's gone,
And I permitted it, I know not how.

Oras. Perhaps you but accuse the charming fault
Of innocence, too modest oft in love.

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Osm. But why, and whence those tears?—
those looks? that flight?
That grief, so strongly stamp'd on every feature?
If it has been that Frenchman——What a
thought!
How low, how horrid a suspicion that!
The dreadful flash at once gives light and kills
me;
My too bold confidence repell'd my caution—
An infidel! a slave!—a heart like mine
Reduc'd to suffer from so vile a rival! [ing?
But tell me, didst thou mark 'em at their part-
Did'st thou observe the language of their eyes?
Hide nothing from me——Is my love betray'd?
Tell me my whole disgrace: nay, if thou trem-
blest,
I hear thy pity speak, though thou art silent.
Oras. I tremble at the pangs I see you suffer.
Let not your angry apprehension urge
Your faithful slave to irritate your anguish;
I did, 'tis true, observe some parting tears;
But they were tears of charity and grief;
I cannot think there was a cause deserving
This agony of passion——
Osm. Why no——I thank thee——
Orasmin, thou art wise. It could not be
That I should stand expos'd to such an insult.
Thou know'st, had Zara meant me the offence,
She wants not wisdom to have hid it better:
How rightly didst thou judge?—Zara shall
know it,
And thank thy honest service——After all,
Might she not have some cause for tears,
which I [her?
Claim no concern in—but the grief it gives
What an unlikely fear—from a poor slave,
Who goes to-morrow, and, no doubt, who
wishes,
Nay, who resolves to see these climes no more.
Oras. Why did you, Sir, against our country's
custom,
Indulge him with a second leave to come?
He said he should return once more to see her.
Osm. Return! the traitor! he return!—Dares
Presume to press a second interview? [he
Would he be seen again?—He shall be seen;
But dead.——I'll punish the audacious slave,
To teach the faithless fair to feel my anger.
Be still, my transports; violence is blind:
I know my heart at once is fierce and weak;
I feel that I descend below myself;
Zara can never justly be suspected;
Her sweetness was not form'd to cover treason;
Yet, Osman must not stoop to woman's follies;
Their tears, complaints, regrets, and reconcile-
ments,
With all their light, capricious roll of changes,
Are arts too vulgar to be tried on me.
It would become me better to resume
The empire of my will. Rather than fall
Beneath myself, I must, how dear soe'er
It costs me, rise—till I look down on Zara!—
Away——but mark me—these seraglio doors,
Against all Christians be they henceforth shut,
Close as the dark retreats of silent death.
[*Exit* ORASMIN.
What have I done, just Heaven! thy rage to
move,
That thou shouldst sink me down, so low to
love? [*Exit.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—ZARA and SELIMA.

Sel. Ah, Madam! how at once I grieve your
fate, [mits,
And how admire your virtue!—Heaven per-
And Heaven will give you strength, to bear
misfortune;
To break these chains, so strong and yet so
dear.
Zar. Oh, that I could support the fatal
struggle!
Sel. Th' Eternal aids your weakness, sees
your will, [rows.
Directs your purpose, and rewards your sor-
Zar. Never had wretch more cause to hope
he does.
Sel. What though you here no more be-
hold your father?
There is a Father to be found above,
Who can restore that father to his daughter.
Zar. But I have planted pain in Osman's
bosom;
He loves me even to death: and I reward him
With anguish and despair.—How base! how
cruel!
But I deserv'd him not; I should have been
Too happy, and the hand of Heaven repell'd
me.
Sel. What, will you then regret the glorious
loss,
And hazard thus a victory bravely won,
Zar. Inhuman victory!——thou dost not
know
This love so powerful, this sole joy of life,
This first, best hope of earthly happiness,
Is yet less powerful in my heart than Heaven.
To him who made that heart I offer it;
There, there, I sacrifice my bleeding passion;
I pour before him every guilty tear;
I beg him to efface the fond impression,
And fill with his own image all my soul:
But, while I weep and sigh, repent and pray,
Remembrance brings the object of my love,
And every light illusion floats before him.
I see, I hear him, and again he charms;
Fills my glad soul, and shines 'twixt me and
Heaven!
Oh, all ye royal ancestors! Oh, father!
Mother! You Christians, and the Christians'
God!
You who deprive me of this generous lover!
If you permit me not to live for him,
Let me not live at all, and I am bless'd:
Let me die innocent; let his dear hand
Close the sad eyes of her he stoop'd to love,
And I acquit my fate, and ask no more.
But he forgives me not——regardless now,
Whether, or how I live, or when I die:
He quits me, scorns me——and I yet live on,
And talk of death as distant.——
Sel. Ah! despair not;
Trust your eternal helper, and be happy.
Zar. Why——what has Osman done that he
too should not? [it?
Has Heaven so nobly form'd his heart to hate
Generous and just, beneficent and brave,
Were he but Christian——What can man be
more?
I wish, methinks, this reverend priest was
come [soul:
To free me from these doubts, which shake my
Yet know not why I should not dare to hope,
That Heaven, whose mercy all confess and
feel,
Will pardon and approve th' alliance wish'd:
Perhaps it seats me on the throne of Syria,
To tax my power for these good Christians'
comfort.
Thou know'st the mighty Saladine, who first
Conquer'd this empire from my father's race,
Who, like my Osman, charm'd th' admiring
world,

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Drew breath, though Syrian, from a Christian mother.

Sel. What mean you, Madam? Ah! you do not see—

Zar. Yes, yes—I see it all; I am not blind:
I see my country and my race condemn me:
I see that, spite of all, I still love Osman.
What if I now go throw me at his feet,
And tell him there sincerely what I am?

Sel. Consider—that might cost your brother's life,
Expose the Christians, and betray you all.

Zar. You do not know the noble heart of Osman.

Sel. I know him the protector of a faith
Sworn enemy to ours;——The more he loves,
The less will he permit you to profess
Opinions which he hates: to-night the priest,
In private introduc'd, attends you here;
You promis'd him admission——

Zar. Would I had not!
I promis'd, too, to keep this fatal secret;
My father's urg'd command requir'd it of me;
I must obey, all dangerous as it is;
Compell'd to silence, Osman is enrag'd,
Suspicion follows, and I lose his love.

Enter Osman.

Osm. Madam! there was a time when my charm'd heart
Made it a virtue to be lost in love;
When, without blushing, I indulg'd my flame,
And every day still made you dearer to me.
You taught me, Madam, to believe my love
Rewarded and return'd—nor was that hope,
Methinks, too bold for reason. Emperors,
Who choose to sigh devoted at the feet
Of beauties, whom the world conceive their slaves,
Have fortune's claim, at least, t' ensure success:
But 'twere profane to think of power in love.
Dear as my passion makes you, I decline
Possession of her charms whose heart's another's.
You will not find me a weak, jealous lover,
By coarse reproaches giving pain to you,
And shaming my own greatness—wounded deeply,
Yet shunning and disdaining low complaint,
I come——to tell you——

Zar. Give my trembling heart
A moment's respite——

Osm. That unwilling coldness
Is the just prize of your capricious lightness;
Your ready arts may spare the fruitless pains
Of colouring deceit with fair pretences;
I would not wish to hear your slight excuses;
I cherish ignorance, to save my blushes.
Osman in every trial shall remember
That he is emperor.——Whate'er I suffer,
'Tis due to honour that I give up you,
And to my injur'd bosom take despair,
Rather than shamefully possess you sighing,
Convinc'd those sighs were never meant for me—
Go, Madam—you are free—from Osman's power—
Expect no wrongs, but see his face no more.

Zar. At last, 'tis come—the fear'd, the murdering moment
Is come—and I am curs'd by earth and Heaven!
[*Throws herself on the ground.*
If it is true that I am lov'd no more——
If you——

Osm. It is too true, my fame requires it;
It is too true, that I unwilling leave you:
That I at once renounce you and adore——
Zara!——you weep!

Zar. If I am doom'd to lose you,
If I must wander o'er an empty world,
Unloving and unlov'd——Oh! yet, do justice
To th' afflicted——do not wrong me doubly:
Punish me, if 'tis needful to your peace,
But say not, I deserv'd it—This, at least,
Believe——for not the greatness of your soul
Is truth more pure and sacred——no regret
Can touch my bleeding heart, for I have lost
The rank of her you raise to share your throne.
I know I never ought to have been there;
My fate and my defects require I lose you.
But ah! my heart was never known to Osman.
May Heaven that punishes, for ever hate me,
If I regret the loss of aught but you.

Osm. Rise—rise, this means not love!

Zar. Strike——Strike me, Heaven!

Osm. What! is it love to force yourself to wound
The heart you wish to gladden? But I find,
Lovers least know themselves; for I believ'd,
That I had taken back the power I gave you;
Yet see!—you did but weep, and have resum'd me!
Proud as I am——I must confess, one wish
Evades my power——the blessing to forget you.
Zara, thy tears were form'd to teach disdain,
That softness can disarm it.——'Tis decreed.
I must for ever love—but from what cause,
If thy consenting heart partakes my fires,
Art thou reluctant to a blessing meant me?
Speak! Is it levity——or, is it fear?
Fear of a power that, but for blessing thee,
Had, without joy, been painful.—Is it artifice?
Oh! spare the needless pains—art was not made
For Zara——Art, however innocent,
Looks like deceiving——I abhorr'd it ever.

Zar. Alas! I have no art; not even enough
To hide this love, and this distress you give me.

Osm. New riddles! Speak with plainness to my soul:
What canst thou mean?

Zar. I have no power to speak it.

Osm. Is it some secret dangerous to my state?
Is it some Christian plot grown ripe against me?

Zar. Lives there a wretch so vile as to betray you!
Osman is bless'd beyond the reach of fear:
Fears and misfortunes threaten only Zara.

Osm. Why threaten Zara?

Zar. Permit me, at your feet,
Thus trembling, to beseech a favour from you.

Osm. A favour! Oh, you guide the will of Osman.

Zar. Ah! would to Heaven our duties were united,
Firm as our thoughts and wishes! But this day;
But this one sad, unhappy day, permit me,
Alone, and far divided from your eye,
To cover my distress, lest you, too tender,
Should see and share it with me—from to-morrow,
I will not have a thought conceal'd from you.

Osm. What strange disquiet, from what stranger cause!

Zar. If I am really bless'd with Osman's love,
He will not then refuse this humble prayer.

Osm. If it must be, it must.—Be pleas'd—my will
Takes purpose from your wishes; and consent

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Depends not on my choice, but your decree:
Go——but remember how he loves, who thus
Finds a delight in pain, because you give it.
Zar. It gives me more than pain to make you feel it.
Osm. And——can you, Zara, leave me?
Zar. Alas! my lord! [*Exit* ZARA.
Osm. [*Alone.*] It should be yet, methinks, too soon to fly me!
Too soon as yet to wrong my easy faith.
The more I think, the less I can conceive,
What hidden cause should raise such strange wish
despair! [love!
Now, when her hopes have wings, and every
Is courted to be lively!—When I love,
And joy and empire press her to their bosom;
When not alone belov'd, but even a lover:
Professing and accepting; bless'd and blessing;
To see her eyes, through tears, shine mystic love!
'Tis madness! and I were unworthy power,
To suffer longer the capricious insult!
Yet, was I blameless?—No—I was too rash;
I have felt jealousy, and spoke it to her;
I have distrusted her—and still she loves:
Generous atonement that! and 'tis my duty
To expiate, by a length of soft indulgence,
The transports of a rage, which still was love.
Henceforth, I never will suspect her false;
Nature's plain power of charming dwells about her,
And innocence gives force to every word.
I owe full confidence to all she looks,
For in her eye shines truth, and every beam
Shoots confirmation round her.—I remark'd,
Even while she wept, her soul a thousand times
Sprung to her lips, and long'd to leap to mine,
With honest, ardent utterance of her love.—
Who can possess a heart so low, so base,
To look such tenderness, and yet have none?

Enter MELIDOR *with* ORASMIN.

Mel. This letter, great disposer of the world!
Address'd to Zara, and in private brought,
Your faithful guards this moment intercepted,
And humbly offer to your sovereign eye.
Osm. Come nearer, give it me.—To Zara!—Rise.
Bring it with speed——Shame on your flattering distance——
[*Advancing, and snatching the letter.*
Be honest—and approach me like a subject
Who serves the prince, yet not forgets the man.
Mel. One of the Christian slaves, whom late your bounty
Releas'd from bondage, sought with heedful guile,
Unnotic'd to deliver it.——Discover'd
He waits, in chains, his doom from your decree.
Osm. Leave me! I tremble, as if something fatal
Were meant me from this letter——should I read it?
Oras. Who knows but it contains some happy truth
That may remove all doubts, and calm your heart?
Osm. Be it as 'twill—it shall be read—my hands
Have apprehension that out-reaches mine!
Why should they tremble thus?—'tis done—and now, [*Opens the letter.*
Fate, be thy call obey'd——Orasmin, mark—
There is a secret passage toward the mosque;
That way you might escape; and, unperceiv'd
Fly your observers, and fulfil our hope;
Despise the danger, and depend on me,
Who wait you, but to die if you deceive.
Hell! tortures! death! and woman!—What, Zara?
Orasmin! [
Are we awake? Heardst thou? Can this be
Oras. Would I had lost all sense—for what I heard
Has cover'd my afflicted heart with horror.
Osm. Thou seest how I am treated!
Oras. Monstrous treason!
To an affront like this you cannot——must not
Remain insensible——You, who but now,
From the most slight suspicion, felt such pain,
Must in the horror of so black a guilt,
Find an effectual cure, and banish love.
Osm. Seek her this instant—go, Orasmin, fly—
Show her this letter—bid her read and tremble:
Then in the rising horrors of her guilt,
Stab her unfaithful breast, and let her die.
Say, while thou strik'st——Stay, stay, return and pity me;
I will think first a moment—Let that Christian
Be straight confronted with her—Stay—I will,
I will—I know not what!——Would I were dead!
Would I had died, unconscious of this shame!
Oras. Never did prince receive so bold a wrong.
Osm. See here detected this infernal secret!
This fountain of her tears, which my weak heart
Mistook for marks of tenderness and pain!
Why! what a reach has woman to deceive!
Under how fine a veil of grief and fear
Did she purpose retirement till to-morrow!
And I, blind dotard! gave the fool's consent,
Sooth'd her, and suffer'd her to go!——She parted,
Dissolv'd in tears; and parted to betray me!
Oras. Reflection serves but to confirm her guilt.
At length resume yourself; awaken thought;
Assert your greatness; and resolve like Osman.
Osm. Nerestan, too—Was this the boasted honour
Of that proud Christian, whom Jerusalem
Grew loud in praising! whose half envied virtue
I wonder'd at myself; and felt disdain
To be but equal to a Christian's greatness!
And does he thank me thus; base infidel!
Honest, pretending, pious, praying villain?
Yet Zara is a thousand times more base,
More hypocrite, than he! A slave! a wretch!
So low, so lost, that even the vilest labours,
In which he lay condemn'd, could never sink him [know
Beneath his native infamy——Did she not
What I have done, what suffer'd—for her sake?
Oras. Could you, my gracious lord! forgive my zeal,
You would——
Osm. I know it—thou art right—I'll see her— [her—
I'll tax her in thy presence;—I'll upbraid
I'll let her learn—Go—find, and bring her to me.
Oras. Alas, my lord! disorder'd as you are,
What can you wish to say? [
Osm. I know not, now—
But I resolve to see her—lest she think
Her falsehood has, perhaps, the power to grieve me.
Oras. Believe me, Sir, your threatenings, your complaints,

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What will they produce, but Zara's tears
To quench this fancied anger! Your lost heart,
Seduc'd against itself, will search but reasons
To justify the guilt, which gives it pain;
Rather conceal from Zara this discovery;
And let some trusty slave convey the letter,
Re-clos'd to her own hand—then shall you learn,
Spite of her frauds, disguise, and artifice,
The firmness, or abasement of her soul.

Osm. Thy counsel charms me! We'll about it now.
'Twill be some recompense, at least, to see
Her blushes, when detected.——

Oras. Oh, my lord!
I doubt you in the trial——for your heart—

Osm. Distrust me not—my love, indeed, is weak, [Zara.
But honour and disdain more strong than
Here, take this fatal letter—choose a slave
Whom yet she never saw, and who retains
His tried fidelity—Despatch—begone—
[*Exit* ORASMIN.
Now, whither shall I turn my eyes and steps,
The surest way to shun her: and give time
For this discovering trial?——Heaven! she's here!

Enter ZARA.

So, Madam! fortune will befriend my cause,
And free me from your fetters.—You are met
Most aptly, to dispel a new-risen doubt,
That claims the finest of your arts to gloss it.
Unhappy each by other, it is time
To end our mutual pain, that both may rest:
You want not generosity, but love;
My pride forgotten, my obtruded throne,
My favours, cares, respect, and tenderness,
Touching your gratitude, provok'd regard;
'Till, by a length of benefits besieg'd,
Your heart submitted, and you thought 'twas love:
But you deceiv'd yourself and injur'd me.
There is, I'm told, an object more deserving
Your love than Osman——I would know his name:
Be just, nor trifle with my anger: tell me
Now, while expiring pity struggles faint;
While I have yet, perhaps, the power to pardon:
Give up the bold invader of my claim,
And let him die to save thee. Thou art known;
Think and resolve——While I yet speak, renounce him;
While yet the thunder rolls suspended, stay it;
Let thy voice charm me, and recall my soul,
That turns averse, and dwells no more on Zara.

Zar. Can it be Osman speaks, and speaks to Zara?
Learn, cruel! learn, that this afflicted heart,
This heart which Heaven delights to prove by tortures, [you.
Did it not love, has pride and power to shun
Alas! you will not know me! What have I
To fear, but that unhappy love you question?
That love which only could outweigh the shame
I feel, while I descend to weep my wrongs.
I know not whether Heaven, that frowns upon me,
Has destin'd my unhappy days for yours;
But, be my fate or bless'd or curs'd, I swear
By honour, dearer even than life or love,
Could Zara be but mistress of herself,
She would with cold regard look down on kings,
And, you alone excepted, fly 'em all.
Would you learn more, and open all my heart?
Know then, that, spite of this renew'd injustice,
I do not—cannot wish to love you less:
That, long before you look'd so low as Zara,
She gave her heart to Osman; yours, before
Your benefits had bought her, or your eye
Had thrown distinction round her; never had,
Nor ever will acknowledge other lover:
And to this sacred truth, attesting Heaven,
I call thy dreadful notice! If my heart
Deserves reproach; 'tis for, but not from Osman.

Osm. What! does she yet presume to swear sincerity!
Oh, boldness of unblushing perjury!
Had I not seen; had I not read such proof
Of her light falsehood as extinguish'd doubt,
I could not be a man, and not believe her.

Zar. Alas, my lord! what cruel fears have seiz'd you? [heard?
What harsh, mysterious words were those I

Osm. What fears should Osman feel, since Zara loves him?

Zar. I cannot live and answer to your voice
In that reproachful tone; your angry eye
Trembles with fury while you talk of love.

Osm. Since Zara loves him!

Zar. Is it possible
Osman should disbelieve it?—Again, again
Your late-repented violence returns—— [me!
Alas! what killing frowns you dart against
Can it be kind? Can it be just to doubt me?

Osm. No! I can doubt no longer—you may retire. [*Exit* ZARA.

Re-enter ORASMIN.

Orasmin, she's perfidious, even beyond
Her sex's undiscover'd power of seeming;
She's at the topmost point of shameless artifice;
An empress at deceiving! Soft and easy,
Destroying like a plague, in calm tranquillity:
She's innocent she swears—so is the fire;
It shines in harmless distance, bright and pleasing,
Consuming nothing till it first embraces.
Say, hast thou chosen a slave?—Is he instructed?
Haste to detect her vileness and my wrongs.

Oras. Punctual I have obey'd your whole command; [heart,
But have you arm'd, my lord, your injur'd
With coldness and indifference? Can you hear,
All painless and unmov'd, the false one's shame?

Osm. Orasmin, I adore her more than ever.

Oras. My lord! my emperor! forbid it, Heaven!

Osm. I have discern'd a gleam of distant hope; [France,
This hateful Christian, the light growth of
Proud, young, vain, amorous, conceited, rash,
Has misconceiv'd some charitable glance,
And judg'd it love in Zara: he alone,
Then, has offended me. Is it her fault,
If those she charms are indiscreet and daring?
Zara, perhaps, expected not this letter;
And I, with rashness groundless as its writer's,
Took fire at my own fancy, and have wrong'd her.
Now hear me with attention—Soon as night
Has thrown her welcome shadows o'er the palace;
When this Nerestan, this ungrateful Christian,
Shall lurk in expectation near our walls,
Be watchful that our guards surprize and seize him; [shame,
Then, bound in fetters, and o'erwhelmed with

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Conduct the daring traitor to my presence:—
But, above all, be sure you hurt not Zara;
Mindful to what supreme excess I love.
[*Exit* ORAS.
On this last trial all my hopes depend;
Prophet, for once thy kind assistance lend,
Dispel the doubts that rack my anxious breast,
If Zara's innocent, thy Osman's bless'd. [*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—ZARA *and* SELIMA.

Zara. Sooth me no longer with this vain desire;
To a recluse like me, who dares, henceforth,
Presume admission?——the seraglio's shut—
Barr'd and impassible——as death to time!
My brother ne'er must hope to see me more:—
How now! what unknown slave accosts us here?

Enter MELIDOR.

Mel. This letter, trusted to my hands, receive,
In secret witness I am wholly yours.
[ZARA *reads the letter.*
Sel. [*Aside.*] Thou everlasting ruler of the world!
Shed thy wish'd mercy on our hopeless tears;
Redeem us from the hands of hated infidels,
And save my princess from the breast of Osman.
Zar. I wish, my friend, the comfort of your counsel.
Sel. Retire—you shall be call'd—wait near—Go, leave us. [*Exit* MEL.
Zar. Read this, and tell me what I ought to answer:
For I would gladly hear my brother's voice.
Sel. Say rather you would hear the voice of Heaven.
'Tis not your brother calls you, but your God.
Zar. I know it, nor resist his awful will;
Thou know'st that I have bound my soul by oath;
But can I—ought I—to engage myself,
My brother, and the Christians, in this danger?
Sel. 'Tis not their danger that alarms your fears; [soul;
Your love speaks loudest to your shrinking
I know your heart of strength to hazard all,
But it has let in traitors, who surrender
On poor pretence of safety:—Learn at least,
To understand the weakness that deceives you:
You tremble to offend your haughty lover,
Whom wrongs and outrage but endear the more;
Yes—you are blind to Osman's cruel nature;
That Tartar's fierceness, that obscures his bounties;
This tiger, savage in his tenderness,
Courts with contempt, and threatens amidst softness;
Yet, cannot your neglected heart efface
His fated, fix'd impression!
Zar. What reproach
Can I with justice make him?——I, indeed,
Have given him cause to hate me!——
Was not his throne, was not his temple ready?
Did he not court his slave to be a queen,
And have not I declin'd it?——I who ought
To tremble, conscious of affronted power!
Have I not triumph'd o'er his pride and love?
Seen him submit his own high will to mine,
And sacrifice his wishes to my weakness?
Sel. Talk we no more of this unhappy passion:
What resolution will your virtue take?
Zar. All things combine to sink me to despair:
From the seraglio death alone will free me.
I long to see the Christians' happy climes;
Yet in the moment, while I form that prayer,
I sigh a secret wish to languish here.
How sad a state is mine! my restless soul
All ignorant what to do, or what to wish:
My only perfect sense is that of pain.
Oh, guardian Heaven! protect my brother's life,
For I will meet him, and fulfil his prayer:
Then, when from Solyma's unfriendly walls,
His absence shall unbind his sister's tongue,
Osman shall learn the secret of my birth,
My faith, unshaken, and my deathless love;
He will approve my choice, and pity me.
I'll send my brother word he may expect me.
Call in the faithful slave—God of my fathers!
[*Exit* SELIMA.
Let thy hand save me, and thy will direct.

Enter SELIMA *and* MELIDOR.

Go—tell the Christian who intrusted thee,
That Zara's heart is fix'd, nor shrinks at danger;
And that my faithful friend will, at the hour,
Expect, and introduce him to his wish.
Away—the sultan comes; he must not find us.
[*Exeunt* ZARA *and* SELIMA.

Enter OSMAN *and* ORASMIN.

Osm. Swifter, ye hours, move on; my fury glows
Impatient, and would push the wheels of time.
How now! What message dost thou bring? Speak boldly—
What answer gave she to the letter sent her?
Mel. She blush'd and trembled, and grew pale, and paus'd, [pale,
Then blush'd, and read it; and again grew
And wept, and smil'd, and doubted, and resolv'd:
For after all this race of varied passions,
When she had sent me out, and call'd me back,
Tell him (she cried) who has intrusted thee,
That Zara's heart is fix'd, nor shrinks at danger;
And that my faithful friend will, at the hour,
Expect, and introduce him to his wish.
Osm. Enough—begone—I have no ear for more.— [*To the slave.*
Leave me, thou too, Orasmin.—Leave me, life, [*To* ORASMIN.
For every mortal aspect moves my hate:
Leave me to my distraction——I grow mad,
And cannot bear the visage of a friend.
Leave me to rage, despair, and shame, and wrongs;
Leave me to seek myself—and shun mankind. [*Exit* ORASMIN.
Who am I?—Heaven! Who am I? What resolve I?
Zara! Nerestan! sound these words like names
Decreed to join? Why pause I?—Perish Zara——
Would I could tear her image from my heart:
'Twere happier not to live at all, than live
Her scorn, the sport of an ungrateful false one!
And sink the sovereign in a woman's property.

Re-enter ORASMIN.

Orasmin!—friend! return, I cannot bear
This absence from thy reason: 'twas unkind,

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'Twas cruel to obey me, thus distress'd,
And wanting power to think, when I had lost thee. [rival?
How goes the hour? Has he appear'd, this
Perish the shameful sound——this villain
Has he appear'd below? [Christian!
Oras. Silent and dark,
Th' unbreathing world is hush'd, as if it heard,
And listen'd to your sorrows.
Osm. Oh, treacherous night!
Thou lend'st thy ready veil to every treason,
And teeming mischiefs thrive beneath thy shade.
Orasmin, prophet, reason, truth and love!
After such length of benefits, to wrong me!
How have I over-rated, how mistaken,
The merit of her beauty!—Did I not
Forget I was a monarch? Did I remember
That Zara was a slave?——I gave up all,
Gave up tranquillity, distinction, pride,
And fell the shameful victim of my love!
Oras. Sir, Sovereign, Sultan, my Imperial Master!
Reflect on your own greatness,
The distant provocation.
Osm. Hark!—heard'st thou nothing?
Oras. My lord!
Osm. A voice, like dying groans!
Oras. I listen, but can hear nothing.
Osm. Again!—look out—he comes——
Oras. Nor tread of mortal foot—nor voice I hear:
The still seraglio lies, profoundly plung'd
In death-like silence! nothing stirs.—The air
Is soft as infant sleep; no breathing wing
Steals through the shadows, to awaken night.
Osm. Horrors a thousand times more dark than these,
Benight my suffering soul—Thou dost not know
To what excess of tenderness I lov'd her:
I knew no happiness, but what she gave me,
Nor could have felt a misery but for her!
Pity this weakness—mine are tears, Orasmin,
That fall not oft, nor lightly.——
Oras. Tears!—Oh, Heaven!
Osm. The first which ever yet unmann'd my eyes!
Oh! pity Zara—pity me—Orasmin,
These but forerun the tears of destin'd blood.
Oras. Oh, my unhappy lord!—I tremble for you——
Osm. Do—tremble at my sufferings, at my love;
At my revenge too, tremble—for 'tis due,
And will not be deluded.
Oras. Hark! I hear
The steps of men, along the neighb'ring wall!
Osm. Fly—seize him—'tis Nerestan! Wait no chains,
But drag him down to my impatient eye.
[*Exit* ORASMIN.

Enter ZARA *and* SELIMA, *in the dark.*

Zar. Where art thou, Selima? Give me thy
It is so dark, I tremble as I step, [hand.
With fears and startings, never felt till now!
Osm. Damnation! 'tis her voice! the well known sound,
That has so often charm'd me into baseness!
Oh, the perfidious hypocrite!——she goes
To meet th' inviting infidel!——now, now,
[*Drawing a dagger.*
Revenge, stand firm, and intercept his wishes;
Revenge? on whom?—no matter—earth and Heaven
Would blush, should I forbear: now—Zara, now! [*Drops the dagger.*
I must not, cannot strike; the starting steel,
Unwilling, flies my hand, and shuns to wound her.
Zar. This is the private path—come nearer lead me——
Are we not noticed, think'st thou!
Sel. Fear not, Madam;
It cannot now be long, ere we shall meet him.
Osm. That word has given me back my ebbing rage— [*Recovers the dagger.*
Zar. I walk in terror, and my heart forebodes.
Who's there!—Nerestan! Is it you?—O welcome—
Osm. [*Stabbing her.*] This to thy heart—'Tis not the traitor meets thee;
'Tis the betray'd—who writes it in thy blood.
Zar. O gracious Heaven! receive my parting soul,
And take thy trembling servant to thy mercy—
[*Dies.*
Osm. Soul! then revenge has reach'd thee—I will now [her!
Haste from this fatal place—I cannot leave
Whom did I strike? Was this the act of love?
Swallow me, earth!—She's silent—Zara's dead!
And should I live to see returning day,
'Twill show me but her blood!—show me left joyless, [me,
In a wide, empty world, with nothing round
But penitence and pain—And yet 'twas just:—
Hark!—Destiny has sent her lover to me,
To fill my vengeance, and restore my joy.

Enter ORASMIN *with* NERESTAN.

Approach, thou wretch! thou more than curs'd come near——
Thou who, in gratitude for freedom gain'd,
Hast given me miseries beyond thy own!
Thou heart of hero with a traitor's soul!
Go—reap thy due reward, prepare to suffer,
Whate'er inventive malice can inflict,
To make thee feel thy death, and perish slow.
Are my commands obey'd?
Oras. All is prepar'd.
Osm. Thy wanton eyes look round, in search of her
Whose love descending to a slave like thee,
From my dishonour'd hand receiv'd her doom.
See! where she lies——
Ner. Oh, fatal, rash mistake!
Osm. Dost thou behold her, slave?
Ner. Unhappy sister!
Osm. Sister!—Didst thou say sister? If thou didst,
Bless me with deafness, Heaven!
Ner. Tyrant! I did——
She was my sister——All that now is left thee,
Despatch——From my distracted heart drain next
The remnant of the royal Christian blood:
Old Lusignan, expiring in my arms,
Sent his too wretched son, with his last blessing,
To his now murder'd daughter!——
Would I had seen the bleeding innocent!
I would have liv'd to speak to her in death!
Would have awaken'd in her languid heart,
A livelier sense of her abandon'd God:
That God, who left by her, forsook her too,
And gave the poor lost sufferer to thy rage.
Osm. Thy sister!—Lusignan her father!—Selima, [Zara?
Can this be true?—and have I wrong'd thee,
Sel. Thy love was all the cloud 'twixt her and Heaven!

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Osm. Be dumb—for thou art base, to add distraction
To my already more than bleeding heart.
And was thy love sincere?—What then remains?
Ner. Why should a tyrant hesitate on murder?
There now remains but mine, of all the blood
Which, through thy father's cruel reign and thine,
Has never ceas'd to stream on Syria's sands.
Restore a wretch to his unhappy race;
Nor hope that torments, after such a scene,
Can force one feeble groan to feast thy anger.
I waste my fruitless words in empty air;
The tyrant o'er the bleeding wound he made,
Hangs his unmoving eye, and heeds not me.
Osm. Oh, Zara!——
Orus. Alas, my lord, return—whither would grief
Transport your generous heart?—This Christian dog——
Osm. Take off his fetters, and observe my will:
To him, and all his friends, give instant liberty:
Pour a profusion of the richest gifts
On these unhappy Christians; and when heap'd
With varied benefits, and charg'd with riches,
Give 'em safe conduct to the nearest port.
Orus. But, Sir——
Osm. Reply not, but obey.——
Fly—nor dispute thy master's last command,
Thy prince, who orders—and thy friend, who loves thee!
Go——lose no time—farewell—begone—and thou!
Unhappy warrior!—yet less lost than I——
Haste from our bloody land—and to thy own,
Convey this poor, pale object of my rage.
Thy king and all his Christians, when they hear
Thy miseries, shall mourn 'em with their tears;
But, if thou tell'st 'em mine, and tell'st 'em truly,
They who shall hate my crime, shall pity me.
Take, too, this poignard with thee, which my hand
Has stain'd with blood far dearer than my own;
Tell 'em—with this I murder'd her I lov'd;
The noblest and most virtuous among women!
The soul of innocence, and pride of truth:
Tell 'em, I laid my empire at her feet:
Tell 'em, I plung'd my dagger in her blood;
Tell 'em, I so ador'd—and thus reveng'd her.
[*Stabs himself.*
Reverence this hero—and conduct him safe.
[*Dies.*
Ner. Direct me, great inspirer of the soul!
How should I act, how judge in this distress?
Amazing grandeur, and detested rage?
Even I, amidst my tears, admire this foe,
And mourn his death, who liv'd to give me wo.
[*Exeunt omnes.*

EPILOGUE.

Here, take a surfeit, Sirs, of being jealous,
And shun the pains that plague those Turkish fellows:
Where love and death join hands, their darts confounding:
Save us, good Heaven, from this new way of wounding.
Curs'd climate! where to cards a lone-left woman
Has only one of her black guards to summon!
Sighs, and sits mop'd, with her tame beast to gaze at: [at!
And that cold treat, is all the game she plays
For, should she once some abler hand be trying,
Poignard's the word!—and the first deal is—dying!
'Slife! should the bloody whim get ground in Britain,
Where woman's freedom has such heights to sit on;
Dagger, provok'd, would bring on desolation,
And murder'd belles unpeople half the nation!——
Fain would I hope this play, to move compassion;
And live to hunt suspicion out of fashion.——
Four motives strongly recommend the lover's
Hate of this weakness that our scene discovers.
First then,—A woman will, or wont—depend on't: [on't.
If she will do't, she will:—and there's an end
But, if she wont—since safe and sound your trust is,
Fear is affront; and jealousy injustice.
Next,—he who bids his dear do what she pleases, [eases:
Blunts wedlock's edge, and all its torture
For—not to feel your sufferings is the same,
As not to suffer:—All the difference—name.
Thirdly,—the jealous husband wrongs his honour; [her:
No wife goes lame, without some hurt upon
And the malicious world will still be guessing,
Who oft dines out dislikes her own cook's dressing.
Fourth, and lastly,—to conclude my lecture,
If you would fix th' inconstant wife—respect her.
She who perceives her virtues over-rated,
Will fear to have the account more justly stated:
And borrowing, from her pride, the good wife's seeming,
Grow really such—to merit your esteeming.

A

COMIC CHORUS;

OR,

INTERLUDES,

DESIGNED TO BE SUNG BETWEEN THE ACTS OF

ZARA.

PROLOGUE.

By Mr. Beard *and* Mrs. Clive, *from opposite Entrances.*

She. So, Sir—you're a man of your word.
He. Who would break it, when summon'd by you?
She. Very fine that—but pray have you heard,
What it is you are summon'd to do?
He. Not a word—but expected to see
Something new in the musical way.
She. Why, this author has cast you and me,
As a Prologue, it seems, to his play,

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He. What then is its tuneful name,
Robinhood of the Greenwood tree?
Or what good old ballad of fame
Has he built into tra-ge-dy?
She. Though he rails against songs, he thought fit,
Most gravely to urge and implore us,
In aid of his tragical wit,
To erect ourselves into a Chorus.
[*Laughing.*
He. A Chorus! what's that—a composing
Of groans to the rants of his madness?
She. No—he hinders the boxes from dozing,
By mixing some spirit with sadness.
He. So then—'tis our task I suppose,
To sing sober sense into relish;
Strike up, at each tragical close,
And unheeded moral embellish.
She. 'Twas the custom, you know, once in Greece,
And if here 'tis not witty, 'tis new.
He. Well then, when you find an act cease,
[*Turning to the boxes.*
Tremble ladies——
She. And gentlemen, too—— [*To the men.*
If I give not the beaux good advice,
[*Merrily.*
Let me dwindle to recitative!
He. Nor will I to the belles be more nice,
When I catch 'em but here, to receive.
She. If there's ought to be learn'd from the play,
I shall sit in a nook, here, behind,
Popping out in the good ancient way,
Now and then, with a piece of my mind.
He. But suppose that no moral should rise,
Worth the ears of the brave or the fair!
She. Why, we'll then give the word—and advise—
Face about, and stand all as ye were.

AFTER THE FIRST ACT.

SONG IN DUET.

He. THE Sultan's a bridegroom—the slaves are set free,
And none must presume to wear fetters but he!
Before honey-moon,
Love's fiddle's in tune;
So we think (silly souls!) 'tis always to be:
For the man that is blind—how should he foresee!
She. I hate these hot blades, who so fiercely begin;
To balk a rais'd hope is a cowardly sin!
The maid that is wise, let her always procure,
Rather a grave than a spirited wooer:
What she loses at breakfast, at supper she'll win.
But your amorous violence never endures:
For to dance without doors
Is the way to be weary, before we get in.
He. Pray how does it happen, that passion so gay,
Blooms, fades, and fails away,
Like the rose of this morn, that at night must decay?
Woman, I fear,
Does one thing appear,
But is found quite another, when look'd on too near.
She. Ah—no—
Not—so—
'Tis the fault of you men, who, with flames of desire,
Set your palates on fire,
And dream not, that eating—will appetite tire;
So resolve in your heat,
To do nothing, but eat,
'Till, alas! on a sudden you sleep o'er your meat
Therefore, learn, O ye fair!—— [
He. And, you lovers, take care——
She. That you trust not beforehand——
He. That you trust not at all.
She. Man was born to deceive,
He. Woman form'd to believe.
Both. Trust not one of us all! [
For to stand on sure ground is the way not to fall.

AFTER THE SECOND ACT.

MRS. CLIVE (*sola*) *to a Flute.*

I.

OH, jealousy, thou bane of bleeding love!
Ah, how unhappy we!
Doom'd by the partial powers above,
Eternal slaves to thee!
Not more unstaid than lovers' hearts the wind!
This moment dying—and the next unkind.
Ah! wavering, weak desires of frail mankind!
With pleading passion ever to pursue,
Yet triumph, only to undo.

II.

Go to the deeps below, thou joyless fiend,
And never rise again to sow despair!
Nor you, ye heedless fair, occasions lend,
To blast your blooming hopes, and bring on care.
Never conclude your innocence secure,
Prudence alone makes love endure.

[*As she is going off, he meets her, and pulls her back, detaining her while he sings what follows.*

He. Ever, ever, doubt the fair in sorrow,
Mourning, as if they felt compassion:
Yet what they weep for to-day—to-morrow,
They'll be first to laugh into fashion.
None are betray'd, if they trust not the charmer;
Jealousy guards the weak from falling;
Would you never catch—you must often alarm her:
Hearts to deceive is a woman's calling.
[*After the song, he lets her go, and they join in a duet.*
She. Come, let us be friends, and no longer abuse,
Condemn, and accuse,
Each other.
He. Would you have us agree, you must fairly confess,
The love we caress,
We smother.
She. I am loath to think that——
He. Yet, you know, it is true;
She. Well—what if I do,
No matter.
He. Could you teach us a way to love on, without strife?
She. Suit the first part of life
To the latter.
He. 'Tis an honest advice; for when love is new blown,
Gay colours are shown,
Too glaring.

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She. Then, alas, for poor wives!—comes a blustering day,
And blows 'em away,
Most scaring!

AFTER THE THIRD ACT.

By Mr. Beard *alone.*

Mark, oh, ye beauties!—gay and young,
Mark the painful woes and weeping,
That from forc'd concealment sprung,
Punish the sin of secret-keeping.
Tell then, nor veil a willing heart,
When the lover, lov'd alarms it;
But—to sooth the pleasing smart,
Whisper the glowing wish that warms it.
She that would hide the gentle flame,
Does but teach her hope to languish;
She that boldly tells her aim,
Flies from the path that leads to anguish.
Not that too far your trust should go;
All that you say—to all discover;
All that you do——but two should know,
One of 'em you, and one your lover.
[*She meets him going off.*
She. Ah! man, thou wert always a traitor,
Thou giv'st thy advice to betray;
Ah! form'd for a rover by nature,
Thou leader of love the wrong way.
Would women let women advise them,
They could not so easily stray,
'Tis trusting to lovers supplies 'em
With will and excuse to betray.
She's safe, who, in guard of her passion,
Far, far, from confessing her pain,
Keeps silence, in spite of the fashion,
Nor suffers her eyes to explain.

AFTER THE FOURTH ACT.

Duet.

She. Well, what do you think——of these sorrows and joys,
These calms, and these whirlwinds—this silence and noise?
Which love in the bosom of man employs?
He. For my part, would lovers be govern'd by me,
Not one of you women so wish'd-for should be,
Since here we a proof of your mischief see.
She. Why, what would you do to escape the distress?
He. I would do—I would do—by my soul I can't guess—
She. Poor wretch! by my soul, I imagin'd no less.
Come, come—let me tell you, these tempests of love,
Did but blow up desire, its briskness to prove,
Which else would—you know, too lazily move.
Were women like logs, of a make to lie still,
Men would sleep and grow dull—but our absolute will
Sets life all a-whirling, like wheels in a mill.
He. Ambition in woman, like valour in man,
Tempts danger—from which they'd be safe if they ran:
And once get 'em in—get 'em out how you can.
She. Pray, what will you give me to teach you the trick,
To keep your wife pleas'd either healthy or sick?
He. The man who hits that, sure, must touch to the quick!
She. Learn this—and depend on a life without pain,
Say nothing to vex her, yet let her complain;
Submit to your fate—and disturb not her reign:
Be moped when she's sad—and be pleas'd when she's gay,
Believe her, and trust her—and give her—her way;
For want of this rule—there's the devil to pay.
Both. For want of this rule—there's the devil to pay.

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THE WEST INDIAN.

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY RICHARD CUMBERLAND, Esq.

REMARKS.

THIS comedy was produced at Drury Lane in 1771, nor have 52 years lessened its merited attraction. Mr. Cumberland selected for the heroes of this piece—an Irishman and a West Indian, two of those suffering characters whom the prejudices of society have usually exhibited as butts for ridicule and abuse, with the laudable endeavour to reconcile the world to them, and them to the world: he availed himself of Mr. Garrick's advice and experience, and was rewarded by an unusual run of twenty eight nights. The copyright was sold by the author for 150*l.* and the publisher boasted of the disposal of 12,000 copies.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	AS ORIGINALLY ACTED, 1771.	DRURY LANE, 1814.
STOCKWELL,	*Mr. Aickin,*	*Mr. Powell.*
BELCOUR,	*Mr. King,*	*Mr. Elliston.*
CAPTAIN DUDLEY,	*Mr. Packer,*	*Mr. Carr.*
CHARLES DUDLEY,	*Mr. Cautherley,*	*Mr. J. Wallack.*
MAJOR O'FLAHERTY,	*Mr. Moody,*	*Mr. Johnstone.*
STUKELY,	*Mr. J. Aickin,*	*Mr. Maddocks.*
FULMER,	*Mr. Baddeley,*	*Mr. Penley.*
VARLAND,	*Mr. Parsons,*	*Mr. Knight.*
LADY RUSPORT,	*Mrs. Hopkins,*	*Mrs. Sparks.*
CHARLOTTE RUSPORT,	*Mrs. Abington,*	*Mrs. Davison.*
LOUISA DUDLEY,	*Mrs. Baddeley,*	*Miss Boyce.*
MRS. FULMER,	*Mrs. Egerton,*	*Miss Tidswell.*
LUCY,	*Mrs. Love,*	*Mrs. Scott.*
HOUSEKEEPER,	*Mrs. Bradshaw,*	*Mrs. Chatterly.*

Servants, Sailors, &c.

SCENE.—London.

ACT I.

SCENE 1.—A Merchant's Counting-house.

In an inner room, set off by glass doors, are discovered several clerks, employed at their desks. A writing table in the front room. STOCKWELL *is discovered, reading a letter;* STUKELY *comes gently out of the back room, and observes him some time before he speaks.*

Stuke. He seems disordered: something in that letter; and, I'm afraid, of an unpleasant sort.—He has many ventures of great account at sea; a ship richly freighted for Barcelona; another for Lisbon; and others expected from Cadiz, of still greater value. Besides these, I know he has many deep concerns in foreign bottoms, and underwritings to a vast amount. I'll accost him—Sir—Mr. Stockwell!

Stock. Stukely!—Well, have you shipped the cloths?

Stuke. I have, Sir; here's the bill of lading, and copy of the invoice; the assortments are all compared: Mr. Traffic will give you the policy upon 'Change.

Stock. 'Tis very well—lay these papers by; and no more business for awhile. Shut the door, Stukely; I have had long proof of your friendship and fidelity to me; a matter of most intimate concern lies on my mind, and 'twill be a sensible relief to unbosom myself to you; I have just now been informed of the arrival of the young West Indian, I have so long been expecting—you know whom I mean?

Stuke. Yes, Sir: Mr. Belcour, the young gentleman who inherited old Belcour's great estate in Jamaica.

Stock. Hush! not so loud; come a little nearer this way. This Belcour is now in London; part of his baggage is already arrived, and I expect him every minute. Is it to be

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wondered at, if his coming throws me into some agitation, when I tell you, Stukely, he is my son.

Stuke. Your son!

Stock. Yes, Sir, my only son. Early in life, I accompanied his grandfather to Jamaica as his clerk; he had an only daughter, somewhat older than myself; the mother of this gentleman: it was my chance (call it good or ill) to engage her affections; and, as the inferiority of my condition made it hopeless to expect her father's consent, her fondness provided an expedient, and we were privately married; the issue of that concealed engagement is, as I have told you, this Belcour.

Stuke. That event surely discovered your connexion.

Stock. You shall hear. Not many days after our marriage, old Belcour set out for England; and, during his abode here, my wife was, with great secrecy, delivered of this son. Fruitful in expedients to disguise her situation without parting from her infant, she contrived to have it laid and received at her door as a foundling. After some time her father returned, having left me here; in one of those favourable moments that decide the fortunes of prosperous men, this child was introduced; from that instant he treated him as his own, gave him his name, and brought him up in his family. Old Belcour is dead, and has bequeathed his whole estate to him we are speaking of.

Stuke. Now then you are no longer bound to secrecy.

Stock. True: but before I publicly reveal myself, I could wish to make some experiment of my son's disposition: this can only be done by letting his spirit take its course without restraint; by these means, I think I shall discover much more of his real character under the title of his merchant, than I should under that of his father.

Enter a SAILOR, *ushering in several black* SERVANTS, *carrying portmanteaus, trunks, &c.*

Sail. 'Save your honour! is your name Stockwell, pray?

Stock. It is.

Sail. Part of my master Belcour's baggage, an't please you: there's another cargo not far a-stern of us; and the cockswain has got charge of the dumb creatures.

Stock. Pr'ythee, friend, what dumb creatures do you speak of; has Mr. Belcour brought over a collection of wild beasts?

Sail. No, Lord love him; no, not he; let me see; there's two green monkies, a pair of gray parrots, a Jamaica sow and pigs, and a Mangrove dog; that's all.

Stock. Is that all?

Sail. Yes, your honour; yes, that's all. bless his heart, a' might have brought over the whole island if he would; a' didn't leave a dry eye in it.

Stock. Indeed!—Stukely, show them where to bestow their baggage. Follow that gentleman.

Sail. Come, bear a hand, my lads, bear a hand. [*Exit, with* STUKELY *and* SERVANTS.

Stock. If the principal tallies with the purveyors, he must be a singular spectacle in this place: he has a friend, however, in this seafaring fellow; 'tis no bad prognostic of a man's heart, when his shipmates give him a good word. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*A Drawing Room.*

Enter HOUSE-KEEPER *and* SERVANT.

House. Why, what a fuss does our good master put himself in about this West Indian; see what a bill of fare I've been forced to draw out; seven and nine, I'll assure you, and only a family dinner, as he calls it: why, if my lord mayor was expected, there couldn't be a greater to-do about him.

Serv. I wish to my heart you had but seen the loads of trunks, boxes, and portmanteaus, he has sent hither. An ambassador's baggage, with all the smuggled goods of his family, does not exceed it.

House. A fine pickle he'll put the house into: had he been master's own son, and a Christian Englishman, there could not be more rout than there is about this Creolian, as they call him.

Serv. No matter for that; he's very rich, and that's sufficient. They say, he has rum and sugar enough belonging to him, to make all the water in the Thames into punch. But I see my master's coming. [*Exit* HOUSE-KEEPER.

Enter STOCKWELL.

Stock. Where is Mr. Belcour? Who brought this note from him?

Serv. A waiter from the London Tavern, Sir; he says, the young gentleman is just dressed, and will be with you directly.

Stock. Show him in when he arrives.

Serv. I shall, Sir.—I'll have a peep at him first, however; I've a great mind to see this outlandish spark. The sailor fellow says, he'll make rare doings amongst us. [*Aside.*

Stock. You need not wait; leave me. [*Exit* SERVANT.] Let me see. [*Reads.*

Sir,—I write to you under the hands of the hair-dresser; as soon as I have made myself decent, and slipped on some fresh clothes, I will have the honour of paying you my devoirs. Yours,

BELCOUR.

He writes at his ease; for he's unconscious to whom his letter is addressed; but what a palpitation does it throw my heart into; a father's heart! All the reports I ever received give me favourable impressions of his character, wild, perhaps, as the manner of his country is, but, I trust, not frantic or unprincipled.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Sir, the foreign gentleman is come. [*Exit.*

Enter BELCOUR.

Stock. Mr. Belcour, I am rejoiced to see you; you are welcome to England!

Bel. I thank you heartily, good Mr. Stockwell; you and I have long conversed at a distance; now we are met; and the pleasure this meeting gives me, amply compensates for the perils I have run through in accomplishing it.

Stock. What perils, Mr. Belcour? I could not have thought you would have made a bad passage at this time o' year.

Bel. Nor did we: courier-like, we came posting to your shores, upon the pinions of the swiftest gales that ever blew; 'tis upon English ground all my difficulties have arisen; 'tis the passage from the river side I complain of.

Stock. Ay, indeed! What obstructions can you have met between this and the river side?

Bel. Innumerable! Your town is as full of

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defiles as the island of Corsica, and I believe they are as obstinately defended; so much hurry, bustle, and confusion, on your quays: so many sugar casks, porter butts, and common council men, in your streets, that, unless a man marched with artillery in his front, 'tis more than the labour of Hercules can effect, to make any tolerable way through your town.

Stock. I am sorry you have been so incommoded.

Bel. Why, 'faith 'twas all my own fault; accustomed to a land of slaves, and out of patience with the whole tribe of custom-house extortioners, boatmen, tide-waiters, and water-bailiffs, that beset me on all sides, worse than a swarm of moschettoes, I proceeded a little too roughly to brush them away with my rattan; the sturdy rogues took this in dudgeon, and, beginning to rebel, the mob chose different sides, and a furious scuffle ensued; in the course of which, my person and apparel suffered so much, that I was obliged to step into the first tavern to refit, before I could make my approaches in any decent trim.

Stock. All without is as I wish; dear nature, add the rest, I am happy! [*Aside.*] Well, Mr. Belcour, 'tis a rough sample you have had of my countrymen's spirit; but, I trust, you'll not think the worse of them for it.

Bel. Not at all, not at all; I like them the better. Was I only a visitor, I might, perhaps, wish them a little more tractable; but, as a fellow-subject, and a sharer in their freedom, I applaud their spirit, though I feel the effects of it in every bone of my skin.

Stock. That's well; I like that well. How gladly I could fall upon his neck, and own myself his father! [*Aside.*

Bel. Well, Mr. Stockwell, for the first time in my life, here am I in England; at the fountain head of pleasure, in the land of beauty, of arts, and elegancies. My happy stars have given me a good estate, and the conspiring winds have blown me hither to spend it.

Stock. To use it, not to waste it, I should hope; to treat it, Mr. Belcour, not as a vassal, over whom you have a wanton and a despotic power; but as a subject, which you are bound to govern, with a temperate and restrained authority.

Bel. True, Sir, most truly said; mine's a commission, not a right; I am the offspring of distress, and every child of sorrow is my brother; while I have hands to hold, therefore, I will hold them open to mankind; but, Sir, my passions are my masters; they take me where they will; and oftentimes they leave to reason and to virtue, nothing but my wishes and my sighs.

Stock. Come, come, the man who can accuse, corrects himself.

Bel. Ah! that's an office I am weary of; I wish a friend would take it up; I would to Heaven you had leisure for the employ, but, did you drive a trade to the four corners of the world, you would not find the task so toilsome as to keep me free from faults.

Stock. Well, I am not discouraged; this candour tells me I should not have the fault of self-conceit to combat; that, at least, is not amongst the number.

Bel. No; if I knew that man on earth who thought more humbly of me than I do of myself, I would take up his opinion, and forego my own.

Stock. And were I to choose a pupil, it should be one of your complexion; so if you'll come along with me, we'll agree upon your admission, and enter on a course of lectures directly.

Bel. With all my heart. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—A Room in LADY RUSPORT'S *house.*

Enter LADY RUSPORT *and* MISS RUSPORT.

Lady R. Miss Rusport, I desire to hear no more of captain Dudley and his destitute family; not a shilling of mine shall ever cross the hands of any of them; because my sister chose to marry a beggar, am I bound to support him and his posterity?

Miss R. I think you are.

Lady R. You think I am! and pray where do you find the law that tells you so?

Miss R. I am not proficient enough to quote chapter and verse; but I take charity to be a main clause in the great statute of Christianity.

Lady R. I say charity indeed! I am apt to think the distresses of old Dudley, and of his daughter into the bargain, would never break your heart, if there was not a certain young fellow of two and twenty in the case; who, by the happy recommendation of a good person, and the brilliant appointments of an ensigncy, will, if I am not mistaken, cozen you out of a fortune of twice twenty thousand pounds, as soon as ever you are of age to bestow it upon him.

Miss R. A nephew of your ladyship's can never want any other recommendation with me: and if my partiality for Charles Dudley is acquitted by the rest of the world, I hope lady Rusport will not condemn me for it.

Lady R. I condemn you! I thank Heaven, Miss Rusport, I am no ways responsible for your conduct; nor is it any concern of mine how you dispose of yourself: you are not my daughter, and, when I married your father, poor Sir Stephen Rusport, I found you a forward spoiled Miss of fourteen, far above being instructed by me.

Miss R. Perhaps your ladyship calls this instruction.

Lady R. You are strangely pert; but 'tis no wonder: your mother, I'm told, was a fine lady: and according to the modern style of education you was brought up. It was not so in my young days; there was then some decorum in the world, some subordination, as the great Locke expresses it. Oh! 'twas an edifying sight, to see the regular deportment observed in our family; no giggling, no gossiping, was going on there; my good father, Sir Oliver Roundhead, never was seen to laugh himself, nor ever allowed it in his children.

Miss R. Ay; those were happy times, indeed.

Lady R. But, in this forward age, we have coquettes in the egg-shell, and philosophers in the cradle; girls of fifteen, that lead the fashion in new caps and new opinions, that have their sentiments and their sensations: and the idle fops encourage them in it: O'my conscience, I wonder what it is the men can see in such babies.

Miss R. True, Madam; but all men do not overlook the maturer beauties of your ladyship's age; witness your admired Major Dennis O'Flaherty; there's an example of some discernment; I declare to you, when your

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ladyship is by, the major takes no more notice of me, than if I was part of the furniture of your chamber.

Lady R. The major, child, has travelled through various kingdoms and climates, and has more enlarged notions of female merit than falls to the lot of an English home-bred lover; in most other countries, no woman on your side forty would ever be named in a polite circle.

Miss R. Right, Madam; I've been told that in Vienna they have coquettes upon crutches, and Venuses in their grand climacteric; the lover there celebrates the wrinkles, not the dimples, in his mistress's face. The major, I think, has served in the Imperial army.

Lady R. Are you piqued, my young Madam? Had my sister Louisa yielded to the addresses of one of major O'Flaherty's person and appearance, she would have had some excuse; but to run away as she did, at the age of sixteen too, with a man of old Dudley's sort—

Miss R. Was, in my opinion, the most venial trespass that ever girl of sixteen committed; of a noble family, an engaging person, strict honour, and sound understanding, what accomplishment was there wanting in Captain Dudley, but that which the prodigality of his ancestors had deprived him of?

Lady R. They left him as much as he deserves; hasn't the old man captain's half-pay? and is not the son an ensign?

Miss R. An ensign! Alas, poor Charles! would to Heaven he knew what my heart feels and suffers for his sake.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Ensign Dudley, to wait upon your ladyship.

Lady R. Who! Dudley; what can have brought him to town?

Miss R. Dear Madam, 'tis Charles Dudley, 'tis your nephew.

Lady R. Nephew! I renounce him as my nephew; Sir Oliver renounced him as his grandson; wasn't he son of the eldest daughter, and only male descendant of Sir Oliver; and didn't he cut him off with a shilling? Didn't the poor dear good old man leave his fortune to me except a small annuity to my maiden sister, who spoiled her constitution with nursing him? and, depend upon it, not a penny of that fortune shall ever be disposed of otherwise than according to the will of the donor.

Enter CHARLES DUDLEY.

So, young man, whence came you? what brings you to town?

Charles. If there is any offence in my coming to town, your ladyship is in some degree responsible for it, for part of my errand was to pay my duty here.

Lady R. And where is your father, child; and your sister? are they in town too.

Charles. They are.

Lady R. Ridiculous! I don't know what people do in London, who have no money to spend in it.

Miss R. Dear Madam, speak more kindly to your nephew; how can you oppress a youth of his sensibility?

Lady R. Miss Rusport, I insist upon your retiring to your apartment; when I want your advice, I'll send to you. [*Exit* MISS RUSPORT.] So you have put on a red coat too, as well as your father; 'tis plain what value you set upon the good advice Sir Oliver used to give you: how often has he cautioned you against the army?

Charles. Had it pleased my grandfather to enable me to have obeyed his caution, I would have done it; but you well know how destitute I am; and 'tis not to be wondered at if I prefer the service of my king to that of any other master.

Lady R. Well, well, take your own course; 'tis no concern of mine: you never consulted me.

Charles. I frequently wrote to your ladyship, but could obtain no answer; and since my grandfather's death, this is the first opportunity I have had of waiting upon you.

Lady R. I must desire you not to mention the death of that dear good man in my hearing; my spirits cannot support it.

Charles. I shall obey you; permit me to say, that, as that event has richly supplied you with the materials of bounty, the distresses of my family can furnish you with objects of it.

Lady R. The distresses of your family, child, are quite out of the question at present. Tell your father and your sister, I totally disapprove of their coming up to town.

Charles. Must I tell my father that, before your ladyship knows the motive that brought him hither? Allured by the offer of exchanging for a commission on full pay, the veteran, after thirty years' service, prepares to encounter the fatal heats of Senegambia; but wants a small supply to equip him for the expedition.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Major O'Flaherty, to wait on your ladyship.

Enter MAJOR.

O'Fla. Spare your speeches, young man; don't you think her ladyship can take my word for that? I hope, Madam, 'tis evidence enough of my being present, when I have the honour of telling you so myself.

Lady R. Major O'Flaherty, I am rejoiced to see you. Nephew Dudley, you perceive I am engaged.

Charles. I shall not intrude upon your ladyship's more agreeable engagements. I presume I have my answer.

Lady R. Your answer, child! What answer can you possibly expect? or how can your romantic father suppose that I am to abet him in all his idle and extravagant undertakings? Come, major, let me show you the way into my dressing-room; and let us leave this young adventurer to his meditation. [*Exit.*

O'Fla. I follow you, my lady. Young gentleman, your obedient! Upon my conscience, as fine a young fellow as I would wish to clap my eyes on: he might have answered my salute, however—well, let it pass: Fortune, perhaps frowns upon the poor lad; she's a damned slippery lady, and very apt to jilt us poor fellows that wear cockades in our hats. Fare thee well, honey, whoever thou art. [*Exit.*

Charles. So much for the virtues of a puritan—out upon it! her heart is flint; yet that woman, that aunt of mine, without one worthy particle in her composition, would, I dare be

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sworn, as soon set her foot in a pesthouse, as in a playhouse.

Enter MISS RUSPORT.

Miss R. Stop, stay a little, Charles; whither are you going in such haste?

Charles. Madam; Miss Rusport; what are your commands?

Miss R. Why so reserved? We had used to answer to no other names than those of Charles and Charlotte.

Charles. What ails you? You have been weeping.

Miss R. No, no; or, if I have, your eyes are full too; but I have a thousand things to say to you: before you go, tell me, I conjure you, where you are to be found: here, give me your direction; write it upon the back of this visiting ticket—Have you a pencil?

Charles. I have: but why should you desire to find us out? 'tis a poor little inconvenient place; my sister has no apartment fit to receive you in.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Madam, my lady desires your company directly.

Miss R. I am coming—well, have you wrote it? Give it me. O, Charles! either you do not or you will not understand me.

[*Exeunt severally.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Room in FULMER'S *house.*

FULMER *discovered, seated;* MRS. FULMER *enters to him.*

Mrs. Ful. Why, how you sit, musing and moping, sighing and desponding! I'm ashamed of you, Mr. Fulmer; is this the country you described to me, a second Eldorado, rivers of gold and rocks of diamonds? You found me in a pretty snug retired way of life at Boulogne, out of the noise and bustle of the world, and wholly at my ease: but, thank Heaven, our partnership is revocable; I am not your wedded wife, praised be my stars! for what have we got, whom have we gulled but ourselves? which of all your trains has taken fire? even this poor expedient of your bookseller's shop seems abandoned; for, if a chance customer drops in, who is there, pray, to help him to what he wants?

Ful. Patty, you know it is not upon slight grounds that I despair; there had used to be a livelihood to be picked up in this country, both for the honest and dishonest: I have tried each walk, and am likely to starve at last; there is not a point to which the wit and faculty of man can turn, that I have not set mine to, but in vain; I am beat through every quarter of the compass.

Mrs. Ful. Ah! common efforts all; strike me a master-stroke, Mr. Fulmer, if you wish to make any figure in this country.

Ful. But where, how, and what? I have blustered for prerogative; I have bellowed for freedom; I have offered to serve my country; I have engaged to betray it; a master-stroke, truly! why I have talked treason, writ treason, and, if a man can't live by that, he can live by nothing. Here I set up as a bookseller, why, men leave off reading; and if I was to turn butcher, I believe, o'my conscience, they'd leave off eating.

CAPTAIN DUDLEY *crosses the stage.*

Mrs. Ful. Why, there now's your lodger, old Captain Dudley, as he calls himself; there's no flint without fire; something might be struck out of him, if you had the wit to find the way.

Ful. Hang him, an old dry-skinned curmudgeon; you may as well think to get truth out of a courtier, or candour out of a critic: I can make nothing of him; besides, he's poor and therefore not for our purpose.

Mrs. Ful. The more fool he! Would any man be poor, that had such a prodigy in his possession?

Ful. His daughter, you mean; she is, indeed, uncommonly beautiful.

Mrs. Ful. Beautiful! Why, she need only be seen, to have the first men in the kingdom at her feet. What would some of your young nabobs give?—

Ful. Hush! here comes the captain; good girl, leave us to ourselves, and let me try what I can make of him.

Mrs. Ful. Captain truly! i'faith I'd have a regiment, had I such a daughter, before I was three months older. [*Exit.*

Enter CAPTAIN DUDLEY.

Ful. Captain Dudley, good morning to you.

Dud. Mr. Fulmer, I have borrowed a book from your shop; 'tis the sixth volume of my deceased friend Tristram: he is a flattering writer to us poor soldiers; and the divine story of Le Fevre, which makes part of this book, in my opinion of it, does honour, not to its author only, but to human nature.

Ful. He's an author I keep in the way of trade, but one I never relished: he is much too loose and profligate for my taste.

Dud. That's being too severe: I hold him to be a moralist in the noblest sense; he plays, indeed, with the fancy, and sometimes, perhaps, too wantonly: but while he thus designedly masks his main attack, he comes at once upon the heart; refines, amends it, softens it; beats down each selfish barrier from about it, and opens every sluice of pity and benevolence,

Ful. Well, Sir, I shall not oppose your opinion; a favourite author is like a favourite mistress; and there, you know, captain, no man likes to have his taste arraigned.

Dud. Upon my word, Sir, I don't know what a man likes in that case; 'tis an experiment I never made.

Ful. Sir!—Are you serious?

Dud. 'Tis of little consequence whether you think so.

Ful. What a formal old prig it is! [*Aside.*] I apprehend you, Sir; you speak with caution; you are married?

Dud. I have been.

Ful. And this young lady, who accompanies you—

Dud. Passes for my daughter.

Ful. Passes for his daughter! humph—[*Aside.*] She is exceedingly beautiful, finely accomplished, of a most enchanting shape and air.

Dud. You are much too partial; she has the greatest defect a woman can have.

Ful. How so, pray?

Dud. She has no fortune.

Ful. Rather say that you have none; and that's a sore defect in one of your years, Captain Dudley: you have served, no doubt?

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Dud. Familiar coxcomb! But I'll humour him. [*Aside.*

Ful. A close old fox! but I'll unkennel him. [*Aside.*

Dud. Above thirty years I have been in the service, Mr. Fulmer.

Ful. I guessed as much; I laid it at no less: why, 'tis a wearisome time; 'tis an apprenticeship to a profession, fit only for a patriarch. But preferment must be closely followed: you never could have been so far behind-hand in the chase, unless you had palpably mistaken your way. You'll pardon me; but I begin to perceive you have lived in the world, not with it.

Dud. It may be so; and you, perhaps, can give me better counsel. I am now soliciting a favour; an exchange to a company on full pay; nothing more; and yet I meet a thousand bars to that; though, without boasting, I should think the certificate of services which I sent in might have purchased that indulgence to me.

Ful. Who thinks or cares about them? Certificate of services, indeed! Send in a certificate of your fair daughter: carry her in your hand with you.

Dud. What! Who! My daughter! Carry my daughter! Well, and what then?

Ful. Why, then your fortune's made, that's all.

Dud. I understand you: and this you call knowledge of the world! Despicable knowledge! but, sirrah, I will have you know— [*Threatens him.*

Ful. Help! Who's within? Would you strike me, Sir? would you lift up your hand against a man in his own house?

Dud. In a church, if he dare insult the poverty of a man of honour.

Ful. Have a care what you do; remember there is such a thing in law as an assault and battery; ay, and such trifling forms as warrants and indictments.

Dud. Go, Sir; you are too mean for my resentment: 'tis that, and not the law protects you. Hence!

Ful. An old, absurd, incorrigible blockhead! I'll be revenged of him. [*Aside.*

Enter CHARLES DUDLEY.

Charles. What is the matter, Sir? Sure I heard an outcry as I entered the house.

Dud. Not unlikely; our landlord and his wife are for ever wrangling.—Did you find your aunt Dudley at home?

Charles. I did.

Dud. And what was your reception?

Charles. Cold as our poverty and her pride could make it.

Dud. You told her the pressing occasion I had for a small supply to equip me for this exchange; has she granted me the relief I asked?

Charles. Alas, Sir, she has peremptorily refused it.

Dud. That's hard; that's hard, indeed! My petition was for a small sum; she has refused it, you say: well, be it so; I must not complain. Did you see the broker, about the insurance on my life?

Charles. There again I am the messenger of ill news; I can raise no money, so fatal is the climate: alas! that ever my father should be sent to perish in such a place!

LOUISA DUDLEY *enters hastily.*

Dud. Louisa, what's the matter? you seem frighted.

Lou. I am, indeed: coming from Miss Rusport's, I met a young gentleman in the streets, who has beset me in the strangest manner.

Charles. Insufferable! Was he rude to you?

Lou. I cannot say he was absolutely rude to me, but he was very importunate to speak to me, and once or twice attempted to lift up my hat; he followed me to the corner of the street, and there I gave him the slip.

Dud. You must walk no more in the streets, child, without me, or your brother.

Lou. O Charles! Miss Rusport desires to see you directly; Lady Rusport is gone out, and she has something particular to say to you.

Charles. Have you any commands for me, Sir?

Dud. None, my dear: by all means wait upon Miss Rusport. Come, Louisa; I must desire you to go up to your chamber, and compose yourself. [*Exeunt.*

Enter BELCOUR, *after peeping in at the door.*

Bel. Not a soul, as I'm alive. Why, what an odd sort of a house is this! Confound the little jilt, she has fairly given me the slip. A plague upon this London, I shall have no luck in it: such a crowd, and such a hurry, and such a number of shops, and one so like the other, that whether the wench turned into this house or the next, or whether she went up stairs or down stairs (for there's a world above and a world below, it seems,) I declare I know no more than if I was in the blue mountains. In the name of all the devils at once, why did she run away? If every handsome girl I meet in this town is to lead me such a wildgoose chase, I had better have stayed in the torrid zone: I shall be wasted to the size of a sugar-cane: what shall I do? give the chase up? hang it, that's cowardly: shall I, a true-born son of Phœbus, suffer this little nimble-footed Daphne to escape me?—'Forbid it, honour, and forbid it, love.' Hush! hush! here she comes! Oh! the devil! What tawdry thing have we got here?

Enter MRS. FULMER.

Mrs. Ful. Your humble servant, Sir.

Bel. Your humble servant, Madam.

Mrs. Ful. A fine summer's day, Sir.

Bel. Yes, Ma'am; and so cool, that, if the calendar didn't call it July, I should swear it was January.

Mrs. Ful. Sir.

Bel. Madam!

Mrs. Ful. Do you wish to speak to Mr. Fulmer, Sir?

Bel. Mr. Fulmer, Madam? I haven't the honour of knowing such a person.

Mrs. Ful. No! I'll be sworn, have you not; thou art much too pretty a fellow, and too much of a gentleman, to be an author thyself, or to have any thing to say to those that are so. 'Tis the captain, I suppose, you are waiting for.

Bel. I rather suspect it is the captain's wife.

Mrs. Ful. The captain has no wife, Sir.

Bel. No wife! I'm heartily sorry for it; for then she's his mistress; and that I take to be the more desperate case of the two. Pray, Madam, wasn't there a lady just now turned into your house? 'Twas with her I wished to speak.

Mrs. Ful. What sort of a lady, pray?

Bel. One of the loveliest sort my eyes ever beheld; young, tall, fresh, fair; in short, a goddess.

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Mrs. Ful. Nay, but dear, dear Sir, now I'm sure you flatter; for 'twas me you followed into the shop-door this minute.

Bel. You! No, no, take my word for it, it was not you, Madam. [*Laughs.*

Mrs. Ful. But what is it you laugh at?

Bel. Upon my soul, I ask your pardon; but it was not you, believe me; be assured, it wasn't.

Mrs. Ful. Well, Sir, I shall not contend for the honour of being noticed by you; I hope you think you wouldn't have been the first man that noticed me in the streets; however, this I'm positive of, that no living woman but myself has entered these doors this morning.

Bel. Why, then, I'm mistaken in the house, that's all; for it is not humanly possible I can be so far out in the lady. [*Going.*

Mrs. Ful. Coxcomb!—But hold—a thought occurs; as sure as can be, he has seen Miss Dudley. A word with you, young gentleman; come back.

Bel. Well, what's your pleasure?

Mrs. Ful. You seem greatly captivated with this young lady; are you apt to fall in love thus at first sight?

Bel. Oh, yes: 'tis the only way I can ever fall in love; any man may tumble into a pit by surprise; none but a fool would walk into one by choice.

Mrs. Ful. You are a hasty lover, it seems: have you spirit to be a generous one? They that will please the eye, mustn't spare the purse.

Bel. Try me; put me to the proof; bring me to an interview with the dear girl that has thus captivated me, and see whether I have spirit to be grateful.

Mrs. Ful. But how, pray, am I to know the girl you have set your heart on?

Bel. By an undescribable grace, that accompanies every look and action that falls from her; there can be but one such woman in the world, and nobody can mistake that one.

Mrs. Ful. Well, if I should stumble upon this angel in my walks, where am I to find you? What's your name?

Bel. Upon my soul I can't tell you my name.

Mrs. Ful. Not tell me! Why so?

Bel. Because I don't know what it is myself; as yet I have no name.

Mrs. Ful. No name!

Bel. None; a friend, indeed, lent me his; but he forbade me to use it on any unworthy occasion.

Mrs. Ful. But where is your place of abode?

Bel. I have none; I never slept a night in England in my life.

Mrs. Ful. Hey day!

Enter FULMER.

Ful. A fine case, truly, in a free country; a pretty pass things are come to, if a man is to be assaulted in his own house.

Mrs. Ful. Who has assaulted you, my dear?

Ful. Who! why this Captain Drawcansir, this old Dudley, my lodger; but I'll unlodge him; I'll unharbour him, I warrant.

Mrs. Ful. Hush! hush! Hold your tongue, man; pocket the affront, and be quiet; I've a scheme on foot will pay you a hundred beatings. Why you surprise me, Mr. Fulmer; Captain Dudley assault you! Impossible.

Ful. Nay, I can't call it an absolute assault; but he threatened me.

Mrs. Ful. Oh, was that all? I thought how it would turn out—a likely thing, truly, for a person of his obliging, compassionate turn: no, no, poor Captain Dudley, he has sorrows and distresses enough of his own to employ his spirits, without setting them against other people. Make it up as fast as you can: watch this gentleman out; follow him wherever he goes, and bring me word who and what he is; be sure you don't lose sight of him; I've other business in hand. [*Exit.*

Bel. Pray, Sir, what sorrows and distresses have befallen this old gentleman you speak of?

Ful. Poverty, disappointment, and all the distresses attendant thereupon: sorrow enough, of all conscience: I soon found how it was with him, by his way of living, low enough, of all reason; but what I overheard this morning put it out of all doubt.

Bel. What did you overhear this morning?

Ful. Why, it seems he wants to join his regiment, and has been beating the town over to raise a little money for that purpose upon his pay; but the climate, I find, where he is going is so unhealthy, that nobody can be found to lend him any.

Bel. Why, then, your town is a damned good-for-nothing town: and I wish I had never come into it.

Ful. That's what I say, Sir; the hard-heartedness of some folks is unaccountable. There's an old Lady Rusport, a near relation of this gentleman's; she lives hard by here, opposite to Stockwell's, the great merchant; he sent to her a-begging, but to no purpose; though she is as rich as a Jew, she would not furnish him with a farthing.

Bel. Is the captain at home?

Ful. He is up stairs, Sir.

Bel. Will you take the trouble to desire him to step hither? I want to speak with him.

Ful. I'll send him to you directly. I don't know what to make of this young man; but, if I live, I will find him out, or know the reason why. [*Exit.*

Bel. I've lost the girl, it seems, that's clear: she was the first object of my pursuit; but the case of this poor officer touches me; and, after all, there may be as much true delight in rescuing a fellow-creature from distress, as there would be in plunging one into it—But let me see: it's a point that must be managed with some delicacy—*Apropos!* there's pen and ink—I've struck upon a method that will do. [*Writes.*] Ay, ay, this is the very thing: 'twas devilish lucky I happened to have these bills about me. There, there, fare you well! I'm glad to be rid of you; you stood a chance of being worse applied, I can tell you.

[*Encloses and seals the paper.*

FULMER *brings in* DUDLEY.

Ful. That's the gentleman, Sir. I shall make bold, however to lend an ear. [*Exit.*

Dud. Have you any commands for me, Sir?

Bel. Your name is Dudley, Sir?—

Dud. It is.

Bel. You command a company, I think, Captain Dudley?

Dud. I did: I am now upon half-pay.

Bel. You have served some time?

Dud. A pretty many years; long enough to see some people, of more merit and better interest than myself, made general officers.

Bel. Their merit I may have some doubt of: their interest I can readily give credit to; these

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is little promotion to be looked for in your profession, I believe, without friends, Captain?

Dud. I believe so too: have you any other business with me, may I ask?

Bel. Your patience for a moment. I was informed you was about to join your regiment in distant quarters abroad.

Dud. I have been soliciting an exchange to a company on full pay, quartered at James's Fort, in Senegambia; but, I'm afraid, I must drop the undertaking.

Bel. Why so, pray?

Dud. Why so, Sir? 'Tis a home question for a perfect stranger to put; there is something very particular in all this.

Bel. If it is not impertinent, Sir, allow me to ask you what reason you have for despairing of success.

Dud. Why, really, Sir, mine is an obvious reason, for a soldier to have—Want of money; simply that.

Bel. May I beg to know the sum you have occasion for?

Dud. Truly, Sir, I cannot exactly tell you on a sudden; nor is it, I suppose, of any great consequence to you to be informed; but I should guess, in the gross, that two hundred pounds would serve.

Bel. And do you find a difficulty in raising that sum upon your pay? 'Tis done every day.

Dud. The nature of the climate makes it difficult: I can get no one to ensure my life.

Bel. Oh! that's a circumstance may make for you, as well as against: in short, Captain Dudley, it so happens, that I can command the sum of two hundred pounds: seek no further; I'll accommodate you with it upon easy terms.

Dud. Sir! do I understand you rightly?—I beg your pardon; but am I to believe that you are in earnest?

Bel. What is your surprise? Is it an uncommon thing for a gentleman to speak truth? Or is it incredible that one fellow-creature should assist another?

Dud. I ask your pardon—may I beg to know to whom?—Do you propose this in the way of business?

Bel. Entirely: I have no other business on earth.

Dud. Indeed! you are not a broker, I'm persuaded.

Bel. I am not.

Dud. Nor an army agent, I think!

Bel. I hope you will not think the worse of me for being neither: in short, Sir, if you will peruse this paper, it will explain to you who I am, and upon what terms I act; while you read it, I will step home, and fetch the money, and we will conclude the bargain without loss of time. In the mean while, good day to you. [*Exit hastily.*

Dud. Humph! there's something very odd in all this—let me see what we've got here.—This paper is to tell me who he is, and what are his terms: in the name of wonder, why has he sealed it? Hey-day! what's here? Two Bank notes, of a hundred each! I cannot comprehend what this means. Hold; here's a writing perhaps that will show me. "Accept this trifle—pursue your fortune, and prosper." Am I in a dream? Is this a reality?

Enter MAJOR O'FLAHERTY.

O'Fla. 'Save you, my dear! Is it you now that are Captain Dudley, I would ask? [*Exit* DUDLEY.]—Whuh! What's the hurry the man's in? If 'tis the lad that run out of the shop you would overtake, you might as well stay where you are; by my soul he's as nimble as a Croat; you are a full hour's march in his rear—Ay faith, you may as well turn back, and give over the pursuit.

Re-enter DUDLEY.

Well, Captain Dudley, if that's your name, there's a letter for you. Read man, read it; and I'll have a word with you after you have done.

Dud. More miracles on foot! So, so, from Lady Rusport.

O'Fla. You're right; it's from her ladyship.

Dud. Well, Sir, I have cast my eye over it; 'tis short and peremptory; are you acquainted with the contents?

O'Fla. Not at all, my dear; not at all.

Dud. Have you any message from Lady Rusport?

O'Fla. Not a syllable, honey: only, when you've digested the letter, I've a little bit of a message to deliver you from myself.

Dud. And may I beg to know who yourself is?

O'Fla. Dennis O'Flaherty, at your service; a poor major of grenadiers; nothing better.

Dud. So much for your name and title, Sir; now be so good to favour me with your message.

O'Fla. Why then, captain, I must tell you I have promised Lady Rusport you shall do whatever it is she bids you to do in that letter there.

Dud. Ay, indeed; have you undertaken so much, major, without knowing either what she commands, or what I can perform?

O'Fla. That's your concern, my dear, not mine; I must keep my word, you know.

Dud. Or else, I suppose, you and I must measure swords.

O'Fla. Upon my soul, you've hit it.

Dud. That would hardly answer to either of us: you and I have, probably, had enough of fighting in our time before now.

O'Fla. Faith and troth, Master Dudley, you may say that; 'tis thirty years, come the time, that I have followed the trade, and in a pretty many countries.—Let me see—In the war before last I served in the Irish brigade, d'ye see; there, after bringing off the French monarch, I left his service, with a British bullet in my body, and this riband in my button-hole. Last war I followed the fortunes of the German eagle, in the corps of grenadiers; there I had my bellyful of fighting, and a plentiful scarcity of every thing else. After six and twenty engagements, great and small, I went off with this gash on my scull, and a kiss of the empress queen's sweet hand, (Heaven bless it!) for my pains. Since the peace, my dear, I took a little turn with the confederates there in Poland—but such another set of madcaps!—by the Lord Harry, I never knew what it was they were scuffling about.

Dud. Well, major, I wont add another action to the list; you shall keep your promise with Lady Rusport: she requires me to leave London; I shall go in a few days, and you may take what credit you please from my compliance.

O'Fla. Give me your hand, my dear boy! this will make her my own; when that's the case, we shall be brothers, you know, and we'll share her fortune between us.

Dud. Not so, major; the man, who marries

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Lady Rusport, will have a fair title to her fortune without division. But, I hope, your expectations of prevailing are founded upon good reasons.

O'Fla. Upon the best grounds in the world; first, I think she will comply, because she is a woman; secondly, I am persuaded she wont hold out long, because she's a widow; and thirdly, I make sure of her, because I have married five wives, (*en militaire*, captain,) and never failed yet; and, for what I know, they are all alive and merry at this very hour.

Dud. Well, Sir, go on, and prosper; if you can inspire Lady Rusport with half your charity, I shall think you deserve all her fortune; at present, I must beg your excuse: good morning to you. [*Exit.*

O'Fla. A good sensible man, and very much of a soldier; I did not care if I was better acquainted with him: but 'tis an awkward kind of country for that; the English, I observe, are close friends, but distant acquaintance. I suspect the old lady has not been over generous to poor Dudley; I shall give her a little touch about that: upon my soul, I know but one excuse a person can have for giving nothing, and that is, like myself, having nothing to give. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—LADY RUSPORT'S *House. A Dressing-room.*

MISS RUSPORT *and* LUCY.

Miss R. Well, Lucy, you've dislodged the old lady at last; but methought you was a tedious time about it.

Lucy. A tedious time, indeed; I think they who have least to spare, contrive to throw the most away; I thought I should never have got her out of the house: then, Madam, this being a visit of great ceremony to a person of distinction at the west end of the town, the old state chariot was dragged forth on the occasion, with strict charges to dress out the box with the leopard-skin hammercloth.

Miss R. Yes, and to hang the false tails on the miserable stumps of the old crawling cattle: well, well, pray, Heaven, the old crazy affair don't break down again with her.—But where's Charles Dudley? run down, dear girl, and be ready to let him in; I think he's as long in coming as she was in going.

Lucy. Why, indeed, Madam, you seem the more alert of the two, I must say. [*Exit.*

Miss R. Now the deuce take the girl, for putting that notion into my head: I am sadly afraid Dudley does not like me; so much encouragement as I have given him to declare himself, I never could get a word from him on the subject! this may be very honourable, but upon my life it's very provoking. By the way, I wonder how I look to-day: Oh! shockingly! hideously pale! like a witch! this is the old lady's glass, and she has left some of her wrinkles on it.—How frightfully have I put on my cap! all awry! and my hair dressed so unbecoming! altogether, I'm a most complete fright.——

Enter CHARLES, *unobserved.*

Charles. That I deny.

Miss R. Ah!

Charles. Quarrelling with your glass, cousin? make it up, make it up, and be friends; it cannot compliment you more than by reflecting you as you are.

Miss R. Well I vow, my dear Charles, that is delightfully said, and deserves my very best courtesy; your flattery, like a rich jewel, has a value not only from its superior lustre, but from its extraordinary scarceness: I verily think, this is the only civil speech you ever directed to my person in your life.

Charles. And I ought to ask pardon of your good sense, for having done it now.

Miss. R. Nay, now you relapse again: don't you know, if you keep well with a woman on the great score of beauty, she'll never quarrel with you on the trifling article of good sense?—But any thing serves to fill up a dull, yawning hour, with an insipid cousin; you have brighter moments, and warmer spirits, for the dear girl of your heart.

Charles. Oh, fy upon you! fy upon you!

Miss R. You blush, and the reason is apparent:—you are a novice at hypocrisy; but no practice can make a visit of ceremony pass for a visit of choice: love is ever before its time; friendship is apt to lag a little after it.—Pray, Charles, did you make any extraordinary haste hither?

Charles. By your question, I see, you acquit me of the impertinence of being in love.

Miss R. But why impertinence? why the impertinence of being in love?—you have one language for me, Charles, and another for the woman of your affection.

Charles. You are mistaken—the woman of my affection shall never hear any other language from me, than what I use to you.

Miss R. I am afraid, then, you'll never make yourself understood by her.

Charles. It is not fit I should; there is no need of love to make me miserable; 'tis wretchedness enough to be a beggar.

Miss R. A beggar do you call yourself! O Charles, Charles, rich in every merit and accomplishment, whom may you not aspire to? and why think you so unworthily of our sex, as to conclude there is not one to be found with sense to discern your virtue, and generosity to reward it?

Charles. You distress me;—I must beg to hear no more.

Miss R. Well, I can be silent.——Thus does he always serve me, whenever I am about to disclose myself to him. [*Aside.*

Charles. Why do you not banish me and my misfortunes for ever from your thoughts?

Miss R. Ay, wherefore do I not, since you never allowed me a place in yours?—But go, Sir; I have no right to stay you; go where your heart directs you; go to the happy the distinguished fair one.

Charles. Now, by all that's good, you do me wrong; there is no such fair one for me to go to; nor have I an acquaintance among the sex, yourself excepted, which answers to that description.

Miss R. Indeed!

Charles. In very truth—there, then, let us drop the subject.—May you be happy, though I never can!

Miss R. O Charles; give me your hand; if I have offended you, I ask your pardon: you have been long acquainted with my temper, and know how to bear with its infirmities.

Charles. Thus, my dear Charlotte, let us seal our reconciliation!—[*Kissing her hand.*] bear with thy infirmities! by Heaven, I know not any one failing in thy whole composition, except, that of too great a partiality for an undeserving man.

Miss R. And you are now taking the very

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course to augment that failing.—A thought strikes me;—I have a commission that you must absolutely execute for me; I have immediate occasion for the sum of two hundred pounds: you know my fortune is shut up till I am of age; take this paltry box, it contains my ear-rings, and some other baubles I have no use for; carry it to our opposite neighbour, Mr. Stockwell; I don't know where else to apply; leave it as a deposit in his hands, and beg him to accommodate me with the sum.

Charles. Dear Charlotte, what are you about to do? How can you possibly want two hundred pounds?

Miss R. How can I possibly do without it, you mean? Doesn't every lady want two hundred pounds?—perhaps, I have lost it at play—perhaps, I mean to win as much to it—perhaps, I want it for two hundred different uses.

Charles. Pooh! pooh! all this is nothing; don't I know you never play?

Miss R. You mistake; I have a spirit to set, not only this trifle, but my whole fortune, upon a stake; therefore make no wry faces, but do as I bid you. You will find Mr. Stockwell a very honourable gentleman.

Enter LUCY, *in haste.*

Lucy. Dear Madam, as I live, hear comes the old Lady in a hackney coach.

Miss R. The old chariot has given her a second tumble: away with you! you know your way out, without meeting her. Take the box, and do as I desire you.

Charles. I must not dispute your orders. Farewell!

[*Exeunt* CHARLES *and* MISS RUSPORT.

Enter LADY RUSPORT *leaning on* MAJOR O'FLAHERTY'S *arm.*

O'Fla. Rest yourself upon my arm: never spare it: 'tis strong enough: it has stood harder service than you can put it to.

Lucy. Mercy upon me, what is the matter? I am frightened out of my wits—Has your ladyship had an accident?

Lady R. O Lucy, the most untoward one in nature. I know not how I shall repair it.

O'Fla. Never go about to repair it, my lady; even build a new one; 'twas but a crazy piece of business at best.

Lucy. Bless me, is the old chariot broke down with you again?

Lady R. Broke, child; I don't know what might have been broke, if, by great good fortune, this obliging gentleman had not been at hand to assist me.

Lucy. Dear Madam, let me run and fetch you a cup of the cordial drops.

Lady R. Do, Lucy. [*Exit* LUCY.] Alas, Sir! ever since I lost my husband, my poor nerves have been shook to pieces;——there hangs his beloved picture; that precious relic, and a plentiful jointure, is all that remains to console me for the best of men.

O'Fla. Let me see—i'faith, a comely personage; by his fur cloak, I suppose, he was in the Russian service; and by the gold chain round his neck, I should guess he had been honoured with the order of St. Catharine.

Lady R. No, no; he meddled with no St. Catharines—that's the habit he wore in his mayoralty; Sir Stephen was lord mayor of London—but he is gone, and has left me, a poor, weak, solitary widow, behind him.

O'Fla. By all means, then, take a strong, able, hearty man, to repair his loss:—if such a plain fellow as one Dennis O'Flaherty can please you, I think I may venture to say, without any disparagement to the gentleman in the fur gown there——

Lady R. What are you going to say? don't shock my ears with any comparisons, I desire.

O'Fla. Not I, my soul; I don't believe there's any comparison in the case.

Re-enter LUCY, *with a bottle and glass.*

Lady R. Oh, are you come? Give me the drops—I'm all in a flutter.

O'Fla. Harkye, sweetheart, what are those same drops? Have you any more left in the bottle? I didn't care if I took a little sip of them myself.

Lucy. Oh, Sir, they are called the cordial restorative elixir, or the nervous golden drops; they are only for ladies' cases.

O'Fla. Yes, yes, my dear, there are gentlemen as well as ladies, that stand in need of those same golden drops; they'd suit my case to a tittle.

Lady R. Well, major, did you give old Dudley my letter, and will the silly man do as I bid him, and be gone.

O'Fla. You are obey'd—he's on his march.

Lady R. That's well; you have managed this matter to perfection; I didn't think he would have been so easily prevailed upon.

O'Fla. At the first word: no difficulty in life; 'twas the very thing he was determined to do, before I came; I never met a more obliging gentleman.

Lady R. Well, 'tis no matter; so I am but rid of him, and his distresses: would you believe it, Major O'Flaherty, it was but this morning he sent a-begging to me for money to fit him out upon some wildgoose expedition to the coast of Africa, I know not where.

O'Fla. Well, you sent him what he wanted?

Lady R. I sent him what he deserved, a flat refusal.

O'Fla. You refused him?

Lady R. Most undoubtedly.

O'Fla. You sent him nothing?

Lady R. Not a shilling.

O'Fla. Good morning to you—Your servant— [*Going.*

Lady R. Hey day! what ails the man? Where are you going?

O'Fla. Out of your house, before the roof falls on my head—to poor Dudley, to share the little modicum that thirty years' hard service has left me; I wish it was more, for his sake.

Lady R. Very well, Sir, take your course; I sha'n't attempt to stop you; I shall survive it; it will not break my heart, if I never see you more.

O'Fla. Break your heart! No, o'my conscience, will it not.—You preach, and you pray, and you turn up your eyes, and all the while you are as hard-hearted as a hyena—A hyena, truly! by my soul, there isn't in the whole creation so savage an animal as a human creature without pity! [*Exit.*

Lady R. A hyena, truly! [*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Room in STOCKWELL'S *House.*

STOCKWELL *and* BELCOUR.

Stock. Gratify me so far, however, Mr. Belcour, as to see Miss Rusport; carry her

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the sum she wants, and return the poor girl her box of diamonds, which Dudley left in my hands: you know what to say on the occasion better than I do; that part of your commission I leave to your own discretion, and you may season it with what gallantry you think fit.

Bel. You could not have pitched upon a greater bungler at gallantry than myself, if you had rummaged every company in the city, and the whole court of aldermen into the bargain:—part of your errand, however, I will do; but whether it shall be with an ill grace or a good one, depends upon the caprice of a moment, the humour of the lady, the mode of our meeting, and a thousand undefinable small circumstances, that, nevertheless, determine us upon all the great occasions of life.

Stock. I persuade myself you will find Miss Rusport an ingenious, worthy, animated girl.

Bel. Why, I like her the better, as a woman; but name her not to me as a wife! No, if ever I marry, it must be a stayed, sober, considerate damsel, with blood in her veins as cold as a turtle's; quick of scent as a vulture when danger's in the wind; wary and sharp-sighted as a hawk when treachery is on foot: with such a companion at my elbow, for ever whispering in my ear—Have a care of this man, he's a cheat; don't go near that woman, she's a jilt; overhead there's a scaffold, underfoot there's a well. Oh, Sir! such a woman might lead me up and down this great city without difficulty or danger; but with a girl of Miss Rusport's complexion, heaven and earth, Sir! we should be duped, undone, and distracted, in a fortnight.

Stock. Ha! ha! ha! Why, you are become wondrous circumspect of a sudden, pupil: and if you can find such a prudent damsel as you describe, you have my consent—only beware how you choose: discretion is not the reigning quality amongst the fine ladies of the present time; and, I think, in Miss Rusport's particular, I have given you no bad counsel.

Bel. Well, well, if you'll fetch me the jewels, I believe, I can undertake to carry them to her: but as for the money, I'll have nothing to do with that: Dudley would be your fittest ambassador on that occasion: and, if I mistake not, the most agreeable to the lady.

Stock. Why, indeed, from what I know of the matter, it may not improbably be destined to find its way into his pockets. [*Exit.*

Bel. Then, depend upon it, these are not the only trinkets she means to dedicate to Captain Dudley.—As for me, Stockwell, indeed, wants me to marry; but till I can get this bewitching girl, this incognita, out of my head, I can never think of any other woman.

Enter a SERVANT, *and delivers a Letter.*

Hey day! where can I have picked up a correspondent already? 'Tis a most execrable manuscript—Let me see——*Martha Fulmer*—Who is Martha Fulmer?—Pshaw! I wont be at the trouble of deciphering her damned pothooks.—Hold, hold, hold; what have we got here?

Dear Sir,—I have discovered the lady you was so much smitten with, and can procure you an interview with her; if you can be as generous to a pretty girl, as you was to a paltry old captain.—How did she find that out?——*you need not despair; come to me immediately: the lady is now in my house, and expects you. Yours,*

MARTHA FULMER.

O thou dear, lovely, and enchanting paper! which I was about to tear into a thousand scraps, devoutly I entreat thy pardon: I have slighted thy contents, which are delicious; slandered thy characters, which are divine; and all the atonement I can make, is implicitly to obey thy mandates.

Enter STOCKWELL.

Stock. Mr. Belcour, here are the jewels; this letter encloses bills for the money; and, if you will deliver it to Miss Rusport, you'll have no further trouble on that score.

Bel. Ah! Sir, the letter, which I have been reading, disqualifies me for delivering the letter, which you have been writing; I have other game on foot, the loveliest girl my eyes ever feasted upon is started in view, and the world cannot now divert me from pursuing her.

Stock. Hey day! What has turned you thus on a sudden?

Bel. A woman; one that can turn, and overturn me and my tottering resolutions every way she will. Oh, Sir, if this is folly in me, you must rail at nature: you must chide the sun, that was vertical at my birth, and would not wink upon my nakedness, but swaddled me in the broadest, hottest, glare of his meridian beams.

Stock. Mere rhapsody: mere childish rhapsody: the libertine's familiar plea.——Nature made us, 'tis true, but we are the responsible creatures of our own faults and follies.

Bel. Sir!

Stock. Slave of every face you meet, some hussy has inveigled you; some handsome profligate (the town is full of them); and, when once fairly bankrupt in constitution as well as fortune, nature no longer serves as your excuse for being vicious, necessity, perhaps, will stand your friend, and you'll reform.

Bel. You are severe.

Stock. It fits me to be so—it well becomes a father—I would say, a friend—How strangely I forget myself! How difficult it is to counterfeit indifference, and put a mask upon the heart! [*Aside.*

Bel. How could you tempt me so? Had you not inadvertently dropped the name of father, I fear our friendship, short as it has been, would scarce have held me—But even your mistake I reverence—Give me your hand—'tis over.

Stock. Generous young man! because I bore you the affection of a father, I rashly took up the authority of one. I ask your pardon—pursue your course; I have no right to stop it—What would you have me do with these things?

Bel. This, if I might advise: carry the money to Miss Rusport immediately; never let generosity wait for its materials; that part of the business presses. Give me the jewels: I'll find an opportunity of delivering them into her hands; and your visit may pave the way for my reception. [*Exit.*

Stock. Be it so; good morning to you. Farewell, advice! Away goes he upon the wing for pleasure. What various passions he awakens in me! He pains, yet pleases me; affrights, offends, yet grows upon my heart. His very failings set him off—for ever trespassing, for ever atoning, I almost think he would not be so perfect, were he free from fault:—I must dissemble longer; and yet how painful the experiment!—Even now he's gone upon some wild adventure; and who can tell what mis-

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chief may befall him: O nature, what it is to be a father! [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—FULMER'S *house.*

Enter FULMER *and* MRS. FULMER.

Ful. I tell you, Patty, you are a fool, to think of bringing him and Miss Dudley together; 'twill ruin every thing, and blow your whole scheme up to the moon at once.

Mrs. Ful. Why, sure, Mr. Fulmer, I may be allowed to rear a chicken of my own hatching, as they say. Who first sprung the thought, but I, pray? Who first contrived the plot? Who proposed the letter, but I, I?

Ful. And who dogged the gentleman home? Who found out his name, fortune, connection: that he was a West Indian, fresh landed, and full of cash; a gull to our heart's content; a hot-brained, headlong spark, that would run into our trap, like a wheatear under a turf, but I, I, I?

Mrs. Ful. Hark! he's come; disappear, march; and leave the field open to my machination. [*Exit* FULMER.

Enter BELCOUR.

Bel. O thou dear minister to my happiness, let me embrace thee! Why, thou art my polar star, my propitious constellation, by which I navigate my impatient bark into the port of pleasure and delight.

Mrs. Ful. Oh, you men are sly creatures! Do you remember now, you cruel, what you said to me this morning?

Bel. All a jest, a frolic; never think on't; bury it for ever in oblivion: thou! why, thou art all over nectar and ambrosia, powder of pearl and odour of roses; thou hast the youth of Hebe, the beauty of Venus, and the pen of Sappho; but, in the name of all that's lovely, where's the lady? I expected to find her with you.

Mrs. Ful. No doubt you did, and these raptures were designed for her; but where have you loitered? the lady's gone—you are too late; girls of her sort are not to be kept waiting, like negro slaves in your sugar plantations.

Bel. Gone! whither is she gone? tell me, that I may follow her.

Mrs. Ful. Hold, hold, not so fast, young gentleman, this is a case of some delicacy; should Captain Dudley know that I introduced you to his daughter, he is a man of such scrupulous honour——

Bel. What do you tell me! is she daughter to the old gentleman I met here this morning?

Mrs. Ful. The same; him you was so generous to.

Bel. There's an end of the matter then at once; it shall never be said of me, that I took advantage of the father's necessities to trepan the daughter. [*Going.*

Mrs. Ful. So, so, I've made a wrong cast; he's one of your conscientious sinners, I find; but I wont lose him thus——Ha, ha, ha!

Bel. What is it you laugh at?

Mrs. Ful. Your absolute inexperience; have you lived so very little time in this country, as not to know that, between young people of equal ages, the term of sister often is a cover for that of mistress? This young lady is, in that sense of the word, sister to young Dudley, and consequently daughter to my old lodger.

Bel. Indeed! are you serious?

Mrs. Ful. Can you doubt it? I must have been pretty well assured of that, before I invited you hither.

Bel. That's true; she cannot be a woman of honour, and Dudley is an unconscionable young rogue, to think of keeping one fine girl in pay, by raising contributions on another: he shall therefore give her up: she is a dear, bewitching, mischievous, little devil, and he shall positively give her up.

Mrs. Ful. Ay, now the freak has taken you again; I say, give her up; there's one way, indeed, and certain of success.

Bel. What's that?

Mrs. Ful. Out-bid him, never dream of out-blustering him. All things, then, will be made easy enough; let me see; some little genteel present to begin with: what have you got about you? Ay, search; I can bestow it to advantage, there's no time to be lost.

Bel. Hang it, confound it! a plague upon't, say I! I haven't a guinea left in my pocket; I parted from my whole stock here this morning, and have forgot to supply myself since.

Mrs. Ful. Mighty well; let it pass, then: there's an end; think no more of the lady, that's all.

Bel. Distraction! think no more of her? let me only step home, and provide myself; I'll be back with you in an instant.

Mrs. Ful. Pooh! pooh! that's a wretched shift; have you nothing of value about you? Money's a coarse, slovenly vehicle, fit only to bribe electors in a borough; there are more graceful ways of purchasing a lady's favours; rings, trinkets, jewels!

Bel. Jewels! Gadso, I protest I had forgot: I have a case of Jewels; but they wont do, I must not part from them; no, no, they are appropriated; they are none of my own.

Mrs. Ful. Let me see, let me see! Ay, now, this were something like: pretty creatures! how they sparkle; these would ensure success.

Bel. Indeed!

Mrs. Ful. These would make her your own for ever.

Bel. Then the deuce take them, for belonging to another person; I could find in my heart to give them the girl, and swear I've lost them.

Mrs. Ful. Ay, do, say they were stolen out of your pocket.

Bel. No, hang it, that's dishonourable; here, give me the paltry things, I'll write you an order on my merchant, for double their value.

Mrs. Ful. An order! No order for me! no order upon merchants, with their value received, and three days' grace; their noting, protesting, and endorsing, and all their counting-house formalities; I'll have nothing to do with them; leave your diamonds with me, and give your order for the value of them to the owner: the money would be as good as the trinkets, I warrant you.

Bel. Hey! how! I never thought of that; but a breach of trust; 'tis impossible: I never can consent; therefore give me the jewels back again.

Mrs. Ful. Take them; I am now to tell you, the lady is in this house.

Bel. In this house?

Mrs. Ful. Yes, Sir, in this very house; but what of that? you have got what you like better: your toys, your trinkets; go, go; Oh, you are a man of notable spirit, are you not?

Bel. Provoking creature! bring me to the

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sight of the dear girl, and dispose of me as you think fit.

Mrs. Ful. And of the diamonds too?

Bel. Damn them, I would there was not such a bauble in nature! But, come, come, despatch; if I had the throne of Delhi, I should give it to her.

Mrs. Ful. Swear to me then, that you will keep within bounds; remember, she passes for the sister of young Dudley. Oh! if you come to your flights and your rhapsodies, she'll be off in an instant.

Bel. Never fear me.

Mrs. Ful. You must expect to hear her talk of her father, as she calls him, and her brother, and your bounty to her family.

Bel. Ay, ay, never mind what she talks of, only bring her.

Mrs. Ful. You'll be prepared upon that head?

Bel. I shall be prepared, never fear: away with you.

Mrs. Ful. But, hold, I had forgot: not a word of the diamonds; leave that matter to my management.

Bel. Hell and vexation! Get out of the room, or I shall run distracted. [*Exit* MRS. FULMER.] Of a certain, Belcour, thou art born to be the fool of woman! sure no man sins with so much repentance, or repents with so little amendment, as I do. I cannot give away another person's property, honour forbids me; and I positively cannot give up the girl; love, passion, constitution, every thing protests against that. How shall I decide? I cannot bring myself to break a trust, and I am not at present in the humour to balk my inclinations. Is there no middle way? Let me consider—— There is, there is: my good genius has presented me with one: apt, obvious, honourable, the girl shall not go without her baubles: I'll not go without the girl; Miss Rusport sha'n't lose her diamonds; I'll save Dudley from destruction, and every party shall be a gainer by the project.

Enter MRS. FULMER, *introducing* MISS DUDLEY.

Mrs. Ful. Miss Dudley, this is the worthy gentleman you wish to see; this is Mr. Belcour.

Lou. As I live, the very man that beset me in the streets! [*Aside.*

Bel. An angel, by this light! Oh, I am gone, past all retrieving! [*Aside.*

Lou. Mrs. Fulmer, Sir, informs me, you are the gentleman from whom my father has received such civilities.

Bel. Her father! [*Aside.*] Oh, never name them.

Lou. Pardon me, Mr. Belcour, they must be both named and remembered; and if my father was here—

Bel. Her father again! [*Aside.*] I am much better pleased with his representative.

Lou. That title is my brother's Sir; I have no claim to it.

Bel. I believe it.

Lou. But, as neither he nor my father were fortunate enough to be at home, I could not resist the opportunity——

Bel. Nor I neither, by my soul, Madam: let us improve it, therefore. I am in love with you to distraction; I was charmed at the first glance; I attempted to accost you: you fled; I followed; but was defeated of an interview; at length I have obtained one, and seize the opportunity of casting my person and my fortune at your feet.

Lou. You astonish me! Are you in your senses, or do you make a jest of my misfortunes? Do you ground pretences on your generosity, or do you make a practice of this folly with every woman you meet?

Bel. Upon my life, no: as you are the handsomest woman I ever met, so you are the first to whom I ever made the like professions: as for my generosity, Madam, I must refer you on that score to this good lady, who I believe has something to offer in my behalf.

Lou. Don't build upon that, Sir; I must have better proofs of your generosity, than the mere divestment of a little superfluous dross, before I can credit the sincerity of professions so abruptly delivered. [*Exit hastily.*

Bel. Oh! ye gods and goddesses, how her anger animates her beauty! [*Going out.*

Mrs. Ful. Stay, Sir; if you stir a step after her, I renounce your interest for ever; why, you'll ruin every thing.

Bel. Well, I must have her, cost what it will: I see she understands her own value though; a little superfluous dross, truly! she must have better proofs of my generosity!

Mrs. Ful. 'Tis exactly as I told you; your money she calls dross; she's too proud to stain her fingers with your coin; bait your hook well with jewels; try that experiment and she's your own.

Bel. Take them; let them go; lay them at her feet; I must get out of the scrape as I can; my propensity is irresistible: there; you have them; they are yours; they are hers; but, remember, they are a trust; I commit them to her keeping, till I can buy them off, with something she shall think more valuable; now tell me when shall I meet her?

Mrs. Ful. How can I tell that? don't you see what an alarm you have put her into? Oh! you're a rare one! but go your ways for this while; leave her to my management, and come to me at seven this evening; but remember not to bring empty pockets with you—— Ha, ha, ha! [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE III.—LADY RUSPORT'S *House.*

Enter MISS RUSPORT, *followed by a* SERVANT.

Miss R. Desire Mr. Stockwell to walk in. [*Exit* SERVANT.

Enter STOCKWELL.

Stock. Madam, your most obedient servant: I am honoured with your commands, by Captain Dudley; and have brought the money with me, as you directed; I understand the sum you have occasion for is two hundred pounds.

Miss R. It is, Sir; I am quite confounded at your taking this trouble upon yourself, Mr. Stockwell.

Stock. There is a bank note, Madam, to the amount; your jewels are in safe hands, and will be delivered to you directly. If I had been happy in being better known to you, I should have hoped you would not have thought it necessary to place a deposit in my hands for so trifling a sum as you have now required me to supply you with.

Miss R. The baubles I sent you may very well be spared; and, as they are the only security, in my present situation, I can give you, I could wish you would retain them in your hands: when I am of age (which if I live a few

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months I shall be,) I will replace your favour, with thanks.

Stock. It is obvious, Miss Rusport, that your charms will suffer no impeachment by the absence of those superficial ornaments; but they should be seen in the suite of a woman of fashion, not as creditors to whom you are indebted for your appearance, but as subservient attendants, which help to make up your equipage.

Miss R. Mr. Stockwell is determined not to wrong the confidence I reposed in his politeness.

Stock. I have only to request, Madam, that you will allow Mr. Belcour, a young gentleman, in whose happiness I particularly interest myself, to have the honour of delivering you the box of jewels.

Miss R. Most gladly; any friend of yours cannot fail of being welcome here.

Stock. I flatter myself you will not find him totally undeserving your good opinion; an education not of the strictest kind, and strong animal spirits, are apt sometimes to betray him into youthful irregularities; but a high principle of honour, and an uncommon benevolence, in the eye of candour, will, I hope, atone for any faults, by which these good qualities are not impaired.

Miss R. I dare say, Mr. Belcour's behaviour wants no apology: we have no right to be over strict in canvassing the morals of a common acquaintance.

Stock. I wish it may be my happiness to see Mr. Belcour in the list, not of your common, but particular acquaintance—of your friends, Miss Rusport—I dare not be more explicit.

Miss R. Nor need you, Mr. Stockwell: I shall be studious to deserve his friendship; and though I have long since unalterably placed my affections on another, I trust, I have not left myself insensible to the merits of Mr. Belcour; and hope, that neither you nor he will, for that reason, think me less worthy your good opinion and regards.

Stock. Miss Rusport, I sincerely wish you happy: I have no doubt you have placed your affection on a deserving man; and I have no right to combat your choice. [*Exit.*

Miss R. How honourable is that behaviour! Now, if Charles was here, I should be happy. The old lady is so fond of her new Irish acquaintance, that I have the whole house at my disposal. [*Exit.*

Enter BELCOUR, *preceded by a* SERVANT.

Serv. I ask your honour's pardon; I thought my young lady was here: who shall I inform her would speak to her?

Bel. Belcour is my name, Sir; and pray beg your lady to put herself in no hurry on my account; for I'd sooner see the devil, than see her face. [*Exit* SERVANT.] In the name of all that's mischievous, why did Stockwell drive me hither in such haste? A pretty figure, truly, I shall make! an ambassador, without credentials! Blockhead that I was, to charge myself with her diamonds; officious, meddling puppy! Now they are irretrievably gone:—that suspicious jade, Fulmer, wouldn't part even with a sight of them, though I would have ransomed them at twice their value.—Now must I trust to my poor wits, to bring me off: a lamentable dependence. Fortune be my helper. Here comes the girl—if she is noble-minded, as she is said to be, she will forgive me; if not, 'tis a lost cause; for I have not thought of one word in my excuse.

Enter MISS RUSPORT.

Miss R. Mr. Belcour, I'm proud to see you: your friend, Mr. Stockwell, prepared me to expect this honour; and I am happy in the opportunity of being known to you.

Bel. A fine girl, by my soul! Now what a cursed hang-dog do I look like! [*Aside.*

Miss R. You are newly arrived in this country, Sir?

Bel. Just landed, Madam; just set ashore, with a large cargo of Muscovado sugars, rum puncheons, mahogany slabs, wet sweetmeats, and green paroquets.

Miss R. May I ask you how you like London, Sir?

Bel. To admiration: I think the town and the town's folk are exactly suited; 'tis a great, rich, overgrown, noisy, tumultuous place: the whole morning is a bustle to get money, and the whole afternoon is a hurry to spend it.

Miss R. Are these all the observations you have made?

Bel. No, Madam; I have observed the women are very captivating, and the men very soon caught.

Miss R. Ay, indeed! Whence do you draw that conclusion?

Bel. From infallible guides; the first remark I collect from what I now see, the second from what I now feel.

Miss R. Oh, the deuce take you! But, to wave this subject; I believe, Sir, this was a visit of business, not compliment; was it not?

Bel. Ay: now comes on my execution. [*Aside.*

Miss R. You have some foolish trinkets of mine, Mr. Belcour; haven't you?

Bel. No, in truth; they are gone in search of a trinket, still more foolish than themselves. [*Aside.*

Miss R. Some diamonds, I mean, Sir; Mr. Stockwell informed me you was charged with them.

Bel. Oh, yes, Madam; but I have the most treacherous memory in life—Here they are! Pray put them up; they're all right; you need not examine them. [*Gives a box.*

Miss R. Hey day! right, Sir! Why these are not my diamonds; these are quite different; and, as it should seem, of much greater value.

Bel. Upon my life, I'm glad on't; for then I hope you value them more than your own.

Miss R. As a purchaser I should, but not as an owner; you mistake; these belong to somebody else.

Bel. 'Tis yours, I'm afraid, that belong to somebody else. [*Aside.*

Miss R. What is it you mean? I must insist upon your taking them back again.

Bel. Pray, Madam, don't do that; I shall infallibly lose them; I have the worst luck with diamonds of any man living.

Miss R. That you might well say, was you to give me these in the place of mine, but, pray, Sir, what is the reason of all this? Why have you changed the jewels? And where have you disposed of mine?

Bel. Miss Rusport, I cannot invent a lie for my life; and, if it was to save it, I couldn't tell one: I am an idle, dissipated, unthinking fellow, not worth your notice: in short, I am a West Indian; and you must try me according to the charter of my colony, not by a jury of English spinsters: the truth is, I have given

away your jewels; caught with a pair of sparkling eyes, whose lustre blinded theirs, I served your property as I should my own, and lavished it away; let me not totally despair of your forgiveness; I frequently do wrong, but never with impunity; if your displeasure is added to my own, my punishment will be too severe. When I parted from the jewels, I had not the honour of knowing their owner.

Miss R. Mr. Belcour, your sincerity charms me; I enter at once into your character, and I make all the allowances for it you can desire. I take your jewels for the present, because I know there is no other way of reconciling you to yourself; but, if I give way to your spirit in one point, you must yield to mine in another: remember, I will not keep more than the value of my own jewels: there is no need to be pillaged by more than one woman at a time, Sir.

Bel. Now, may every blessing that can crown your virtues, and reward your beauty, be showered upon you; may you meet admiration without envy, love without jealousy, and old age without malady; may the man of your heart be ever constant, and you never meet a less penitent or less grateful offender, than myself!

Enter SERVANT, *and delivers a Letter.*

Miss R. Does your letter require such haste?

Serv. I was bade to give it into your own hands, Madam.

Miss R. From Charles Dudley, I see—have I your permission? Good Heaven, what do I read! Mr. Belcour, you are concerned in this!—— [*Reads.*

Dear Charlotte—In the midst of our distress, Providence has cast a benefactor in our way, after the most unexpected manner: a young West Indian, rich, and with a warmth of heart peculiar to his climate, has rescued my father from his troubles, satisfied his wants, and enabled him to accomplish his exchange: when I relate to you the manner in which this was done, you will be charmed: I can only now add, that it was by chance we found out that his name is Belcour, and that he is a friend of Mr. Stockwell's. I lose not a moment's time in making you acquainted with this fortunate event, for reasons which delicacy obliges me to suppress; but, perhaps, if you have not received the money on your jewels, you will not think it necessary now to do it. I have the honour to be, dear Madam, most faithfully yours, CHARLES DUDLEY.

Is this your doing, Sir? Never was generosity so worthily exerted.

Bel. Or so greatly overpaid.

Miss R. After what you have now done for this noble, but indigent family, let me not scruple to unfold the whole situation of my heart to you. Know then, Sir, (and don't think the worse of me for the frankness of my declaration,) that such is my attachment to the son of that worthy officer, whom you relieved, that the moment I am of age, and in possession of my fortune, I should hold myself the happiest of women to share it with young Dudley.

Bel. Say you so, Madam! then let me perish if I don't love and reverence you above all womankind; and, if such is your generous resolution, never wait till you are of age; life is too short, pleasure too fugitive; the soul grows narrower every hour. I'll equip you for your escape—I'll convey you to the man of your heart, and away with you then to the first hospitable parson that will take you in.

Miss R. Oh, blessed be the torrid zone for ever, whose rapid vegetation quickens nature into such benignity! But, had I spirit to accept your offer, which is not improbable, wouldn't it be a mortifying thing, for a fond girl to find herself mistaken, and sent back to her home, like a vagrant?—and such, for what I know, might be my case.

Bel. Then he ought to be proscribed the society of mankind for ever.—Ay, ay, 'tis the sham sister, that makes him thus indifferent; 'twill be a meritorious office, to take that girl out of the way. [*Aside.*

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Miss Dudley, to wait on you, Madam.

Bel. Who?

Serv. Miss Dudley.

Miss R. What's the matter, Mr. Belcour? Are you frighted at the name of a pretty girl? 'Tis the sister of him we were speaking of.—Pray admit her. [*Exit* SERVANT.

Bel. The sister!—So, so; he has imposed on her too—this is an extraordinary visit, truly. Upon my soul, the assurance of some folks is not to be accounted for. [*Aside.*

Miss R. I insist upon your not running away;—you'll be charmed with Louisa Dudley.

Bel. Oh yes, I am charmed with her.

Miss R. You have seen her then, have you?

Bel. Yes, yes, I've seen her.

Miss R. Well, isn't she a delightful girl?

Bel. Very delightful.

Miss R. Why, you answer as if you was in a court of justice. O'my conscience, I believe you are caught; I've a notion she has tricked you out of your heart.

Bel. I believe she has, and you out of your jewels; for, to tell you the truth, she's the very person I gave them to.

Miss R. You gave her my jewels! Louisa Dudley my jewels! admirable! inimitable! Oh, the sly little jade!—but, hush! here she comes; I don't know how I shall keep my countenance.

Enter LOUISA.

My dear, I'm rejoiced to see you; how do you do?—I beg leave to introduce Mr. Belcour, a very worthy friend of mine, I believe, Louisa, you have seen him before.

Lou. I have met the gentleman.

Miss R. You have met the gentleman!—well, Sir, and you have met the lady; in short, you, have met each other, why, then, don't you speak to each other? How you both stand! tongue-tied and fixed as statues—Ha, ha, ha! Why, you'll fall asleep by and by.

Lou. Fy upon you, fy upon you! is this fair?

Bel. Upon my soul, I never looked so like a fool in my life—the assurance of that girl puts me quite down. [*Aside.*

Miss R. Sir—Mr. Belcour—Was it your pleasure to advance any thing? Not a syllable. Come, Louisa, woman's wit, they say, is never at a loss—Nor you neither?—Speechless both—Why, you was merry enough before this lady came in.

Lou. I am sorry I have been any interruption to your happiness, Sir.

Bel. Madam!

Miss R. Madam! Is that all you can say?

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But come, my dear girl, I wont tease you—*apropos!* I must show you what a present this dumb gentleman has made me—Are not these handsome diamonds?

Lou. Yes, indeed, they seem very fine; but I am no judge of these things.

Miss R. Oh, you wicked, little hypocrite; you are no judge of these things, Louisa; you have no diamonds, not you.

Lou. You know I haven't, Miss Rusport: you know those things are infinitely above my reach.

Miss R. Ha, ha, ha!

Bel. She does tell a lie with an admirable countenance, that's true enough. [*Aside.*

Lou. What ails you, Charlotte?—What impertinence have I been guilty of, that you should find it necessary to humble me at such a rate?—If you are happy, long may you be so: but surely, it can be no addition to it to make me miserable.

Miss R. So serious; there must be some mystery in this—Mr. Belcour, will you leave us together? You see I treat you with all the familiarity of an old acquaintance already.

Bel. Oh, by all means; pray, command me. Miss Rusport, I am your most obedient! By your condescension in accepting these poor trifles, I am under eternal obligations to you. —To you, Miss Dudley, I shall not offer a word on that subject;—you despise finery; you have a soul above it; I adore your spirit; I was rather unprepared for meeting you here, but I shall hope for an opportunity of making myself better known to you. [*Exit.*

Miss R. Louisa Dudley, you surprise me; I never saw you act thus before: can't you bear a little innocent raillery before the man of your heart?

Lou. The man of my heart, Madam! Be assured, I never was so visionary to aspire to any man whom Miss Rusport honours with her choice?

Miss R. My choice, my dear! Why, we are playing at cross-purposes: how entered it into your head that Mr. Belcour was the man of my choice?

Lou. Why, didn't he present you with those diamonds?

Miss. R. Well: perhaps he did—and pray, Louisa, have you no diamonds?

Lou. I diamonds, truly? Who should give me diamonds?

Miss. R. Who but this very gentleman: *apropos;* here comes your brother—

Enter CHARLES.

I insist upon referring our dispute to him: your sister and I, Charles, have a quarrel: Belcour the hero of your letter, has just left us—somehow or other, Louisa's bright eyes have caught him; and the poor fellow's fallen desperately in love with her—(don't interrupt me, hussy)—Well, that's excusable enough, you'll say; but the jest of the story is, that this hairbrained spark, who does nothing like other people, has given her the very identical jewels, which you pledged for me to Mr. Stockwell; and will you believe that this little demure slut made up a face, and squeezed out three or four hypocritical tears, because I rallied her about it?

Charles. I'm all astonishment! Louisa, tell me, without reserve, has Mr. Belcour given you any diamonds?

Lou. None, upon my honour.

Charles. Has he made any professions to you?

Lou. He has; but altogether in a style so whimsical and capricious, that the best which can be said of them is to tell you, that they seemed more the result of good spirits than good manners.

Miss R. Ay, ay, now the murder's out: he's in love with her, and she has no very great dislike to him; trust to my observations, Charles, for that: as to the diamonds, there's some mistake about them, and you must clear it up: three minutes' conversation with him will put every thing in a right train: go, go, Charles, 'tis a brother's business; about it instantly; ten to one you'll find him over the way, at Mr. Stockwell's.

Charles. I confess I'm impatient to have the case cleared up; I'll take your advice, and find him out: good bye to you.

Miss R. Your servant: my life upon it, you'll find Belcour a man of honour. Come, Louisa, let us adjourn to my dressing-room; I've a little private business to transact with you, before the old lady comes up to tea, and interrupts us. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Room in FULMER'S *house.*

Enter FULMER *and* MRS. FULMER.

Ful. Patty, wasn't Mr. Belcour with you?

Mrs. Ful. He was; and is now shut up in the chamber, in high expectation of an interview with Miss Dudley: she's at present with her brother, and 'twas with some difficulty I persuaded my hot-headed spark to wait till he has left her.

Ful. Well, child, and what then?

Mrs. Ful. Why, then, Mr. Fulmer, I think it will be time for you and me to steal a march, and be gone.

Ful. So this is all the fruit of your ingenious project; a shameful overthrow, or a sudden flight.

Mrs. Ful. Why, my project was a mere impromptu, and can at worst but quicken our departure a few days; you know we had fairly outlived our credit here, and a trip to Boulogne is no ways unseasonable. Nay, never droop, man—Hark! hark! here's enough to bear charges. [*Showing a purse.*

Ful. Let me see, let me see: this weighs well; this is of the right sort: why your West Indian bled freely.

Mrs. Ful. But that's not all: look here!—Here are the sparklers. [*Showing the jewels.*] Now, what d'ye think of my performances?—Heh! a foolish scheme, isn't it?—a silly woman—

Ful. Thou art a Judith, a Joan of Arc, and I'll march under thy banners, girl, to the world's end: come, let's be gone; I've little to regret; my creditors may share the old books amongst them; they'll have occasion for philosophy to support their loss; they'll find enough upon my shelves: the world is my library; I read mankind—Now, Patty, lead the way.

Mrs. Ful. Adieu, Belcour. [*Exeunt.*

Enter CHARLES DUDLEY *and* LOUISA.

Charles. Well, Louisa, I confess the force of what you say: I accept Miss Rusport's boun-

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ty; and when you see my generous Charlotte, tell her——but have a care, there is a selfishness even in gratitude, when it is too profuse; to be over-thankful for any one favour, is in effect to lay out for another; the best return I could make my benefactress would be, never to see her more.

Lou. I understand you.

Charles. We, that are poor, Louisa, should be cautious: for this reason, I would guard you against Belcour; at least, till I can unravel the mystery of Miss Rusport's diamonds; I was disappointed of finding him at Mr. Stockwell's, and I am now going in search of him again: he may intend honourably; but, I confess to you, I am staggered; think no more of him, therefore, for the present: of this be sure, while I have life and you have honour, I will protect you or perish in your defence. [*Exit.*

Lou. Think of him no more! Well, I'll obey; but if a wandering, uninvited thought should creep by chance into my bosom, must I not give the harmless wretch a shelter? Fy, fy upon it! Belcour pursues, insults me; yet, such is the fatality of my condition, that what should rouse my resentment, only calls up love.

Enter BELCOUR.

Bel. Alone, by all that's happy!

Lou. Ah!

Bel. Oh! shriek not, start not, stir not, loveliest creature! but let me kneel and gaze upon your beauties.

Lou. Sir! Mr. Belcour, rise! What is it you do? Should he that parted from me but this minute, now return, I tremble for the consequence.

Bel. Fear nothing; let him come: I love you, Madam; he'll find it hard to make me unsay that.

Lou. You terrify me; your impetuous temper frightens me; you know my situation; it is not generous to pursue me thus.

Bel. True, I do know your situation, your real one, Miss Dudley, and am resolved to snatch you from it; 'twill be a meritorious act; the old captain shall rejoice; Miss Rusport shall be made happy; and even he, even your beloved brother, with whose resentment you threaten me, shall in the end applaud and thank me. Come, thou art a dear, enchanting girl, and I'm determined not to live a minute longer without thee.

Lou. Hold! are you mad? I see you are a bold, assuming man; and know not where to stop.

Bel. Who that beholds such beauty can? Provoking girl! is it within the stretch of my fortune to content you? What is it you can further ask, that I am not ready to grant?

Lou. Yes, with the same facility, that you bestowed upon me Miss Rusport's diamonds. For shame! for shame! was that a manly story?

Bel. So! so! these devilish diamonds meet me every where. Let me perish if I meant you any harm: Oh! I could tear my tongue out for saying a word about the matter.

Lou. Go to her then, and contradict it; till that is done, my reputation is at stake.

Bel. Her reputation!—Now she has got upon that, she'll go on for ever. [*Aside.*]—What is there I will not do for your sake? I will go to Miss Rusport.

Lou. Do so; restore her own jewels to her, which I suppose you kept back for the purpose of presenting others to her of a greater value; but for the future, Mr. Belcour, when you would do a gallant action to that lady, don't let it be at my expense.

Bel. I see where she points: she is willing enough to give up Miss Rusport's diamonds, now she finds she shall be a gainer by the exchange. Be it so! 'tis what I wished.—Well, Madam, I will return to Miss Rusport her own jewels, and you shall have others of tenfold their value.

Lou. No, Sir, you err most widely; it is my good opinion, not my vanity, which you must bribe.

Bel. Why what the devil would she have now?—Miss Dudley, it is my wish to obey and please you; but I have some apprehension that we mistake each other.

Lou. I think we do: tell me, then, in few words, what it is you aim at.

Bel. In few words, then, and in plain honesty, I must tell you, so entirely am I captivated with you, that had you but been such as it would have become me to have called my wife, I had been happy in knowing you by that name; as it is, you are welcome to partake my fortune, give me, in return, your person, give me pleasure, give me love; free, disencumbered, antimatrimonial love.

Lou. Stand off, and never let me see you more.

Bel. Hold, hold, thou dear, tormenting, tantalizing girl! Upon my knees, I swear you shall not stir till you have consented to my bliss.

Lou. Unhand me, Sir: O, Charles! protect me, rescue me, redress me. [*Exit.*

Enter CHARLES DUDLEY.

Charles. How's this?—Rise, villain, and defend yourself.

Bel. Villain!

Charles. The man who wrongs that lady is a villain—Draw!

Bel. Never fear me, young gentleman; brand me for a coward if I balk you.

Charles. Yet hold! let me not be too hasty: your name, I think, is Belcour.

Bel. Well, Sir.

Charles. How is it, Mr. Belcour, you have done this mean, unmanly wrong; beneath the mask of generosity, to give this fatal stab to our domestic peace? You might have had my thanks, my blessing: take my defiance now. 'Tis Dudley speaks to you; the brother, the protector of that injured lady.

Bel. The brother! give yourself a truer title.

Charles. What is't you mean?

Bel. Come, come, I know both her and you: I found you, Sir, (but how or why I know not,) in the good graces of Miss Rusport—(yes, colour at that name,) I gave you no disturbance there, never broke in upon you in that rich and plenteous quarter, but, when I could have blasted all your projects with a word, spared you, in foolish pity spared you, nor roused her from the fond credulity in which your artifice had lulled her.

Charles. No, Sir, nor boasted to her of the splendid present you had made my poor Louisa; the diamonds, Mr. Belcour: how was that? What can you plead to that arraignment?

Bel. You question me too late; the name of Belcour and of villain never met before; had you inquired of me before you uttered that rash word, you might have saved yourself or

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me a mortal error; now, Sir, I neither give nor take an explanation; so, come on!

[*They fight.*

Enter LOUISA *and* O'FLAHERTY.

Lou. Hold, hold, for Heaven's sake!

O'Fla. Hell and confusion! What's all this uproar for? Can't you leave off cutting one another's throats, and mind what the poor girl says to you? You've done a notable thing, haven't you both, to put her into such a furry? I think, o'my conscience, she's the most frighted of the three.

Charles. Dear Louisa, recollect yourself; why did you interfere? 'tis in your cause.

Bel. Now could I kill him for caressing her.

O'Fla. O Sir, your most obedient! You are the gentleman I had the honour of meeting here before; you was then running off at full speed, like a Calmuck, now you are tilting and driving like a bedlamite, with this lad here, that seems as mad as yourself: 'tis pity but your country had a little more employment for you both.

Bel. Mr. Dudley, when you have recovered the lady, you know where I am to be found.

[*Exit.*

O'Fla. Well, then, can't you stay where you are, and that will save the trouble of looking after you? You volatile fellows think to give a man the meeting by getting out of his way: by my soul, 'tis a roundabout method that of his. But I think he called you Dudley: harkye, young man, are you son of my friend, the old captain?

Charles. I am. Help me to convey this lady to her chamber, and I shall be more at leisure to answer your questions.

O'Fla. Ay, will I: come along, pretty one; if you've had wrong done you, young man, you need look no further for a second; Dennis O'Flaherty's your man for that: but never draw your sword before a woman, Dudley; damn it, never while you live draw your sword before a woman.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—LADY RUSPORT'S *House.*

Enter LADY RUSPORT *and* SERVANT.

Serv. An elderly gentleman, who says his name is Varland, desires leave to wait on your ladyship.

Lady R. Show him in: the very man I wish to see. Varland, he was Sir Oliver's solicitor, and privy to all his affairs: he brings some good tidings; some fresh mortgage or another bond come to light: they start up every day.

Enter VARLAND.

Mr. Varland, I'm glad to see you; you are heartily welcome, honest Mr. Varland; you and I haven't met since our late irreparable loss: how have you passed your time this age?

Var. Truly, my lady, ill enough: I thought I must have followed good Sir Oliver.

Lady R. Alack-a-day, poor man! Well, Mr. Varland, you find me here overwhelmed with trouble and fatigue; torn to pieces with a multiplicity of affairs; a great fortune poured upon me, unsought for and unexpected: 'twas my good father's will and pleasure it should be so, and I must submit.

Var. Your ladyship inherits under a will made in the year forty-five, immediately after Captain Dudley's marriage with your sister.

Lady R. I do so, Mr. Varland; I do so.

Var. I well remember it; I engrossed every syllable, but I am surprised to find your ladyship set so little store by this vast accession.

Lady R. Why, you know, Mr. Varland, I am a moderate woman: I had enough before; a small matter satisfies me; and Sir Stephen Rusport (heaven be his portion!) took care I shouldn't want that.

Var. Very true, very true; he did so; and I am overjoyed to find your ladyship in this disposition; for, truth to say, I was not without apprehension the news I have to communicate would have been of some prejudice to your ladyship's tranquillity.

Lady R. News, Sir! what news have you for me?

Var. Nay, nothing to alarm you; a trifle in your present way of thinking: I have a will of Sir Oliver's, you have never seen.

Lady R. A will! impossible! how came you by it, pray?

Var. I drew it up, at his command, in his last illness: it will save you a world of trouble: it gives his whole estate from you to his grandson, Charles Dudley.

Lady R. To Dudley! his estate to Charles Dudley? I can't support it! I shall faint! You have killed me, you vile man! I never shall survive it!

Var. Lookye there, now: I protest, I thought you would have rejoiced at being clear of the encumbrance.

Lady R. 'Tis false; 'tis all a forgery, concerted between you and Dudley: why else did I never hear of it before?

Var. Have patience, my lady, and I'll tell you. By Sir Oliver's direction, I was to deliver this will into no hands but his grandson Dudley's: the young gentleman happened to be then in Scotland; I was despatched thither in search of him: the hurry and fatigue of my journey brought on a fever by the way, which confined me in extreme danger for several days; upon my recovery, I pursued my journey, found young Dudley had left Scotland in the interim, and am now directed hither; where, as soon as I can find him, doubtless, I shall discharge my conscience, and fulfil my commission.

Lady R. Dudley then, as yet, knows nothing of this will?

Var. Nothing: that secret rests with me.

Lady R. A thought occurs: by this fellow's talking of his conscience, I should guess it was upon sale. [*Aside.*]—Come, Mr. Varland, if 'tis as you say, I must submit. I was somewhat flurried at first, and forgot myself: I ask your pardon: this is no place to talk of business; step with me into my room; you will there compare the will, and resolve accordingly—Oh! would your fever had you, and I had your paper!

[*Exeunt.*

Enter MISS RUSPORT, CHARLES, *and* O'FLAHERTY.

Miss R. So, so! My lady and her lawyer have retired to close conflabulation: now, major, if you are the generous man I take you for, grant me one favour.

O'Fla. 'Faith will I, and not think much of my generosity neither; for, though it may not be in my power to do the favour you ask, look you, it can never be in my heart to refuse it.

Charles. Could this man's tongue do justice to his thoughts, how eloquent would he be!

[*Aside.*

Miss R. Plant yourself, then, in that room:

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keep guard for a few moments upon the enemy's motions in the chamber beyond; and, if they should attempt a sally, stop their mouth a moment, till your friend here can make good his retreat down the back stairs.

O'Fla. A word to the wise! I'm an old campaigner: make the best use of your time; and trust me for tying the old cat up to the picket.

Miss R. Hush! hush! not so loud.

Charles. 'Tis the office of a sentinel, major, you have undertaken, rather than that of a field-officer.

O'Fla. 'Tis the office of a friend, my dear boy; and therefore no disgrace to a general. [*Exit.*

Miss R. Well, Charles, will you commit yourself to me for a few minutes?

Charles. Most readily; and let me, before one goes by, tender you the only payment I can ever make for your abundant generosity.

Miss R. Hold, hold! so vile a thing as money must not come between us. What shall I say? Oh, Charles! Oh, Dudley! What difficulties have you thrown upon me! Familiarly as we have lived, I shrink now at what I am doing; and, anxiously as I have sought this opportunity, my fears almost persuade me to abandon it.

Charles. You alarm me!

Miss R. Your looks and actions have been so distant, and at this moment are so deterring, that, was it not for the hope that delicacy, and not disgust, inspires this conduct in you, I should sink with shame and apprehension; but time presses; and I must speak, and plainly too—Was you now in possession of your grandfather's estate, as justly you ought to be, and was you inclined to seek a companion for life, should you, or should you not, in that case, honour your unworthy Charlotte with your choice?

Charles. My unworthy Charlotte! So judge me, Heaven, there is not a circumstance on earth so valuable as your happiness, so dear to me as your person; but to bring poverty, disgrace, reproach from friends, ridicule from all the world, upon a generous benefactress; thievishly to steal into an open and unreserved ingenuous heart, O Charlotte! dear, unhappy girl, it is not to be done.

Miss R. Come, my dear Charles, I have enough; make that enough still more by sharing it with me: sole heiress of my father's fortune, a short time will put it in my disposal; in the mean while you will be sent to join your regiment; let us prevent a separation, by setting out this very night for that happy country, where marriage still is free: carry me this moment to Belcour's lodgings.

Charles. Belcour's?—The name is ominous; there's murder in it: bloody, inexorable honour! [*Aside.*

Miss R. D'ye pause? Put me into his hands, while you provide the means for our escape: he is the most generous, the most honourable, of men.

Charles. Honourable! most honourable!

Miss R. Can you doubt it? Do you demur? Have you forgot your letter? Why, Belcour, 'twas that prompted me to this proposal, that promised to supply the means, that nobly offered his unasked assistance—

Enter O'Flaherty, *hastily.*

O'Fla. Run, run; for holy St. Anthony's sake, to horse, and away! The conference is broke up and the enemy advances upon a full Piedmontese trot, within pistol-shot of your encampment.

Miss R. Here, here, down the back stairs! O Charles, remember me!

Charles. Farewell! Now, now I feel myself a coward. [*Exit.*

Miss R. What does he mean?

O'Fla. Ask no questions, but be gone: she has cooled the lad's courage, and wonders he feels like a coward. There's a damned deal of mischief brewing between this hyena and her lawyer: 'egad, I'll step behind this screen and listen: a good soldier must sometimes fight in ambush, as well as open field. [*Retires.*

Enter Varland.

Var. Let me consider——Five thousand pounds, prompt payment, for destroying this scrap of paper, not worth five farthings; 'tis a fortune easily earned; yes, and 'tis another man's fortune easily thrown away: 'tis a good round sum, to be paid down at once for a bribe; but 'tis a damned rogue's trick in me to take it.

O'Fla So, so! this fellow speaks truth to himself, though he lies to other people. [*Aside.*

Var. 'Tis breaking the trust of my benefactor, that's a foul crime; but he's dead, and can never reproach me with it: and 'tis robbing young Dudley of his lawful patrimony, that's a hard case; but he's alive, and knows nothing of the matter.

O'Fla. These lawyers are so used to bring off the rogueries of others, that they are never without an excuse for their own. [*Aside.*

Var. Were I assured now that Dudley would give me half the money for producing this will, that Lady Rusport does for concealing it, I would deal with him and be an honest man at half price; and I wish every gentleman of my profession could lay his hand on his heart and say the same thing.

O'Fla. A bargain, old gentleman! Nay, never start nor stare; you wasn't afraid of your own conscience never be afraid of me.

Var. Of you, Sir! who are you, pray?

O'Fla. I'll tell you who I am: you seem to wish to be honest, but want the heart to set about it; now I am the very man in the world to make you so; for, if you do not give up that paper this very instant, by the soul of me, fellow, I will not leave one whole bone in your skin that sha'n't be broken.

Var. What right have you, pray, to take this paper from me?

O'Fla. What right have you, pray, to keep it from young Dudley? I don't know what it contains, but I am apt to think it will be safer in my hands than in yours; therefore give it me without more words, and save yourself a beating: do now; you had best.

Var. Well, Sir, I may as well make a grace of necessity. There; I have acquitted my conscience, at the expense of five thousand pounds.

O'Fla. Five thousand pounds! Mercy upon me! When there are such temptations in the law, can we wonder if some of the corps are a disgrace to it!

Var. Well, you have got the paper; if you are an honest man, give it to Charles Dudley.

O'Fla. An honest man! look at me, friend; I am a soldier, this is not the livery of a knave; I am an Irishman, honey; mine is not the country of dishonour. Now, sirrah, be gone; if thou enter these doors, or give Lady Rusport

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the least item of what has passed, I will cut off both your ears, and rob the pillory of its due.

Ver. I wish I was once fairly out of his sight. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—A Room in STOCKWELL'S *House.*

Enter STOCKWELL.

Stock. I must disclose myself to Belcour; this noble instance of his generosity which old Dudley has been relating, allies me to him at once; concealment becomes too painful; I shall be proud to own him for my son——But see, he's here.

Enter BELCOUR, *and throws himself upon a sofa.*

Bel. O my cursed tropical constitution! 'Would to Heaven I had been dropped upon the snows of Lapland, and never felt the blessed influence of the sun, so I had never burnt with these inflammatory passions!

Stock. So, so, you seem disordered, Mr. Belcour.

Bel. Disordered, Sir! Why did I ever quit the soil in which I grew; what evil planet drew me from that warm, sunny region, where naked nature walks without disguise, into this cold, contriving, artificial country.

Stock. Come, Sir, you've met a rascal; what o'that? general conclusions are illiberal.

Bel. No, Sir, I have met reflection by the way; I have come from folly, noise, and fury, and met a silent monitor—Well, well, a villain! 'twas not to be pardoned—pray never mind me, Sir.

Stock. Alas! my heart bleeds for him.

Bel. And yet, I might have heard him: now, plague upon that blundering Irishman, for coming in as he did; the hurry of the deed might palliate the event; deliberate execution has less to plead.—Mr. Stockwell, I am bad company to you.

Stock. Oh, Sir, make no excuse. I think you have not found me forward to pry into the secrets of your pleasures and pursuits; 'tis not my disposition; but there are times, when want of curiosity would be want of friendship.

Bel. Ah, Sir, mine is a case wherein you and I shall never think alike.

Stock. 'Tis very well, Sir; if you think I can render you any service, it may be worth your trial to confide in me; if not, your secret is safer in your own bosom.

Bel. That sentiment demands my confidence: pray, sit down by me. You must know, I have an affair of honour on my hands with young Dudley; and, though I put up with no man's insult, yet I wish to take away no man's life.

Stock. I know the young man, and am apprised of your generosity to his father; what can have bred a quarrel between you?

Bel. A foolish passion on my side, and a haughty provocation on his. There is a girl, Mr. Stockwell, whom I have unfortunately seen, of most uncommon beauty; she has withal an air of so much natural modesty, that, had I not had good assurance of her being an attainable wanton, I declare I should as soon have thought of attempting the chastity of Diana.

Enter SERVANT.

Stock. Hey day, do you interrupt us?

Serv. Sir, there's an Irish gentleman will take no denial: he says he must see Mr. Belcour directly, upon business of the last consequence.

Bel. Admit him: 'tis the Irish officer that parted us, and brings me young Dudley's challenge; I should have made a long story of it, and he'll tell you in three words.

Enter O'FLAHERTY.

O'Fla. 'Save you, my dear; and you, Sir, I have a little bit of a word in private for you.

Bel. Pray, deliver your commands: this gentleman is my intimate friend.

O'Fla. Why, then, ensign Dudley will be glad to measure swords with you yonder, at the London Tavern, in Bishopsgate-street, at nine o'clock—you know the place.

Bel. I do, and shall observe the appointment.

O'Fla. Will you be of the party, Sir? we shall want a fourth hand.

Stock. Savage as the custom is, I close with your proposal; and, though I am not fully informed of the occasion of your quarrel, I shall rely on Mr. Belcour's honour for the justice of it, and willingly stake my life in his defence.

O'Fla. Sir, you are a gentleman of honour, and I shall be glad of being better known to you.—But, harkye, Belcour, I had like to have forgot part of my errand: there is the money you gave old Dudley: you may tell it over, 'faith: 'tis a receipt in full; now the lad can put you to death with a safe conscience, and when he has done that job for you, let it be a warning how you attempt the sister of a man of honour.

Bel. The sister?

O'Fla. Ay, the sister; 'tis English, is it not? or Irish; 'tis all one; you understand me, his sister, or Louisa Dudley, that's her name, I think, call her which you will. By St. Patrick, 'tis a foolish piece of business, Belcour, to go about to take away a poor girl's virtue from her, when there are so many to be met with in this town, who have disposed of theirs to your hands. [*Exit.*

Stock. Why, I am thunderstruck! what is it you have done, and what is the shocking business in which I have engaged? If I understand him right, 'tis the sister of young Dudley you've been attempting: you talked to me of a professed wanton; the girl he speaks of has beauty enough indeed to inflame your desires, but she has honour, innocence, and simplicity, to awe the most licentious passion; if you have done that, Mr. Belcour, I renounce you, I abandon you, I forswear all fellowship or friendship with you for ever.

Bel. Have patience for a moment; we do indeed speak of the same person, but she is not innocent, she is not young Dudley's sister.

Stock. Astonishing! who told you this?

Bel. The woman, where she lodges, the person, who put me on the pursuit, and contrived our meetings.

Stock. What woman? what person?

Bel. Fulmer her name is: I warrant you, I did not proceed without good grounds.

Stock. Fulmer, Fulmer? Who waits?

Enter a SERVANT.

Send Mr. Stukely hither directly; [*Exit* SER-

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VANT.] I begin to see my way into this dark transaction. Mr. Belcour, Mr. Belcour, you are no match for the cunning and contrivances of this intriguing town.

Enter STUKELY.

Pr'ythee, Stukely, what is the name of the woman and her husband, who were stopped upon suspicion of selling stolen diamonds at our next-door neighbour's the jeweller?

Stuke. Fulmer.

Stock. So!

Bel. Can you procure me a sight of those diamonds?

Stuke. They are now in my hand; I was desired to show them to Mr. Stockwell.

Stock. Give them to me—What do I see?—as I live, the very diamonds Miss Rusport sent hither, and which I entrusted to you to return.

Bel. Yes, but I betrayed that trust, and gave them Mrs. Fulmer, to present to Miss Dudley.

Stock. With a view, no doubt, to bribe her to compliance?

Bel. I own it.

Stock. For shame, for shame;—and 'twas this woman's intelligence you relied upon, for Miss Dudley's character.

Bel. I thought she knew her;—by Heaven, I would have died, sooner than have insulted a woman of virtue, or a man of honour.

Stock. I think you would; but mark the danger of licentious courses; you are betrayed, robbed, abused, and, but for this providential discovery, in a fair way of being sent out of the world, with all your follies on your head.—Dear Stukely, go to my neighbour, tell him, I have an owner for the jewels; and beg him to carry the people under custody to the London Tavern, and wait for me there. [*Exit* STUKELY.] I see it was a trap laid for you, which you have narrowly escaped: you addressed a woman of honour with all the loose incense of a profane admirer; and you have drawn upon you the resentment of a man of honour, who thinks himself bound to protect her. Well, Sir, you must atone for this mistake.

Bel. To the lady, the most penitent submission I can make is justly due; but, in the execution of an act of justice, it never shall be said my soul was swayed by the least particle of fear. I have received a challenge from her brother; now, though I would give my fortune, almost my life itself, to purchase her happiness, yet I cannot abate her one scruple of my honour;—I have been branded with the name of villain.

Stock. Ay, Sir, you mistook her character, and he mistook yours: error begets error.

Bel. Villain, Mr. Stockwell, is a harsh word.

Stock. It is a harsh word, and should be unsaid.

Bel. Come, come, it shall be unsaid.

Stock. Or else, what follows? Why, the sword is drawn; and, to heal the wrongs you have done to the reputation of the sister, you make an honourable amends by murdering the brother.

Bel. Murdering!

Stock. 'Tis thus religion writes and speaks the word; in the vocabulary of modern honour, there is no such term. But, come, I don't despair of satisfying the one, without alarming the other; that done, I have a discovery to unfold, that you will then, I hope, be fitted to receive. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—STOCKWELL'S *House.*

CAPTAIN DUDLEY, LOUISA, *and* STUKELY.

Dud. And are those wretches, Fulmer, and his wife, in safe custody?

Stuke. They are in good hands; I accompanied them to the tavern, where your son was to be, and then went in search of you. You may be sure, Mr. Stockwell will enforce the law against them as far as it will go.

Dud. What mischief might their cursed machinations have produced, but for this timely discovery!

Lou. Still I am terrified; I tremble with apprehension.

Stuke. Mr. Stockwell is with them, Madam, and you have nothing to fear; you may expect them every minute;—and see, Madam, agreeably to your wish, they are here. [*Exit.*

Enter CHARLES; *afterwards* STOCKWELL *and* O'FLAHERTY.

Lou. O, Charles, O, brother! how could you serve me so? how could you tell me you was going to Lady Rusport's, and then set out with a design of fighting Mr. Belcour? But where is he? where is your antagonist?

Stock. Captain, I am proud to see you; and you, Miss Dudley, do me particular honour. We have been adjusting, Sir, a very extraordinary and dangerous mistake, which I take for granted, my friend Stukely has explained to you.

Dud. He has—I have too good an opinion of Mr. Belcour, to believe he could be guilty of a designed affront to an innocent girl; and I am much too well acquainted with your character, to suppose you could abet him in such design; I have no doubt, therefore, all things will be set to rights in a very few words, when we have the pleasure of seeing Mr. Belcour.

Stock. He has only stepped into the counting-house, and will wait upon you directly. You will not be over strict, Madam, in weighing Mr. Belcour's conduct to the minutest scruple;—his manners, passions, and opinions are not as yet assimilated to this climate; he comes amongst you a new character, an inhabitant of a new world, and both hospitality, as well as pity, recommend him to our indulgence.

Enter BELCOUR; *he bows to* MISS DUDLEY.

Bel. I am happy, and ashamed, to see you;—no man in his senses would offend you; I forfeited mine, and erred against the light of the sun, when I overlooked your virtues; but your beauty was predominant, and hid them from my sight;—I now perceive, I was the dupe of a most improbable report, and humbly entreat your pardon.

Lou. Think no more of it; 'twas a mistake.

Bel. My life has been composed of little else; 'twas founded in mystery, and has continued in error:—I was once given to hope, Mr. Stockwell, that you was to have delivered me from these difficulties; but either I do not deserve your confidence, or I was deceived in my expectations.

Stock. When this lady has confirmed your pardon, I shall hold you deserving of my confidence.

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Lou. That was granted the moment it was asked.

Bel. To prove my title to his confidence, honour me so far with yours, as to allow me a few minutes' conversation in private with you. [*She turns to her father.*

Dud. By all means, Louisa; come, Mr. Stockwell, let us go into another room.

Charles. And now, Major O'Flaherty, I claim your promise, of a sight of the paper, that is to unravel this conspiracy of my aunt Rusport's. I think I have waited with great patience.

O'Fla. I have been endeavouring to call to mind what it was I overheard; I have got the paper, and will give you the best account I can of the whole transaction. [*Exeunt.*

Bel. Miss Dudley, I have solicited this audience, to repeat to you my penitence and confusion. How shall I atone? What reparation can I make to you and virtue?

Lou. To me there's nothing due, nor any thing demanded of you but your more favourable opinion for the future, if you should chance to think of me. Upon the part of virtue, I am not empowered to speak; but if hereafter, as you range through life, you should surprise her in the person of some wretched female, poor as myself, and not so well protected, enforce not your advantage, complete not your licentious triumph; but raise her, rescue her from shame and sorrow, and reconcile her to herself again.

Bel. I will, I will; by bearing your idea ever present in my thoughts, virtue shall keep an advocate within me: but tell me, loveliest, when you pardon the offence, can you, all perfect as you are, approve of the offender? As I now cease to view you in that false light I lately did, can you, and in the fulness of your bounty will you, cease also to reflect upon the libertine addresses I have paid you, and look upon me as your reformed, your rational admirer.

Lou. Are sudden reformations apt to last? and how can I be sure the first fair face you meet will not ensnare affections so unsteady, and that I shall not lose you lightly as I gained you?

Bel. Because, though you conquered me by surprise, I have no inclination to rebel; because, since the first moment that I saw you, every instant has improved you in my eyes; because, by principle as well as passion, I am unalterably yours; in short, there are ten thousand causes for my love to you, would to Heaven I could plant one in your soft bosom, that might move you to return it!

Lou. Nay, Mr. Belcour——

Bel. I know I am not worthy your regard; I know I am tainted with a thousand faults, sick of a thousand follies; but there's a healing virtue in your eyes, that makes recovery certain; I cannot be a villain in your arms.

Lou. That you can never be: whomever you shall honour with your choice, my life upon't, that woman will be happy: it is not from suspicion that I hesitate, it is from honour; 'tis the severity of my condition, it is the world that never will interpret fairly in our case.

Bel. Oh, what am I, and who in this wide world concerns himself for such a nameless, such a friendless, thing as I am? I see, Miss Dudley, I've not yet obtained your pardon.

Lou. Nay, that you are in full possession of.

Bel. Oh, seal it with your hand, then, loveliest of women; confirm it with your heart; make me honourably happy, and crown your penitent, not with your pardon only, but your love.

Lou. My love!——

Enter O'Flaherty; *afterwards* Dudley *and* Charles, *with* Stockwell.

O'Fla. Joy, joy! sing, dance, leap, laugh for joy. Ha' done making love, and fall down on your knees, to every saint in the calendar, for they are all on your side, and honest St. Patrick at the head of them.

Charles. O Louisa, such an event! by the luckiest chance in life, we have discovered a will of my grandfather's, made in his last illness, by which he cuts off my aunt Rusport with a small annuity, and leaves me heir to his whole estate, with a fortune of fifteen thousand pounds to yourself.

Lou. What is it you tell me? O Sir, instruct me to support this unexpected change of fortune. [*To her father.*

Dud. Name not fortune; 'tis the work of Providence; 'tis the justice of Heaven that would not suffer innocence to be oppressed, nor your base aunt to prosper in her cruelty and cunning.

[*A Servant whispers* Belcour, *and he goes out.*

O'Fla. You shall pardon me, Captain Dudley, but you must not overlook St. Patrick neither; for by my soul, if he had not put it into my head to slip behind the screen, I don't see how you would ever have come at the paper there, that Master Stockwell is reading.

Dud. True, my good friend, you are the father of this discovery; but how did you contrive to get this will from the lawyer?

O'Fla. By force, my dear; the only way of getting any thing from a lawyer's clutches.

Stock. Well, major, when he brings his action of assault and battery against you, the least Dudley can do is to defend you with the weapons you have put into his hands.

Charles. That I am bound to do; and after the happiness I shall have in sheltering a father's age from the vicissitudes of life, my next delight will be in offering you an asylum in the bosom of your country.

O'Fla. And upon my soul, my dear, 'tis high time I was there, for 'tis now thirty long years since I set foot in my native country, and by the power of St. Patrick, I swear I think it's worth all the rest of the world put together.

Dud. Ay, major, much about that time have I been beating the round of service, and 'twere well for us both to give over; we have stood many a tough gale, and abundance of hard blows, but Charles shall lay us up in a little private, but safe harbour, where we'll rest from our labours, and peacefully wind up the remainder of our days.

O'Fla. Agreed, and you may take it as a proof of my esteem, young man, that Major O'Flaherty accepts a favour at your hands; for, by Heaven, I'd sooner starve, than say I thank you, to the man I despise; but I believe you are an honest lad, and I'm glad you have trounced the old cat; for, on my conscience, I believe I must otherwise have married her myself, to have let you in for a share of her fortune.

Stock. Hey day, what's become of Belcour?

Lou. One of your servants called him out

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just now, and seemingly on some earnest occasion.

Stock. I hope, Miss Dudley, he has atoned to you as a gentleman ought.

Lou. Mr. Belcour, Sir, will always do what a gentleman ought, and in my case I fear only you will think he has done too much.

Stock. What has he done? and what can be too much? Pray Heaven, it may be as I wish. [*Aside.*

Dud. Let us hear it, child.

Lou. With confusion for my own unworthiness, I confess he has offered me——

Stock. Himself.

Lou. 'Tis true.

Stock. Then I am happy; all my doubts, my cares, are over, and I may own him for my son.——Why, these are joyful tidings; come, my good friend, assist me in disposing your lovely daughter to accept this returning prodigal; he is no unprincipled, no hardened libertine; his love for you and virtue is the same.

Dud. 'Twere vile ingratitude in me to doubt his merit—What says my child?

O'Fla. Begging your pardon now, 'tis a frivolous sort of a question, that of yours, for you may see plainly enough, by the young lady's looks, that she says a great deal, though she speaks never a word.

Charles. Well, sister, I believe the major has fairly interpreted the state of your heart.

Lou. I own it; and what must that heart be, which love, honour, and beneficence, like Mr. Belcour's, can make no impression on?

Stock. I thank you: what happiness has this hour brought to pass!

O'Fla. Why don't we all sit down to supper, then, and make a night on't?

Enter BELCOUR, *introducing* MISS RUSPORT.

Bel. Mr. Dudley, here is a fair refugee, who properly comes under your protection; she is equipped for Scotland, but your good fortune, which I have related to her, seems inclined to save you both the journey——Nay, Madam, never go back! you are amongst friends.

Charles. Charlotte!

Miss R. The same; that fond, officious girl, that haunts you every where: that persecuting spirit—

Charles. Say, rather, that protecting angel; such you have been to me.

Miss R. Charles, you have an honest, but proud heart.

Charles. Nay, chide me not, dear Charlotte.

Bel. Seal up her lips, then; she is an adorable girl; her arms are open to you; and love and happiness are ready to receive you.

Charles. Thus, then, I claim my dear, my destined wife. [*Embracing her.*

Enter LADY RUSPORT.

Lady R. Hey day! mighty fine! wife, truly! mighty well! kissing, embracing—did ever any thing equal this? Why, you shameless hussy!—But I wont condescend to waste a word upon you.—You, Sir, you, Mr. Stockwell; you fine, sanctified, fair-dealing man of conscience; is this the principle you trade upon? is this your neighbourly system, to keep a house of reception for runaway daughters, and young beggarly fortune-hunters?

O'Fla. Be advised now, and don't put yourself in such a passion; we were all very happy till you came.

Lady R. Stand away, Sir; haven't I a reason to be in a passion?

O'Fla. Indeed, honey, and you have, if you knew all.

Lady R. Come, Madam, I have found out your haunts; dispose yourself to return home with me. Young man, never let me see you within my doors again: Mr. Stockwell, I shall report your behaviour, depend on it.

Stock. Hold, Madam, I cannot consent to lose Miss Rusport's company this evening, and I am persuaded you wont insist upon it; 'tis an unmotherly action to interrupt your daughter's happiness in this manner—believe me it is.

Lady R. Her happiness truly! upon my word! and I suppose it's an unmotherly action to interrupt her ruin; for what but ruin must it be to marry a beggar? I think my sister had a proof of that, Sir, when she made a choice of you. [*To* CAPTAIN DUDLEY.

Dud. Don't be too lavish of your spirits, Lady Rusport.

O'Fla. By my soul, you'll have occasion for a sip of the cordial elixir by and by.

Stock. It don't appear to me, Madam, that Mr. Dudley can be called a beggar.

Lady R. But it appears to me, Mr. Stockwell; I am apt to think a pair of colours cannot furnish settlement quite sufficient for the heiress of Sir Stephen Rusport.

Miss R. But a good estate, in aid of a commission, may do something.

Lady R. A good estate, truly! where should he get a good estate, pray?

Stock. Why, suppose now a worthy old gentleman, on his death-bed, should have taken it in mind to leave him one—

Lady R. Hah! what's that you say?

O'Fla. O ho, you begin to smell a plot, do you?

Stock. Suppose there should be a paper in the world, that runs thus—"I do hereby give and bequeath all my estates, real and personal, to Charles Dudley, son of my late daughter Louisa, &c. &c. &c."

O'Fla. There's a fine parcel of *et ceteras* for your ladyship.

Lady R. Why, I am thunderstruck! by what contrivance, what villany, did you get possession of that paper?

Stock. There was no villany, Madam, in getting possession of it; the crime was in concealing it, none in bringing it to light.

Lady R. Oh, that cursed lawyer, Varland!

O'Fla. You may say that, 'faith; he is a cursed lawyer; and a cursed piece of work I had to get the paper from him; your ladyship was to have paid him five thousand pounds for it: I forced him to give it me of his own accord, for nothing at all, at all.

Lady R. Is it you that have done this? am I foiled by your blundering contrivances after all?

O'Fla. 'Twas a blunder, faith, but as natural a one as if I had made it o'purpose.

Charles. Come, let us not oppress the fallen; do right even now, and you shall have no cause to complain.

Lady R. Am I become an object of your pity, then? Insufferable! confusion light among you! marry, and be wretched: let me never see you more. [*Exit.*

Miss R. She is outrageous; I suffer for her, and blush to see her thus exposed.

Charles. Come, Charlotte, don't let this angry woman disturb our happiness: we will save her, in spite of herself; your father's memory shall not be stained by the discredit of his second choice.

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Miss R. I trust implicitly to your discretion, and am in all things yours.

Bel. Now, lovely, but obdurate, does not this example soften?

Lou. What can you ask for more? Accept my hand, accept my willing heart.

Bel. O, bliss unutterable! brother, father, friend, and you, the author of this general joy——

O'Fla. Blessing of St. Patrick upon us all! 'tis a night of wonderful and surprising ups and downs: I wish we were all fairly set down to supper, and there was an end on't.

Stock. Hold for a moment! I have yet one word to interpose.—Entitled by my friendship to a voice in your disposal, I have approved your match; there yet remains a father's consent to be obtained.

Bel. Have I a father?

Stock. You have a father; did not I tell you I had a discovery to make?—Compose yourself—you have a father, who observes, who knows, who loves you.

Bel. Keep me no longer in suspense; my heart is softened for the affecting discovery, and nature fits me to receive his blessing.

Stock. I am your father.

Bel. My father!—Do I live?

Stock. I am your father.

Bel. It is too much—my happiness overpowers me—to gain a friend, and find a father, is too much: I blush to think how little I deserve you. [*They embrace.*

Dud. See, children, how many new relations spring from this night's unforeseen events, to endear us to each other.

O'Fla. O'my conscience, I think we shall be all related by and by.

Stock. Yes, Belcour, I have watched you with a patient, but inquiring eye, and I have discovered, through the veil of some irregularities, a heart beaming with benevolence, and animated nature; fallible, indeed, but not incorrigible; and your election of this excellent young lady makes me glory in acknowledging you to be my son.

Bel. I thank you, and, in my turn, glory in the father I have gained. Sensibly impressed with gratitude for such extraordinary dispensations, I beseech you, amiable Louisa, for the time to come, whenever you perceive me deviating into error or offence, bring only to my mind the Providence of this night, and I will turn to reason, and obey.

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HIGH LIFE BELOW STAIRS:

A FARCE,

IN TWO ACTS.

BY THE REV. MR. TOWNLEY.

REMARKS.

THIS after-piece was, for a long period, attributed to Mr. Garrick, but it is now known to have been the production of the Rev. James Townley, the master of Merchant Tailors' School.—The main idea of it appears to have been suggested by the Spectator, No. 88, in which it is observed,

"Falling-in the other day at a victualling-house near the house of Peers, I heard the maid come down and tell the landlady at the bar, that my Lord Bishop swore he would throw her out at the window, if she did not bring up more mild beer, and that my Lord Duke would have a double mug of purl. My surprise was increased, in hearing loud and rustic voices speak and answer to each other upon the public affairs, by the names of the most illustrious of our nobility; till of a sudden one came running in, and cried the house was rising. Down came all the company together, and away! The ale-house was immediately filled with clamour, and scoring one mug to the Marquis of such a place, oil and vinegar to such an Earl, three quarts to my new Lord for wetting his title, and so forth."

A most important reform was effected, by this well-timed exposure, in the manners and habits of both servants and masters; the wastefulness and infidelity of the former were never more conspicuous than about 1759, when this piece was first acted. Amidst all the fluctuations of dramatic taste, it has for more than half a century received constant applause, and is on the stock-list of all the theatres in the kingdom.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LOVEL, a gentleman of fortune.
FREEMAN, his friend.
PHILIP, TOM, COACHMAN, KINGSTON, a black, KITTY, COOK, CLOE, a black, } servants to Lovel.
DUKE'S servant, SIR HARRY'S servant, LADY BAB'S maid, LADY CHARLOTTE'S maid, } visitors.
ROBERT, servant to Freeman.
A FIDDLER.

SCENE.—London.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—An apartment in FREEMAN'S *House.*

Enter FREEMAN *and* LOVEL.

Free. A country boy! ha, ha, ha. How long has this scheme been in your head?

Lov. Some time—I am now convinced of what you have so often been hinting to me, that I am confoundedly cheated by my servants.

Free. Oh! are you satisfied at last, Mr. Lovel?—I always told you, that there is not a worse set of servants in the parish of St. James than in your kitchen.

Lov. 'Tis with some difficulty I believe it now, Mr. Freeman; though, I must own, my expenses often make me stare:—Philip, I am sure, is an honest fellow; and I will swear for my blacks;—if there is a rogue among my folks, it is that surly dog, Tom.

Free. You are mistaken in every one. Philip is a hypocritical rascal; Tom has a good deal of surly honesty about him; and, for your blacks, they are as bad as your whites.

Lov. But, to business.—I am resolved upon my frolic.—I will know whether my servants are rogues or not; if they are, I'll bastinado the rascals; if not, I think I ought to pay for my impertinence. Pray tell me, is not your Robert acquainted with my people? perhaps he may give a little light into the thing.

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Free. To tell the truth, Mr. Lovel, your servants are so abandoned, that I have forbid him your house; however, if you have a mind to ask him any question, he shall be forthcoming.

Lov. Let us have him.

Free. You shall; but it is a hundred to one if you get any thing out of him; for though he is a very honest fellow, yet he is so much of a servant, that he'll never tell any thing to the disadvantage of another.—Who waits? [*Enter* SERVANT.] Send Robert to me. [*Exit* SERVANT.] And what was it determined you upon this project at last?

Lov. This letter. It is an anonymous one, and so ought not to be regarded; but it has something honest in it, and put me upon satisfying my curiosity.—Read it.

[*Gives the letter.*

Free. I should know something of this hand.

[*Reads.*

To PEREGRINE LOVEL, *Esq.*

Please your honour,

I take the liberty to acquaint your honour, that you are sadly cheated by your servants.—Your honour will find it as I say. I am not willing to be known, whereof, if I am, it may bring one into trouble.

So no more from your honour's
Servant to command.

——Odd and honest! Well—and now what are the steps you intend to take?

[*Returns the letter.*

Lov. I shall immediately apply to my friend the manager, for a disguise: under the form of a gawky country boy, I will be an eye witness of my servants' behaviour. You must assist me, Mr. Freeman.

Free. As how, Mr. Lovel?

Lov. My plan is this:—I gave out, that I was going to my borough in Devonshire, and yesterday set out with a servant in great form, and lay at Basingstoke.

Free. Well?

Lov. I ordered the fellow to make the best of his way down into the country, and told him that I would follow him; instead of that, I turned back, and am just come to town: *ecce signum!* [*Points to his boots.*

Free. It is now one o'clock.

Lov. This very afternoon I shall pay my people a visit.

Free. How will you get in?

Lov. When I am properly habited, you shall get me introduced to Philip as one of your tenant's sons who wants to be made a good servant of.

Free. They will certainly discover you.

Lov. Never fear, I'll be so countryfied that you shall not know me.

Free. Shall you be able to play your part?

Lov. I am surprised, Mr. Freeman, that you, who have known me from my infancy, should not remember my abilities in that way. But you old fellows have short memories.

Free. What should I remember?

Lov. How I played Daniel in the Conscious Lovers, at school, and afterwards arrived at the distinguished character of the mighty Mr. Scrub. [*Mimicking.*

Free. Ha, ha, ha! That is very well.—Enough—here is Robert.

Enter ROBERT.

Rob. Your honour ordered me to wait on you.

Free. I did, Robert—Robert?

Rob. Sir.

Free. Come here—you know, Robert, I have a good opinion of your integrity.——

Rob. I have always endeavoured that your honour should.

Free. Pray have not you some acquaintance among Mr. Lovel's people?

Rob. A little, your honour.

Free. How do they behave?—we have nobody but friends—you may speak out.

Lov. Aye, Robert, speak out.

Rob. I hope your honours will not insist on my saying any thing in an affair of this kind.

Lov. Oh, but we do insist, if you know any thing.

Rob. Sir, I am but a servant myself, and it would not become me to speak ill of a brother servant.

Free. Pshaw! this is false honesty; speak out.

Rob. Don't oblige me, good Sir.—Consider, Sir, a servant's bread depends upon his *carackter.*

Lov. But if a servant uses me ill——

Rob. Alas, Sir, what is one man's poison is another man's meat.

Free. You see how they trim for one another.

Rob. Service is no inheritance. A servant that is not approved in one place, may give satisfaction in another. Every body must live, your honour.

Lov. Robert, I like your heartiness, as well as your caution; but in my case, it is necessary that I should know the truth.

Rob. The truth, Sir, is not to be spoken at all times, it may bring one into trouble, whereof, if——

Free. [*Musing.*] 'Whereof, if.'—Pray, Mr. Lovel, let me see that letter again. [LOVEL *gives the letter.*] Ay; it must be so. Robert!

Rob. Sir!

Free. Do you know any thing of this letter?

Rob. Letter, your honour.

Free. Yes, letter.

Rob. I have seen the hand before.

Lov. He blushes.

Free. I ask you, if you were concerned in writing this letter?—You never told me a lie yet, and I expect the truth from you now.

Rob. Pray, your honour, don't ask me.

Free. Did you write it? answer me.

Rob. I cannot deny it. [*Bowing.*

Lov. What induced you to it?

Rob. I will tell the truth. I have seen such waste and extravagance, and riot, and drunkenness, in your kitchen, Sir, that, as my master's friend, I could not help discovering it to you.

Lov. Go on.

Rob. I am sorry to say it to your honour; but your honour is not only imposed on, but laughed at by all your servants; especially by Philip, who is a very bad man.

Lov. Philip? an ungrateful dog! Well.

Rob. I could not presume to speak to your honour, and therefore I resolved, though but a poor scribe, to write your honour a letter.

Lov. Robert, I am greatly indebted to you.—Here—— [*Offers Money.*

Rob. On any other account than this I should

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be proud to receive your honour's bounty, but now I beg to be excused. [*Refuses the money.*

Lov. Thou hast a noble spirit, Robert, and I'll not forget you.—Freeman, he must be in the secret.—Wait your master's orders.

Rob. I will, your honour. [*Exit.*

Free. Well, Sir, are you convinced now?

Lov. Convinced? yes; and I'll be among the scoundrels before night. You or Robert must contrive some way or other to get me introduced to Philip, as one of your cottager's boys out of Essex.

Free. Ha, ha, ha! you'll make a fine figure.

Lov. They shall make a fine figure. It must be done this afternoon; walk with me across the park, and I'll tell you the whole.—My name shall be Jemmy.—And I am come to be a gentleman's servant, and will do my best, and hope to get a good character. [*Mimicking.*

Free. But what will you do if you find them rascals?

Lov. Discover myself, and blow them all to the devil.—Come along.

Free. Ha, ha, ha!—Bravo, Jemmy, bravo, ha, ha! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—The Park.

Enter DUKE'S SERVANT.

Duke. What wretches are ordinary servants, that go on in the same vulgar track every day! eating, working, and sleeping!—But we, who have the honour to serve the nobility, are of another species. We are above the common forms, have servants to wait upon us, and are as lazy and luxurious as our masters.——Ha! my dear, Sir Harry!——

Enter SIR HARRY'S SERVANT.

—How have you done these thousand years?

Sir H. My lord duke!—your grace's most obedient servant.

Duke. Well, baronet, and where have you been?

Sir H. At Newmarket, my lord;—we have had dev'lish fine sport.

Duke. And a good appearance, I hear.—Pox take it, I should have been there, but our old duchess died, and we were obliged to keep house, for the decency of the thing.

Sir H. I picked up fifteen pieces.

Duke. Pshaw! a trifle!

Sir H. The viscount's people have been d——ly taken in this meeting.

Duke. Credit me, baronet, they know nothing of the turf.

Sir H. I assure you, my lord, they lost every match, for Crab was beat hollow, Careless threw his rider, and Miss Slammerkin had the distemper.

Duke. Ha, ha, ha! I'm glad on't. Taste this snuff, Sir Harry. [*Offers his box.*

Sir H. 'Tis good rappee.

Duke. Right Strasburgh, I assure you, and of my own importing.

Sir H. Aye!

Duke. The city people adulterate it so confoundedly, that I always import my own snuff.—I wish my lord would do the same; but he is so indolent—When did you see the girls? I saw Lady Bab this morning; but, 'fore gad, whether it be love or reading, she looked as pale as a penitent.

Sir H. I have just had this card from Lovel's people. [*Reads.*] *Philip and Mrs. Kitty present their compliments to Sir Harry, and desire the honour of his company this evening, to be of a smart party, and to eat a bit of supper.*

Duke. I have the same invitation; their master, it seems, is gone to his borough.

Sir H. You'll be with us, my lord?——Philip's a blood.——

Duke. A buck of the first head. I'll tell you a secret, he's going to be married.

Sir H. To whom?

Duke. To Kitty.

Sir H. No!

Duke. Yes he is, and I intend to cuckold him.

Sir H. Then we may depend upon your grace for certain. Ha, ha, ha!

Duke. If our house breaks up in a tolerable time, I'll be with you. Have you any thing for us?

Sir H. Yes, a little bit of poetry. I must be at the Cocoa-tree myself to-night.

Duke. Heigho!—I am quite out of spirits.—I had a d——d debauch last night, baronet.—Lord Francis, Bob the bishop, and I, tipt off four bottles of Burgundy a-piece.—Ha! there are two fine girls coming, faith;—Lady Bab, aye, and Lady Charlotte. [*Takes out his glass.*

Sir H. We'll not join them.

Duke. Oh, yes, Bab is a fine wench, notwithstanding her complexion; though I shou'd be glad if she would keep her teeth cleaner.—Your English women are d——d negligent about their teeth. How is your Charlotte in that particular?

Sir H. My Charlotte?

Duke. Aye, the world says, you are to have her.

Sir H. I own I did keep her company; but we are off, my lord.

Duke. How so?

Sir H. Between you and me, she has a plaguy thick pair of legs.

Duke. Oh, d——n it, that's insufferable.

Sir H. Besides, she is a fool, and missed her opportunity with the old countess.

Duke. I am afraid, baronet, you love money.—Rot it, I never save a shilling; indeed I am sure of a place in the Excise. Lady Charlotte is to be of the party to-night; how do you manage that?

Sir H. Why, we do meet at a third place, are very civil, and look queer, and laugh, and abuse one another, and all that.

Duke. *A-la-mode*, ha? Here they are.

Sir H. Let us retire. [*They retire.*

Enter LADY BAB'S MAID, *and* LADY CHARLOTTE'S MAID.

Lady B. Oh! fy! Lady Charlotte, you are quite indelicate; I'm sorry for your taste.

Lady C. Well, I say it again, I love Vauxhall.

Lady B. O my stars! why, there is nobody there but filthy citizens.

Lady C. We were in hopes the raising the price would have kept them out, ha, ha, ha.

Lady B. Ha, ha, ha.—Runelow for my money.

Lady C. Now you talk of Runelow, when did you see the colonel, Lady Bab?

Lady B. The colonel? I hate the fellow. He had the assurance to talk of a creature in Gloucestershire before my face.

Lady C. He is a pretty man for all that: soldiers, you know, have their mistresses every where.

Lady B. I despise him. How goes on your affair with the baronet?

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Lady C. The baronet is a stupid wretch, and I shall have nothing to say to him. You are to be at Lovel's to-night, Lady Bab?

Lady B. Unless I alter my mind. I don't admire visiting these commoners, Lady Charlotte.

Lady C. Oh, but Mrs. Kitty has taste.

Lady B. She affects it.

Lady C. The duke is fond of her, and he has judgment.

Lady B. The duke might show his judgment much better. [*Holding up her head.*

Lady C. There he is, and the baronet, too.—Take no notice of them; we'll rally them by and by.

Lady B. Dull souls! let us set up a loud laugh and leave 'em.

Lady C. Ay; let us be gone; for the common people do so stare at us; we shall certainly be mobb'd.

Both. Ha, ha, ha.—Ha, ha, ha. [*Exeunt.*

DUKE *and* SIR HARRY *come forward.*

Duke. They certainly saw us, and are gone off laughing at us. I must follow——

Sir H. No, no.

Duke. I must,—I must have a party of raillery with them, a bon mot or so. Sir Harry, you'll excuse me. Adieu; I'll be with you in the evening, if possible; though, hark ye, there is a bill depending in our house, which the ministry make a point of our attending; and so, you know, mum! we must mind the stops of the great fiddle.—Adieu. [*Exit.*

Sir H. What a coxcomb that is! and the fellow can't read. It was but the other day that he was a cow-boy in the country, then was bound 'prentice to a periwig-maker, got into my lord duke's family, and now sets up for a fine gentleman. *O tempora, O mores!*

Re-enter DUKE'S SERVANT.

Duke. Sir Harry, prithee what are we to do at Lovel's when we come there?

Sir H. We shall have the fiddles I suppose.

Duke. The fiddles! I have done with dancing ever since the last fit of the gout. I'll tell you what, my dear boy, I positively cannot be with them, unless we have a little——

[*Makes a motion as with the dice-box.*

Sir H. Fy, my lord duke.

Duke. Look ye, baronet, I insist on it.—Who the devil of any fashion can possibly spend an evening without it?—But I shall lose the girls.—How grave you look, ha, ha, ha.—Well, let there be fiddles.

Sir H. But, my dear lord, I shall be quite miserable without you.——

Duke. Well, I wont be particular, I'll do as the rest do.—Tol, lol, lol.

[*Exit, singing and dancing.*

Sir H. [*Solus.*] He had the assurance, last winter, to court a tradesman's daughter in the city, with two thousand pounds to her fortune, and got me to write his love-letters He pretended to be an ensign in a marching regiment; so wheedled the old folks into consent, and would have carried the girl off, but was unluckily prevented by the washer-woman, who happened to be his first cousin.

Enter PHILIP.

——Mr. Philip, your servant.

Phi. You are welcome to England, Sir Harry; I hope you received the card, and will do us the honour of your company.—My master is gone into Devonshire:—we'll have a roaring night.

Sir H. I'll certainly wait on you.

Phi. The girls will be with us.

Sir H. Is this a wedding supper, Philip?

Phi. What do you mean, Sir Harry?

Sir H. The Duke tells me so.

Phi. The Duke is a fool.

Sir H. Take care what you say; his grace is a bruiser.

Phi. I am a pupil of the same academy, and not afraid of him, I assure you: Sir Harry, we'll have a noble batch; I have such wine for you!

Sir H. I am your man, Phil.

Phi. Egad, the cellar shall bleed: I have some Burgundy that is fit for an emperor; my master would have given his ears for some of it t'other day, to treat my Lord What-d'ye-call-him with, but I told him it was all gone, ha? charity begins at home, ha?—Odso, here is Mr. Freeman, my master's intimate friend; he is a dry one. Don't let us be seen together; he'll suspect something.

Sir H. I am gone.

Phi. Away, away; remember, Burgundy is the word.

Sir H. Right—long corks! ha, Phil? [*Mimics the drawing of a cork.*]—Yours. [*Exit.*

Phi. Now for a cast of my office;—a starch phiz, a canting phrase, and as many lies as necessary.——Hem!

Enter FREEMAN.

Free. Oh! Philip: how do you do, Philip?—You have lost your master, I find.

Phi. It is a loss, indeed, Sir. So good a gentleman! He must be nearly got into Devonshire by this time. Sir, your servant.

[*Going.*

Free. Why in such a hurry, Philip?

Phi. I shall leave the house as little as possible, now his honour is away.

Free. You are in the right, Philip.

Phi. Servants at such times are too apt to be negligent and extravagant, Sir.

Free. True; the master's absence is the time to try a good servant in.

Phi. It is so, Sir; Sir, your servant. [*Going.*

Free. Oh, Mr. Philip, pray stay, you must do me a piece of service.

Phi. You command me, Sir. [*Bows.*

Free. I look upon you, Philip, as one of the best behaved, most sensible, completest [PHILIP *bows.*] rascals in the world. [*Aside.*

Phi. Your honour is pleased to compliment.

Free. There is a tenant of mine in Essex, a very honest man; poor fellow, he has a great number of children, and has sent me one of 'em, a tall, gawky boy, to make a servant of; but my folks say they can do nothing with him.

Phi. Let me have him, Sir.

Free. In truth, he is an unlicked cub.

Phi. I will lick him into something, I warrant you, Sir. Now my master is absent, I shall have a good deal of time upon my hands; and I hate to be idle, Sir; in two months I'll engage to finish him.

Free. I don't doubt it. [*Aside.*

Phi. Sir, I have twenty pupils in the parish of St. James's; and for a table or a sideboard, or behind an equipage, or in the delivery of a message, or any thing——

Free. What have you for entrance?

Phi. I always leave it to gentlemen's generosity.

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Free. Here is a guinea; I beg he may be taken care of.

Phi. That he shall, I promise you. [*Aside.*] Your honour knows me.

Free. Thoroughly. [*Aside.*

Phi. When can I see him, Sir?

Free. Now directly; call at my house, and take him in your hand.

Phi. Sir, I'll be with you in a minute. I will but step into the market, to let the tradesmen know they must not trust any of our servants now they are at board wages—humph!

Free. How happy is Mr. Lovel in so excellent a servant. [*Exit.*

Phi. Ha, ha, ha! This is one of my master's prudent friends, who dines with him three times a-week, and thinks he is mighty generous in giving me five guineas at Christmas. D——n all such sneaking scoundrels, I say. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—The SERVANTS' *Hall, in* LOVEL'S *House.*

KINGSTON *and* COACHMAN, *drunk and sleepy.*

[*Knocking at the door.*

King. Somebody knocks.—Coachy! go, go, to the door, coachy.

Coa. I'll not go; do you go, you black dog.

King. Devil shall fetch me if I go.

Coa. Why then let them stay; I'll not go, d——e; aye, knock the door down, and let yourself in. [*Knocking.*

King. Aye, aye, knock again, knock again.

Coa. Master is gone into Devonshire, so he can't be there, so I'll go to sleep.

King. So will I; I'll go to sleep too.

Coa. You lie, devil, you shall not go to sleep till I am asleep; I am king of the kitchen.

King. No, you are not king; but when you are drunk you are as sulky as hell.—Here is cooky coming; she is king and queen too.

Enter COOK.

Cook. Somebody has knocked at the door twenty times, and nobody hears.—Why, coachman!—Kingston!—Ye drunken bears, why don't one of you go to the door?

Coa. You go, cook; you go.

Cook. Hang me if I go.

King. Yes, yes, cooky, go; Mollsy Pollsy, go.

Cook. Out, you black toad; it is none of my business, and go I will not. [*Sits down.*

Enter PHILIP, *with* LOVEL *disguised.*

Phi. I might have staid at the door all night, as the little man in the play says, if I had not had the key of the door in my pocket. What is come to you all?

Cook. There is John Coachman, and Kingston, as drunk as two bears.

Phi. Ah, hah! my lads, what, finished already?—These are the very best of servants; poor fellows, I suppose they have been drinking their master's good journey. Ha, ha, ha.

Lov. No doubt on't. [*Aside.*

Phi. Yo ho! get to bed, you dogs, and sleep yourselves sober, that you may be able to get drunk again by and by. They are as fast as a church.—Jemmy?

Lov. Anon.

Phi. Do you love drinking?

Lov. Yes,—I loves ale.

Phi. You dog, you shall swim in Burgundy.

Lov. Burgumdy? what's that?

Phi. Cook, wake these worthy gentlemen, and send them to bed.

Cook. It is impossible to wake them.

Lov. I think I could wake them if I might, heh?

Phi. Jemmy, wake 'em, Jemmy. Ha, ha, ha.

Lov. Hip—Mr Coachman.

[*Gives him a slap on the face.*

Coa. Oh! oh! zounds! Oh! d——n you.

Lov. What, blackey, blackey.

[*Pulls him by the nose.*

King. Oh! oh! what now! curse you! oh! —Cot tam you.

Phi. Ha, ha, ha; well done, Jemmy.—Cook, see these gentry to bed.

Cook. Marry come up, I say so too; not I, indeed.

Coa. She sha'n't see us to bed; we'll see ourselves to bed.

King. We got drunk together, and we'll go to bed together. [*Exeunt, reeling.*

Phi. You see how we live, boy.

Lov. Yes, I sees how you live.

Phi. Let the supper be elegant, cook.

Cook. Who pays for it?

Phi. My master, to be sure; who else! ha, ha, ha. He is rich enough, I hope, ha, ha, ha.

Lov. Humph! [*Aside.*

Phi. Each of us must take a part, and sink it in our next weekly bills; that is the way.

Lov. So! [*Aside.*

Cook. Prithee, Philip, what boy is this?

Phi. A boy of Freeman's recommending.

Lov. Yes, I'm 'Squire Freeman's boy,—heh.

Cook. Freeman is a stingy hound; and you may tell him I say so. He dines here three times a-week, and I never saw the colour of his money yet.

Lov. Ha, ha, ha, that is good; Freeman shall have it. [*Aside.*

Cook. I must step to my tallow-chandler's, to dispose of some of my perquisites; and then I'll set about supper.

Phi. Well said, cook, that is right, the perquisite is the thing, cook.

Cook. Cloe, Cloe, where are you, Cloe? [*Calls.*

Enter CLOE.

Cloe. Yes, mistress.

Cook. Take that box, and follow me. [*Exit.*

Cloe. Yes, mistress. [*Takes the box.*] Who is this? [*Sees* LOVEL.] Hee, hee, hee! this is pretty boy,—hee, hee, hee!—Oh, this is pretty red hair, hee, hee, hee. You shall be in love with me, by and by—Hee, hee.

[*Exit, chucking Lovel under the chin.*

Lov. A very pretty amour. [*Aside.*] Oh la! what a fine room is this!;—is this the dining-room, pray, Sir?

Phi. No, our drinking room.

Lov. La! la! what a fine lady here is. This is Madam, I suppose.

Enter KITTY.

Phi. Where have you been, Kitty?

Kit. I have been disposing of some of his honour's shirts and other linen, which it is a shame his honour should wear any longer.—Mother Barter is above, and waits to know if you have any commands for her.

Phi. I shall dispose of my wardrobe to-morrow.

Kit. Who have we here? [LOVEL *bows.*

Phi. A boy of Freeman's, a poor silly fool.

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Lov. Thank you.

Phi. I intend the entertainment of this evening as a compliment to you, Kitty.

Kit. I am your humble, Mr. Philip.

Phi. But I beg that I may see none of your airs, or hear any of your French gibberish with the duke.

Kit. Don't be jealous, Phil. [*Fawningly.*

Phi. I intend, before our marriage, to settle something handsome upon you; and with the five hundred pounds which I have already saved in this extravagant fellow's family.

Lov. A dog! [*Aside.*] O la, la, what, have you got five hundred pounds?

Phi. Peace, blockhead.

Kit. I'll tell you what you shall do, Phil.

Phi. Aye, what shall I do?

Kit. You shall set up a chocolate-house, my dear.

Phi. Yes, and be cuckolded. [*Apart.*

Kit. You know my education was a very genteel one;—I was half-boarder at Chelsea, and I speak French like a native:—*Comment vous porter vous, Monsieur?* [Awkwardly.

Phi. Pshaw! pshaw!

Kit. One is nothing without French; I shall shine at the bar.—Do you speak French, boy?

Lov. Anon.

Kit. Anon; O the fool! ha, ha, ha.—Come here, do, and let me new mould you a little:—you must be a good boy, and wait upon the gentlefolks to-night.

[*She ties and powders his hair.*

Lov. Yes, an't please you, I'll do my best.

Kit. His best! O the natural! This is a strange head of hair of thine, boy; it is so coarse and so carroty.

Lov. All my brothers and sisters be red in the pole.

Phi. & Kit. Ha, ha, ha. [*Loud laugh.*

Kit. There, now you are something like.—Come, Philip, give the boy a lesson, and then I'll lecture him out of the Servants' Guide.

Phi. Come, Sir, first, hold up your head;—very well:—turn out your toes, Sir;—very well;—now, call coach.

Lov. What is 'call coach?'

Phi. Thus, Sir, coach, coach, coach. [*Loud.*

Lov. Coach, coach, coach. [*Imitating.*

Phi. Admirable! the knave has a good ear. Now, Sir, tell me a lie.

Lov. Oh la! I never told a lie in all my life.

Phi. Then it is high time you should begin now; what's a servant good for that can't tell a lie.

Kit. And stand to it.—Now I'll lecture him. [*Takes out a book.*] This is The Servants' Guide to Wealth, by Timothy Shoulderknot, formerly servant to several noblemen, and now an officer in the customs: necessary for all servants.

Phi. Mind, Sir, what excellent rules the book contains, and remember them well.—Come, Kitty, begin.

Kit. [*Reads.*] Advice to the footman:
Let it for ever be your plan
To be the master, not the man,
And do—as little as you can.

Lov. He, he, he! Yes, I'll do nothing at all,—not I.

Kit. At market never think of stealing,
To keep with tradesmen *proper* dealing;
All stewards have a fellow-feeling.

Phi. You will understand that better one day or other, boy.

Kit. To the groom:
Never allow your master able
To judge of matters in the stable.
If he should roughly speak his mind,
Or to dismiss you seems inclin'd,
Lame the best horse, or break his wind.

Lov. Oddines! that's good; he, he, he.

Kit. To the coachman:
If your good master on you dotes,
Ne'er leave his house to serve a stranger,
But pocket hay, and straw, and oats,
And let the horses eat the manger.

Lov. Eat the manger! he, he, he!

Kit. I wont give you too much at a time.—Here, boy, take the book, and read it every night and morning before you say your prayers.

Phi. Ha, ha, ha!—very good. But now for business.

Kit. Right—I'll go and get out one of the damask table cloths, and some napkins; and be sure, Phil. your sideboard is very smart. [*Exit.*

Phi. That it shall; come, Jemmy. [*Exit.*

Lov. Soh! soh! it works well. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—The Servants' *Hall, with the Supper and Sideboard set out.*

Enter Philip, Kitty, *and* Lovel.

Kit. Well, Phil, what think you? don't we look very smart?—Now let 'em come as soon as they will, we shall be ready for 'em.

Phi. 'Tis all very well; but——

Kit. But what?

Phi. Why, I wish we could get that snarling cur, Tom, to make one.

Kit. What is the matter with him?

Phi. I don't know; he's a queer son of a——

Kit. Oh, I know him; he is one of your sneaking half-bred fellows, that prefers his master's interest to his own.

Phi. Here he is.

Enter Tom.

—And why wont you make one to-night, Tom?—Here's cook and coachman and all of us.

Tom. I tell you again, I will not make one.

Phi. We shall have something that's good.

Tom. And make your master pay for it.

Phi. I warrant you think yourself mighty honest—ha, ha, ha.

Tom. A little honester than you, I hope, and not brag neither.

Kit. Harkee, you Mr. Honesty, don't be saucy.

Lov. This is worth listening to. [*Aside.*

Tom. What, Madam, you are afraid of your cully, are you?

Kit. Cully, sirrah! cully? afraid, sirrah! afraid of what? [*Goes up to Tom.*

Phi. Ay, Sir, afraid of what? [*Goes up on the other side.*

Lov. Ay, Sir, afraid of what? [*Goes up too.*

Tom. I value none of you: I know your tricks.

Phi. What do you know, sirrah?

Kit. Ay, what do you know?

Lov. Ay, Sir, what do you know?

Tom. I know that you two are in fee with every tradesman belonging to the house. And that you, Mr. Clodpole are in a fair way to be hanged. [*Strikes* Lovel.

Phi. What do you strike the boy for?

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Lov. It is an honest blow. [*Aside.*

Tom. I'll strike him again.—'Tis such as you that bring a scandal upon us all.

Kit. Come, none of your impudence, Tom.

Tom. Egad, Madam, the gentry may well complain, when they get such servants as you in their houses.—There's your good friend, mother Barter, the old clothes woman, the greatest thief in town, just now gone out with her apron full of his honour's linen.

Kit. Well, Sir, and did you never,—ha?

Tom. No, never: I have lived with his honour four years, and never took the value of that. [*Snapping his fingers.*] His honour is a prince, gives noble wages, and keeps noble company; and yet you two are not contented, but cheat him wherever you can lay your fingers.—Shame on you!

Lov. The fellow I thought a rogue, is the only honest servant in my house. [*Aside.*

Kit. Out, you mealy-mouth'd cur.

Phi. Well, go, tell his honour, do; ha, ha, ha.

Tom. I scorn that; damn an informer! but yet, I hope his honour will find you two out, one day or other: that's all. [*Exit.*

Kit. This fellow must be taken care of.

Phi. I'll do his business for him, when his honour comes to town.

Lov. You lie, you scoundrel, you will not. [*Aside.*] O la! here's a fine gentleman.

Enter DUKE'S SERVANT.

Duke. *Ah! ma chere Mademseille! comment vous portez vous?* [Salute.

Kit. *Fort bien, je vous remercier, Mounsieur.*

Phi. Now we shall have nonsense by wholesale.

Duke. How do you do, Philip?

Phi. Your grace's humble servant.

Duke. But my dear Kitty. [*Talk apart.*

Phi. Jemmy.

Lov. Anon.

Phi. Come along with me, and I will make you free of the cellar.

Lov. Yes, I will; but wont you ask *he* to drink?

Phi. No, no; he will have his share by and by.—Come along.

Lov. Yes. [*Exeunt* PHILIP *and* LOVEL.

Kit. Indeed, I thought your grace an age in coming.

Duke. Upon honour, our house is but this moment up.—You have a damn'd vile collection of pictures I observe, above stairs, Kitty; your squire has no taste.

Kit. No taste? that's impossible, for he has laid out a vast deal of money.

Duke. There is not an original picture in the whole collection. Where could he pick 'em up?

Kit. He employs three or four men to buy for him, and he always pays for originals.

Duke. *Donnez moi votre eau de luce.*—My head aches confoundedly.—[*She gives a smelling bottle.*]—Kitty, my dear, I hear you are going to be married.

Kit. *Pardonnez moi*, for that.

Duke. If you get a boy, I'll be god-father, faith.

Kit. How you rattle, Duke. I am thinking, my lord, when I had the honour to see you last.

Duke. At the play, *Mademseille.*

Kit. Your grace loves a play?

Duke. No; it is a dull, old-fashioned, entertainment: I hate it.

Kit. Well, give me a good tragedy.

Duke. It must not be a modern one then.—You are devilish handsome, Kate; kiss me. [*Offers to kiss her.*

Enter SIR HARRY'S SERVANT.

Sir H. Oh, oh! are you thereabouts, my lord duke? That may do very well by and by;—however, you'll never find me behind hand. [*Offers to kiss her.*

Duke. Stand off, you are a commoner; nothing under nobility approaches Kitty.

Sir H. You are so devilish proud of your nobility. Now, I think, we have more true nobility than you;—let me tell you, Sir, a knight of the shire——

Duke. A knight of the shire! ha, ha, ha!—a mighty honour, truly, to represent all the fools in the county.

Kit. O, lud! this is charming, to see two noblemen quarrel.

Sir H. Why, any fool may be born to a title, but only a wise man can make himself honourable.

Kit. Well said, Sir Harry, that is good morillity.

Duke. I hope you make some difference between hereditary honours and the huzzas of a mob.

Kit. Very smart, my lord.—Now, Sir Harry.

Sir H. If you make use of your hereditary honours to screen you from debt——

Duke. Zounds! Sir, what do you mean by that?

Kit. Hold, hold! I shall have some fine old noble blood spilt here.—Ha' done, Sir Harry—

Sir H. Not I.—Why, he is always valuing himself upon his upper house.

Duke. We have dignity. [*Slow.*

Sir H. But what becomes of your dignity if we refuse the supplies? [*Quick.*

Kit. Peace, peace! here's Lady Bab.

Enter LADY BAB'S *Servant, in a chair.*

Dear Lady Bab!

Lady B. Mrs. Kitty, your servant.—I was afraid of taking cold, and so ordered the chair down stairs. Well, and how do ye do?—My lord duke, your servant—and Sir Harry too—yours.

Duke. Your ladyship's devoted——

Lady B. I am afraid I have trespassed in point of time—[*Looks on her watch.*] But I got into my favourite author.

Duke. Yes, I found her ladyship at her studies this morning.—Some wicked poem.

Lady B. Oh, you wretch! I never read but one book.

Kit. What is your ladyship so fond of?

Lady B. *Shikspur.* Did you never read *Shikspur?*

Kit. *Shikspur? Shikspur?*—Who wrote it?—No, I never read *Shikspur.*

Lady B. Then you have an immense pleasure to come.

Kit. Well, then, I'll read it over one afternoon or other.—Here's Lady Charlotte.

Enter LADY CHARLOTTE'S *Maid, in a chair.*

Dear Lady Charlotte—

Lady C. Oh! Mrs. Kitty, I thought I never should have reached your house.—Such a fit of the colic seized me—Oh! Lady Bab, how long has your ladyship been here?—My chairmen were such drones—My lord duke, the pink of all good breeding!

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Duke. Oh! Ma'am— [*Bowing.*

Lady C. And Sir Harry—your servant, Sir Harry. [*Formally.*

Sir H. Madam, your servant——I am sorry to hear your ladyship has been ill.

Lady C. You must give me leave to doubt the sincerity of that sorrow, Sir. Remember the park.

Sir H. The park? I'll explain that affair, Madam.

Lady C. I want none of your explanations. [*Scornfully.*

Sir H. Dear Lady Charlotte!——

Lady C. No, Sir; I have observed your coolness of late, and despise you—a trumpery baronet!

Sir H. I see how it is; nothing will satisfy you but nobility: that sly dog, the marquis—

Lady C. None of your reflections, Sir; the marquis is a person of honour, and above inquiring after a lady's fortune, as you meanly did.

Sir H. I, I, Madam?—I scorn such a thing. I assure you, Madam, I never—that is to say—egad I am confounded! My lord duke, what shall I say to her? Pray help me out. [*Aside.*

Duke. Ask her to show her legs—ha, ha, ha! [*Aside.*

Enter PHILIP *and* LOVEL, *loaded with bottles.*

Phi. Here, my little peer—here is wine that will ennoble your blood. Both your ladyships' most humble servant.

Lov. [*Affecting to be drunk.*] Both your ladyships' most humble servant.

Kit. Why, Philip, you have made the boy drunk.

Phi. I have made him free of the cellar, ha, ha!

Lov. Yes, I am free; I am very free.

Phi. He has had a smack of every sort of wine, from humble port to imperial tokay.

Lov. Yes, I have been drinking kokay.

Kit. Go, get you some sleep, child, that you may wait on his lordship by and by.

Lov. Thank you, Madam. I will certainly wait on their lordships and their ladyships too. [*Aside and exit.*

Phi. Well, ladies, what say you to a dance, and then to supper? Have you had your tea?

All. A dance, a dance: no tea, no tea.

Phi. Here, fiddler; [*Calls.*] I have provided a very good hand, you see.

Enter FIDDLER, *with a wooden leg.*

Sir H. Not so well legged, Mr. Philip.

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Duke. *Le drole!*—Harkye, Mr.—— which leg do you beat time with?

All. Ha, ha, ha! [*Loud laugh.*

Sir H. What can you play, Domine?

Fid. Any thing, an't please your honour, from a jig to a sonato.

Phi. Come here—where are all our people?—[*Enter* COACHMAN, COOK, KINGSTON, CLOE.] I'll couple you; my lord duke will take Kitty; Lady Bab will do me the honour of her hand; Sir Harry, Lady Charlotte, coachman and cook, and the two devils dance together, ha, ha, ha.

Duke. With submission, the country dances by and by.

Lady C. Ay, ay; French dances before supper, and country dances after. I beg the duke and Mrs. Kitty may give us a minuet.

Duke. Dear Lady Charlotte, consider my poor gout. Sir Harry will oblige us. [*Sir* HARRY *bows.*

All. Minuet, Sir Harry! Minuet, Sir Harry!

Fid. What minuet would your honours please to have?

Kit. What minuet?——Let me see——play Marshal Thingumbob's minuet.

[*A minuet by* SIR HARRY *and* KITTY; *awkward and conceited.*

Lady C. Mrs. Kitty dances sweetly.

Phi. And Sir Harry delightfully.

Duke. Well enough for a commoner.

Phi. Come, now to supper—a gentleman and a lady—Here fiddler, [*Gives money.*] wait without.

Fid. Yes, an't please your honour. [*Exit with a tankard; they sit down.*

Phi. We will set the wine on the table; here is claret, burgundy, and champaign, and a bottle of tokay for the ladies; there are tickets on every bottle—if any gentleman chooses port——

Duke. Port? 'Tis only fit for a dram.

Kit. Lady Bab, what shall I send you?—Lady Charlotte, pray be free; the more free, the more welcome, as they say in my country. The gentlemen will be so good as take care of themselves. [*A pause.*

Duke. Lady Charlotte, hob or nob!

Lady C. Done, my lord; in burgundy, if you please.

Duke. Here's your sweetheart and mine, and the friends of the company. [*They drink; a pause.*

Phi. Come, ladies and gentlemen, a bumper all round. I have a health for you—Here is to the amendment of our masters and mistresses.

All. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! [*Loud laugh; a pause.*

Kit. Ladies, pray what is your opinion of a single gentleman's service?

Lady C. Do you mean an old single gentleman?

All. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! [*Loud laugh.*

Phi. My lord duke, your toast.

Duke. Lady Betty.——

Phi. Oh! no—a health and a sentiment.

Duke. A health and a sentiment?——No, no, let us have a song——Sir Harry, your song.

Sir H. Would you have it?—Well then, Mrs. Kitty, we must call upon you: will you honour my muse?

All. A song, a song; ay, ay, Sir Harry's song! Sir Harry's song.

Duke. A song to be sure; but first—preludio—[*Kisses* KITTY.] Pray, gentlemen, put it about.

[*Kissing round;* KINGSTON *kisses* CLOE *heartily.*

Sir H. See how the devils kiss!

Kit I am really hoarse; but—hem—I must clear up my pipes——hem——this is Sir Harry's song; being a new song, entitled and called, 'The Fellow-Servant, or All in Livery.' [KITTY *sings.*

Come here, fellow-servant, and listen to me
I'll show you how those of superior degree,
Are only dependants, no better than we.

Chorus. Both high and low in this do agree
'Tis here, fellow-servant,
And there, fellow-servant,
And all in a livery.

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See yonder fine spark in embroid'ry dress'd,
Who bows to the great, and if they smile is bless'd.
What is he? I'faith, but a servant at best.
Both high, &c.

Nature made all alike, no distinction she craves,
So we laugh at the great world, its fools and its knaves,
For we are all servants, but they are all slaves.
Both high, &c.

The fat shining glutton looks up to the shelf,
The wrinkled lean miser bows down to his pelf,
And the curl-pated beau is a slave to himself.
Both high, &c.

The gay sparkling belle, who the whole town alarms,
And with eyes, lips, and neck, sets the smarts all in arms, [charms.
Is a vassal herself, a mere drudge to her
Both high, &c.

Then we'll drink like our betters, and laugh, sing, and love; [move,
And when sick of one place, to another we'll
For with little and great, the best joy is to rove.

Chorus. Both high and low in this do agree,
That 'tis here, fellow-servant,
And there fellow-servant,
And all in a livery.

Phi. How do you like it, my lord duke?
Duke. It is a damned vile composition.
Phi. How so?
Duke. O very low! very low indeed.
Sir H. Can you make a better?
Duke. I hope so.
Sir H. This is very conceited.
Duke. What is conceited, you scoundrel?
Sir H. Scoundrel! you are a rascal: I'll pull you by the nose! [*All rise.*
Duke. Look ye, friend; don't give yourself airs, and make a disturbance among the ladies. If you are a gentleman, name your weapons.
Sir H. Weapons! what you will—pistols—
Duke. Done—behind Montague House—
Sir H. Done—with seconds—
Duke. Done.
Phi. Oh shame, gentlemen. My lord Duke! —Sir Harry, the ladies! fy!
[DUKE *and* SIR H. *affect to sing; a violent knocking.*
Phi. What the devil can that be, Kitty?
Kit. Who can it possibly be?
Phi. Kingston, run up stairs and peep. [*Exit* KINGSTON.] It sounds like my master's rap. Pray Heaven it is not he! [*Enter* KINGSTON.] Well, Kingston, what is it?
King. It is my master and Mr. Freeman: I peeped through the key-hole, and saw them by the lamp-light. Tom has just let them in.
Phi. The devil he has! What can have brought him back!
Kit. No matter what——away with the things.——
Phi. Away with the wine——away with the plate. Here, coachman, cook, Cloe, Kingston, bear a hand——out with the candles——away, away. [*They carry away the table, &c.*
Visitors. What shall we do? What shall we do? [*They all run about in confusion.*
Kit. Run up stairs, ladies.
Phi. No, no, no. He'll see you then—
Sir H. What the devil had I to do here!
Duke. Pox take it, face it out.
Sir H. Oh no; these West Indians are very fiery.
Phi. I would not have him see any of you for the world.
Lov. [*Without.*] Philip—where's Philip?
Phi. Oh the devil! he's certainly coming down stairs—Sir Harry, run down into the cellar—My lord Duke, get into the pantry—away, away.
Kit. No, no; do you put their ladyships into the pantry, and I'll take his grace into the coal-hole.
Visitors. Any where, any where—up the chimney, if you will.
Phi. There—in with you. [*All go into the pantry.*
Lov. [*Without.*] Philip——Philip——
Phi. Coming, Sir. [*Aloud.*] Kitty, have you never a good book to be reading of?
Kit. Yes, here is one.
Phi. 'Egad, this is black Monday with us; sit down—seem to read your book.—Here he is, as drunk as a piper. [*They sit down.*

Enter LOVEL *with pistols, affecting to be drunk,* FREEMAN *following.*

Lov. Philip, the son of Alexander the Great, where are all my myrmidons?—What the devil makes you up so early this morning?
Phi. He is very drunk indeed—[*Aside.*] Mrs. Kitty and I had got into a good book, your honour.
Free. Ay, ay, they have been well employed, I dare say, ha, ha, ha!
Lov. Come, sit down, Freeman—lie you there.—[*Lays his pistols down.*] I come a little unexpectedly, perhaps, Philip.
Phi. A good servant is never afraid of being caught, Sir.
Lov. I have some accounts that I must settle.
Phi. Accounts, Sir! to-night?
Lov. Yes; to-night!—I find myself perfectly clear—you shall see I'll settle them in a twinkling.
Phi. Your honour will go into the parlour?
Lov. I'll settle 'em all here.
Kit. Your honour must not sit here.
Lov. Why not?
Kit. You will certainly take cold, Sir; the room has not been washed above an hour.
Lov. What a cursed lie that is! [*Aside.*
Duke. Philip—Philip—Philip. [*Peeping out.*
Phi. Pox take you!——hold your tongue. [*Aside.*
Free. You have just nicked them in the very minute. [*Aside to* LOVEL.
Lov. I find I have—mum—[*Aside to* FREEMAN.] Get some wine, Philip—[*Exit* PHILIP.] Though I must eat something before I drink —Kitty, what have you got in the pantry?
Kit. In the pantry? lord, your honour! we are at board wages.
Free. I could eat a morsel of cold meat.
Lov. You shall have it—here. [*Rises.*] Open the pantry door—I'll be about your board wages! I have treated you often, now you shall treat your master.
Kit. If I may be believed, Sir, there is not a scrap of any thing in the world in the pantry. [*Opposing him.*
Lov. Well, then, we must be contented, Freeman. Let us have a crust of bread and a bottle of wine. [*Sits down again.*

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Kit. Had not my master better go to bed? [*Makes signs to* FREEMAN *that* LOVEL *is drunk.*

Lov. Bed! not I—I'll sit here all night—'tis very, very pleasant: and nothing like variety in life.

Sir H. [*Peeping.*] Mrs. Kitty, Mrs. Kitty.

Kit. Peace, on your life. [*Aside.*

Lov. Kitty, what voice is that?

Kit. Nobody's, Sir—hem—

PHILIP *brings wine.*

Lov. Soh—very well—now do you two march off—march off, I say.

Phi. We can't think of leaving your honour: for egad if we do, we are undone. [*Aside.*

Lov. Begone——My service to you, Freeman——this is good stuff.

Free. Excellent.

[*Somebody in the pantry sneezes.*

Kit. We are undone—undone. [*Aside.*

Phi. Oh! that is the duke's damned rappee. [*Aside.*

Lov. Didn't you hear a noise, Charles?

Free. Somebody sneezed I thought.

Lov. Damn it! there are thieves in the house——I'll be among 'em——

[*Takes a pistol.*

Kit. Lack-a-day, Sir, it was only the cat——they sometimes sneeze for all the world like a Christian——here, Jack, Jack!——he has got a cold, Sir——puss, puss!

Lov. A cold? then I'll cure him—here, Jack, Jack!—puss, puss!——

Kit. Your honour wont be so rash——pray, your honour, don't—— [*Opposing.*

Lov. Stand off—here, Freeman—here's a barrel for business, with a brace of slugs, and well primed, as you see—Freeman—I'll hold you five to four—nay, I'll hold you two to one, I hit the cat through the key-hole of that pantry door.

Free. Try, try, but I think it impossible.

Lov. I am a damned good marksman. [*Cocks the pistol and points it at the pantry door.*]—Now for it! [*A violent shriek, and all is discovered.*]—Who the devil are all these?—One—two—three—four.

Phi. They are particular friends of mine, Sir. Servants to some noblemen in the neighbourhood.

Lov. I told you there were thieves in the house.

Free. Ha, ha, ha!

Phi. I assure your honour they have been entertained at our expense, upon my word.

Kit. Yes, indeed, your honour, if it was the last word I had to speak.

Lov. Take up that bottle—[PHILIP *takes up a bottle with a ticket to it, and is going off.*]—bring it back—Do you usually entertain your company with tokay, Monsieur?

Phi. I, Sir, treat with wine!

Lov. O yes, from humble port to imperial okay too! [*Mimicking himself.*

Phi. How! Jemmy my master!

Kit. Jemmy! the devil!

Phi. Your honour is at present in liquor—but in the morning, when your honour is recovered, I will set all to rights again.

Lov. [*Changing his countenance and turning his wig.*] We'll set all to rights now. There, I am sober at your service—what have you to say, Philip? [PHILIP *starts.*] You may well start—Go, get out of my sight.

Duke. Sir—I have not the honour to be known to you, but I have the honour to serve his Grace the Duke of——

Lov. And the impudence familiarly to assume his title—your grace will give me leave to tell you, that is the door—and, if ever you enter there again, I assure you, my lord duke, I will break every bone in your grace's skin—begone—I beg their ladyships' pardon, perhaps they cannot go without chairs—Ha, ha, ha.

Free. Ha, ha, ha. [SIR HARRY *steals off.*

Duke. Low bred fellows! [*Exit.*

Lady C. I thought how this visit would turn out. [*Exit.*

Lady B. They are downright Hottenpots. [*Exit.*

Phi. & Kit. I hope your honour will not take away our bread.

Lov. Five hundred pounds will set you up in a chocolate-house——you'll shine in the bar, Madam. I have been an eye-witness of your roguery, extravagance, and ingratitude.

Phi. & Kit. Oh, Sir—good Sir!

Lov. You, Madam, may stay here till tomorrow morning——and there, Madam is the book you lent me, which I beg you'll read night and morning before you say your prayers.

Kit. I am ruined and undone. [*Exit.*

Lov. But you, Sir, for your villany, and (what I hate worse) your hypocrisy, shall not stay a minute longer in this house; and here comes an honest man to show you the way out—Your keys, Sir. [PHILIP *gives keys.*

Enter TOM.

——Tom, I respect and value you—you are an honest servant, and shall never want encouragement: be so good Tom, as to see that gentleman out of my house—[*Points to* PHILIP.]—and then take charge of the cellar and plate.

Tom. I thank your honour; but I would not rise on the ruin of a fellow-servant.

Lov. No remonstrances, Tom; it shall be as I say.

Phi. What a cursed fool have I been? [*Exeunt* SERVANTS.

Lov. Well, Charles, I must thank you for my frolic—it has been a wholesome one to me—have I done right?

Free. Entirely; no judge could have determined better; as you punished the bad, it was but justice to reward the good.

Lov. A faithful servant is a worthy character.

Free. And can never receive too much encouragement.

Lov. Right.

Free. You have made Tom very happy.

Lov. And I intend to make your Robert so too.—Every honest servant should be made happy.

Free. But what an insufferable piece of assurance is it in some of these fellows, to affect and imitate their masters' manners.

Lov. What manners must those be, which they can imitate?

Free. True.

Lov. If persons of rank would act up to their standard, it would be impossible that their servants could ape them; but, when they affect every thing that is ridiculous, it will be in the power of any low creature to follow their example.

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TAMERLANE:

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY NICHOLAS ROWE, Esq.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

TAMERLANE.	MIRVAN.
BAJAZET.	ZAMA.
AXALLA.	HALY.
MONESES.	DERVIS.
STRATOCLES.	
PRINCE OF TANAIS.	ARPASIA.
OMAR.	SELIMA.

Parthian and Tartarian Soldiers.—Mutes belonging to Bajazet.—Other Attendants.

SCENE.—Tamerlane's Camp, near Angoria in Galatia.

PROLOGUE.

Of all the muse's various labours, none
Have lasted longer or have higher flown,
Than those that tell the fame by ancient heroes won.
With pleasure, Rome and great Augustus heard
Arms and the man sung by the Mantuan bard.
In spite of time the sacred story lives,
And Cæsar and his empire still survives.
Like him (though much unequal to his flame)
Our author makes a pious prince his theme.
High with the foremost names, in arms he stood,
Had fought, and suffer'd for his country's good,
Yet sought not fame, but peace, in fields of blood.
Safe under him his happy people sat,
And griev'd, at distance, for their neighbours' fate;
Whilst with success a Turkish monarch crown'd,
Like spreading flame, deform'd the nations round;
With sword and fire he forc'd his impious way
To lawless power and universal sway.
Some abject states, for fear, the tyrant join,
Others for gold their liberties resign,
And venal princes sold their right divine:
Till Heaven, the growing evil to redress,
Sent Tamerlane to give the world a peace.
The hero rous'd, asserts the glorious cause,
And to the field the cheerful soldier draws.
Around, in crowds, his valiant leaders wait,
Anxious for glory and secure of fate;
Well pleas'd, once more, to venture on his side,
And prove that faith again, which had so oft been tried.
The peaceful fathers, who in senates meet,
Approve an enterprise so just, and great;
While with their prince's arms, their voice thus join'd,
Gains half the praise of having sav'd mankind.
Even in a circle, where, like this, the fair
Were met, the bright assembly did declare,
Their house, with one consent, were for the war;
Each urg'd her lover to unsheath the sword,
And never spare a man who broke his word.
Thus fir'd, the brave on to the danger press;
Their arms were crown'd abroad with just success,
And bless'd at home with beauty and with peace.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—Before TAMERLANE'S *Tent.*

Enter the PRINCE *of* TANAIS, ZAMA, *and* MIRVAN.

Pr. Hail to the sun! from whose returning light
The cheerful soldier's arms new lustre take,
To deck the pomp of battle. Oh, my friends!
Was ever such a glorious face of war?
See, from this height, how all Galatia's plains
With nations numberless are cover'd o'er;
Who, like a deluge, hide the face of earth,

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And leave no object in the vast horizon,
But glittering arms, and skies.
Zam. Our Asian world,
From this important day expects a lord;
This day they hope an end of all their woes,
Of tyranny, of bondage and oppression,
From our victorious emp'ror, Tamerlane.
Mir. Well has our holy Alha mark'd him out,
The scourge of lawless pride and dire ambition,
The great avenger of the groaning world.
Well has he worn the sacred cause of justice
Upon his prosperous sword. Approving Heaven
Still crown'd the righteous warrior with success;
As if it said, Go forth, and be my champion,
Thou, most like me of all my works below.
Pr. No lust of rule, the common vice of kings,
No furious zeal, inspir'd by hot-brain'd priests,
Ill hid beneath religion's specious name,
E'er drew his temperate courage to the field:
But to redress an injur'd people's wrongs,
To save the weak one from the strong oppressor,
Is all his end of war. And when he draws
The sword to punish, like relenting Heaven,
He seems unwilling to deface his kind.
Mir. So rich his soul in every virtuous grace,
That, had not nature made him great by birth,
Yet all the brave had sought him for their friend.
The Christian prince, Axalla, nicely bred
In polish'd arts of European courts,
For him forsakes his native Italy,
And lives a happy exile in his service.
Pr. Pleas'd with the gentle manners of that prince,
Our mighty lord is lavish to his friendship;
Though Omar and the Tartar lords repine,
And loudly tax their monarch as too partial.
Zam. Ere the mid-hour of night, from tent to tent,
Unwearied, through the numerous host he past,
Viewing with careful eyes each several quarter;
Whilst from his looks, as from divinity,
The soldiers took presage, and cried, Lead on,
Great Alha, and our emperor, lead on,
To victory, and everlasting fame.
Mir. Hear you of Bajazet?
Pr. Late in the evening,
A slave of near attendance on his person
'Scap'd to our camp. From him we learn'd, the tyrant,
With rage redoubled, for the fight prepares;
Some accidental passion fires his breast,
(Love, as 'tis thought, for a fair Grecian captive,)
And adds new horror to his native fury.
For five returning suns, scarce was he seen
By any, the most favour'd of his court,
But in lascivious ease, among his women,
Liv'd from the war retir'd; or else alone,
In sullen mood, sat meditating plagues
And ruin to the world; 'till yester morn,
Like fire that lab'ring upwards rends the earth,
He burst with fury from his tent, commanding
All should be ready for the fight this day.
Zam. I know his temper well, since in his court,
Companion of the brave Axalla's embassy,
I oft observ'd him proud, impatient
Of aught superior, even of Heaven that made him;
Fond of false glory of the savage power
Of ruling without reason, of confounding
Just and unjust, by an unbounded will;
By whom religion, honour, all the bands
That ought to hold the jarring world at peace,
Were held the tricks of state, snares of wise princes,
To draw their easy neighbours to destruction.
Mir. Thrice, by our law and prophet, has he sworn,
By the world's Lord and Maker, lasting peace,
With our great master, and his royal friend
The Grecian emperor; as oft, regardless
Of plighted faith, with most unkingly baseness,
Has ta'en th' advantage of their absent arms,
Without a war proclaim'd, or cause pretended,
To waste with sword and fire their fruitful fields:
Like some accursed fiend, who, 'scap'd from hell,
Poisons the balmy air through which he flies,
He blasts the bearded corn, and loaded branches,
The lab'ring hind's best hopes, and marks his way with ruin.
Pr. But see his fate! The mighty Tamerlane
Comes, like the proxy of inquiring Heaven,
To judge and to redress. [*Flourish of trumpets.*

Enter TAMERLANE, *guards, and other attendants.*

Tam. Yet, yet a little, and destructive slaughter
Shall rage around, and mar this beauteous prospect;
Pass but an hour, which stands betwixt the lives
Of thousands and eternity, what change
Shall hasty death make in yon glittering plain,
Oh, thou fell monster, war! that in a moment
Lay'st waste the noblest part of the creation.
The boast and master-piece of the great Maker
That wears in vain th' impression of his image,
Unprivileg'd from thee.
Health to our friends, and to our arms success,
[*To the* PRINCE, ZAMA, *and* MIRVAN.
Such as the cause for which we fight deserves!
Pr. Nor can we ask beyond what Heaven bestows,
Preventing still our wishes. See, great Sir,
The universal joy your soldiers wear,
Omen of prosperous battle.
Impatient of the tedious night, in arms
Watchful they stood, expecting opening day;
And now are hardly by their leaders held
From darting on the foe. Like a hot courser,
That bounding paws the mouldering soil, disdaining
The rein that checks him, eager for the race.
Tam. Yes, prince, I mean to give a loose to war.
This morn Axalla, with my Parthian horse,
Arrives to join me. He, who, like a storm,
Swept, with his flying squadrons, all the plain
Between Angoria's walls and yon tall mountains,
That seem to reach the clouds; and now he comes,
Loaden with spoils and conquest, to my aid.
[*Flourish of trumpets*
Zam. These trumpets speak his presence——

Enter AXALLA, *who kneels to* TAMERLANE.

Tam. Welcome! thou worthy partner of my laurels,
Thou brother of my choice, a band more sacred
Than nature's brittle tie. By holy friendship!
Glory and Fame stood still for thy arrival;
My soul seem'd wanting in its better half,
And languish'd for thy absence; like a prophet,
That waits the inspiration of his god.

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Ax. My emperor! My ever royal master!
To whom my secret soul more lowly bends,
Than forms of outward worship can express;
How poorly does your soldier pay this goodness,
Who wears his every hour of life out for you!
Yet, 'tis his all, and what he has he offers;
Nor now disdain t' accept the gift he brings,

Enter SELIMA, MONESES, STRATOCLES, *Prisoners; Guards, Mutes, &c. &c.*

This earnest of your fortune. See, my lord,
The noblest prize that ever grac'd my arms!
Approach, my fair——
Tam. This is indeed to conquer,
And well to be rewarded for thy conquest;
The bloom of opening flowers, unsullied beauty,
Softness, and sweetest innocence she wears,
And looks like Nature in the world's first spring.
But say, Axalla—— [
Sel. Most renown'd in war,
[*Kneeling to* TAM.
Look with compassion on a captive maid,
Though born of hostile blood; nor let my birth,
Deriv'd from Bajazet, prevent that mercy,
Which every subject of your fortune finds.
War is the province of ambitious man,
Who tears the miserable world for empire;
Whilst our weak sex, incapable of wrong,
On either side claims privilege of safety.
Tam. [*Raising her.*] Rise, royal maid! the pride of haughty power
Pays homage, not receives it from the fair.
Thy angry father fiercely calls me forth,
And urges me unwillingly to arms.
Yet, though our frowning battles menace death
And mortal conflict, think not that we hold
Thy innocence and virtue as our foe.
Here, till the fate of Asia is decided,
In safety stay. To-morrow is your own.
Nor grieve for who may conquer, or who lose;
Fortune on either side shall wait thy wishes.
Sel. Where shall my wonder and my praise begin?
From the successful labours of thy arms;
Or from a theme more soft, and full of peace,
Thy mercy and thy gentleness? Oh, Tamerlane!
What can I pay thee for this noble usage,
But grateful praise? So Heaven itself is paid.
Give peace, ye powers above, peace to mankind;
Nor let my father wage unequal war
Against the force of such united virtues.
Tam. Heaven hear thy pious wish!—But since our prospect
Looks darkly on futurity, till fate
Determine for us, let thy beauty's safety
Be my Axalla's care; in whose glad eyes,
I read what joy the pleasing service gives him.
Is there amongst thy other pris'ners aught
[*To* AX.
Worthy our knowledge!
Ax. This brave man, my lord,
[*Pointing to* MON.
With long resistance held the combat doubtful.
His party, press'd with numbers, soon grew faint,
And would have left their charge an easy prey;
Whilst he alone, undaunted at the odds,
Though hopeless to escape, fought well and firmly;
Nor yielded, till o'ermatch'd by many hands,
He seem'd to shame our conquest whilst he own'd it.
Tam. Thou speak'st him as a soldier should a soldier,
Just to the worth he finds. I would not war
[*To* MON.
With aught that wears thy virtuous stamp of greatness.
Thy habit speaks thee Christian—Nay, yet more,
My soul seems pleas'd to take acquaintance with thee,
As if allied to thine: perhaps 'tis sympathy
Of honest minds; like strings wound up in harmony.
Where, by one touch, both utter the same music,
Why art thou then a friend to Bajazet?
And why my enemy?
Mon. If human wisdom
Could point out every action of our lives,
And say, Let it be thus, in spite of fate
Or partial fortune, then I had not been
The wretch I am.
Tam. The brave meet every accident
With equal minds. Think nobler of thy foes,
Than to account thy chance in war an evil.
Mon. Far, far from that: I rather hold it grievous
That I was forc'd even but to seem your enemy;
Nor think the baseness of a vanquish'd slave
Moves me to flatter for precarious life,
Or ill-bought freedom, when I swear by Heaven!
Were I to choose from all mankind a master,
It should be Tamerlane.
Tam. A noble freedom
Dwells with the brave, unknown to fawning sycophants,
And claims a privilege of being believ'd.
I take thy praise as earnest of thy friendship.
Mon. Still you prevent the homage I should offer,
O, royal Sir! let my misfortunes plead
And wipe away the hostile mark I wore.
I was, when not long since my fortune hail'd me,
Bless'd to my wish, I was the prince Moneses;
Born, and bred up to greatness: witness the blood,
Which through successive heroes' veins, allied
To our Greek emperors, roll'd down to me,
Feeds the bright flame of glory in my heart.
Tam. Even that, that princely tie should bind thee to me,
If virtue were not more than all alliance.
Mon. I have a sister, oh, severe remembrance!
Our noble house's, nay, her sex's pride
Nor think my tongue too lavish, if I speak her
Fair as the fame of virtue, and yet chaste
As its cold precepts; wise beyond her sex
And blooming youth; soft as forgiving mercy,
Yet greatly brave, and jealous for her honour:
Such as she was, to say I barely lov'd her,
Is poor to my soul's meaning. From our infancy
There grew a mutual tenderness between us,
Till not long since her vows were kindly plighted
To a young lord, the equal of her birth.
The happy day was fix'd, and now approaching,
When faithless Bajazet (upon whose honour,
In solemn treaty given, the Greeks depended)
With sudden war broke in upon the country,
Secure of peace, and for defence unready.
Tam. Let majesty no more be held divine,
Since kings, who are call'd gods, profane themselves.

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Mon. Among the wretches, whom that deluge swept
Away to slavery, myself and sister,
Then passing near the frontiers to the court,
(Which waited for her nuptials) were surpris'd,
And made the captives of the tyrant's power.
Soon as we reach'd his court, we found our usage
Beyond what we expected, fair and noble;
'Twas then the storm of your victorious arms
Look'd black, and seem'd to threaten, when he press'd me
(By oft repeated instances) to draw
My sword for him: but when he found my soul
Disdain'd his purpose, he more fiercely told me,
That my Arpasia, my lov'd sister's fate
Depended on my courage shown for him.
I had long learn'd to hold myself at nothing;
But for her sake, to ward the blow from her,
I bound my service to the man I hated.
Six days are past, since by the sultan's order,
I left the pledge of my return behind,
And went to guard this princess to his camp:
The rest the brave Axalla's fortune tells you.

Tam. Wisely the tyrant strove to prop his cause,
By leaguing with thy virtue; but just Heaven
Has torn thee from his side, and left him naked
To the avenging bolt that drives upon him.
Forget the name of captive, and I wish
I could as well restore that fair one's freedom,
Whose loss hangs heavy on thee; yet ere night,
Perhaps, we may deserve thy friendship nobler;
Th' approaching storm may cast thy ship-wreck'd wealth
Back to thy arms: till that be past, since war
(Though in the justest cause) is ever doubtful,
I will not ask thy sword to aid my victory,
Lest it should hurt that hostage of thy valour
Our common foe detains.

Mon. Let Bajazet
Bend to his yoke repining slaves by force;
You, Sir, have found a nobler way to empire,
Lord of the willing world.

Tam. Oh, my Axalla!
Thou hast a tender soul, apt for compassion,
And art thyself a lover and a friend.
Does not this prince's fortune move thy temper?

Ax. Yes, Sir, I mourn the brave Moneses' fate,
The merit of his virtue hardly match'd
With disadventurous chance: yet, prince, allow me,
Allow me, from th' experience of a lover,
To say, one person, whom your story mention'd
(If he survive) is far beyond you wretched:
You nam'd the bridegroom of your beauteous sister.

Mon. I did. Oh, most accurs'd!

Ax. Think what he feels,
Dash'd in the fierceness of his expectation:
Then, when th' approaching minute of possession
Had wound imagination to the height,
Think if he lives!

Mon. He lives, he does: 'tis true
He lives! But how? To be a dog, and dead,
Were Paradise to such a state as his:
He holds down life, as children do a potion,
With strong reluctance and convulsive struggling,
Whilst his misfortunes press him to disgorge it.

Tam. Spare the remembrance, 'tis a useless grief,
And adds to the misfortune by repeating;
The revolution of a day may bring
Such turns, as Heaven itself could scarce have promis'd,
Far, far beyond thy wish: let that hope cheer thee.
Haste, my Axalla, to dispose with safety
Thy beauteous charge, and on the foe revenge
The pain which absence gives; thy other care,
Honour and arms, now summon thy attendance.
Now do thy office well, my soul! Remember
Thy cause, the cause of Heaven and injur'd earth.
O thou supreme! if thy great spirit warms
My glowing breast, and fires my soul to arms.
Grant that my sword, assisted by thy power,
This day may peace and happiness restore,
That war and lawless rage may vex the world no more.

[*Exeunt* TAMERLANE, MONESES, STRATOCLES, PRINCE *of* TANAIS, ZAMA, MIRVAN, *and Attendants.*

Ax. The battle calls, and bids me haste to leave thee;
Oh, Selima!——But let destruction wait,
Are there not hours enough for blood and slaughter?
This moment shall be love's, and I will waste it
In soft complainings, for thy sighs and coldness,
For thy forgetful coldness; even at Birza,
When in thy father's court my eyes first own'd thee,
Fairer than light, the joy of their beholding
Even then thou wert not thus.

Sel. Art not thou chang'd,
Christian Axalla? Art thou still the same?
Those were the gentle hours of peace, and join thou
The world's good angel, that didst kindly
Its mighty masters in harmonious friendship:
But since those joys that once were ours are lost,
Forbear to mention 'em, and talk of war;
Talk of thy conquests and my chains, Axalla.

Ax. Yet I will listen, fair, unkind upbraider!
Yet I will listen to thy charming accents,
Although they make me curse my fame and fortune,
My laurel wreaths, and all the glorious trophies,
For which the valiant bleed—Oh, thou unjust one!
Dost thou then envy me this small return
My niggard fate has made for all the mournings,
For all the pains, for all the sleepless nights
That cruel absence brings?

Sel. Away, deceiver!
I will not hear thy soothing. Is it thus
That Christian lovers prove the faith they swear?
Are war and slavery the soft endearments
With which they court the beauties they admire?
'Twas well my heart was cautious of believing
Thy vows, and thy protesting. Know, my conqueror,
Thy sword has vanquish'd but the half of Selima;
Her soul disdains thy victory.

Ax. Hear, sweet Heaven!
Hear the fair tyrant, how she wrests love's laws,
As she had vow'd my ruin! What is conquest?
What joy have I from that, but to behold thee,
To kneel before thee, and with lifted eyes
To view thee, as devotion does a saint,

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With awful, trembling pleasure; then to swear
Thou art the queen and mistress of my soul?
Has not even Tamerlane (whose word, next Heaven's,
Makes fate at second-hand) bid thee disclaim
Thy fears? And dost thou call thyself a slave;
Only to try how far the sad impression
Can sink into Axalla?

Sel. Oh, Axalla!
Ought I to hear you?

Ax. Come back, ye hours,
And tell my Selima what she has done!
Bring back the time, when to her father's court
I came ambassador of peace from Tamerlane;
When, hid by conscious darkness and disguise,
I past the dangers of the watchful guards,
Bold as the youth who nightly swam the Hellespont:
Then, then she was not sworn the foe of love;
When, as my soul confess'd its flame, and sued
In moving sounds for pity, she frown'd rarely,
But, blushing, heard me tell the gentle tale;
Nay, even confess'd, and told me softly, sighing,
She thought there was no guilt in love like mine.

Sel. Young, and unskilful in the world's false arts,
I suffer'd love to steal upon my softness,
And warm me with a lambent guiltless flame:
Yes, I have heard thee swear a thousand times,
And call the conscious powers of Heaven to witness
The tenderest, truest, everlasting passion.
But, oh! 'tis past; and I will charge remembrance
To banish the fond image from my soul.
Since thou art sworn the foe of royal Bajazet,
I have resolv'd to hate thee.

Ax. Is it possible!
Hate is not in thy nature: thy whole frame
Is harmony, without one jarring atom.
Why dost thou force thy eyes to wear this coldness?
It damps the springs of life. Oh! bid me die,
Much rather bid me die, if it be true
That thou hast sworn to hate me.——

Sel. Let life and death
Wait the decision of the bloody field;
Nor can thy fate, my conqueror, depend
Upon a woman's hate. Yet, since you urge
A power, which once, perhaps, I had, there is
But one request that I can make with honour.

Ax. Oh, name it! say!——

Sel. Forego your right of war,
And render me this instant to my father.

Ax. Impossible!——The tumult of the battle,
That hastes to join, cuts off all means of commerce
Betwixt the armies.

Sel. Swear then to perform it,
Which way soe'er the chance of war determines,
On my first instance.

Ax. By the sacred majesty
Of Heaven, to whom we kneel, I will obey thee;
Yes, I will give thee this severest proof
Of my soul's vow'd devotion; I will part with thee,
(Thou cruel, to command it!) I will part with thee,
As wretches that are doubtful of hereafter
Part with their lives, unwilling, loath and fearful,
And trembling at futurity. But is there nothing
No small return that honour can afford
For all this waste of love?

Sel. The gifts of captives minds
Wear somewhat of constraint; and generous
Disdain to give, where freedom of the choice
Does but seem wanting.

Ax. What! not one kind look?
Then thou art chang'd indeed. [*Trumpets.*]
Hark! I am summon'd,
And thou wilt send me forth like one unbless'd;
Whom fortune has forsaken, and ill fate
Mark'd for destruction. Thy surprising coldness down;
Hangs on my soul, and weighs my courage
And the first feeble blow I meet shall raze me
From all remembrance: nor is life or fame
Worthy my care, since I am lost to thee.
[*Going.*

Sel. Ha! goest thou to the fight?——

Ax. I do——Farewell!——

Sel. What! and no more! A sigh heaves in my breast,
And stops the struggling accents on my tongue,
Else, sure, I should have added something more,
And made our parting softer.

Ax. Give it way.
The niggard honour that affords not love,
Forbids not pity——

Sel. Fate, perhaps, has set
This day, the period of thy life and conquests;
And I shall see thee borne at evening back
A breathless corse.——Oh! can I think on that, way,
And hide my sorrows;—No—they will have
And all the vital air that life draws in
Is render'd back in sighs.

Ax. The murmuring gale revives the drooping flame,
That at thy coldness languish'd in my breast:
So breathe the gentle zephyrs on the spring,
And waken every plant and odorous flower,
Which winter frost had blasted, to new life.

Sel. To see thee for this moment, and no more.— ness,
Oh! help me to resolve against this tender-
That charms my fierce resentment, and presents thee
Not as thou art, mine and my father's foe,
But as thou wert, when first thy moving accents
Won me to hear; when, as I listen'd to thee,
The happy hours pass'd by us unperceiv'd,
So was my soul fix'd to the soft enchantment.

Ax. Let me be still the same; I am, I must be;
If it were possible my heart could stray,
One look from thee would call it back again,
And fix the wanderer for ever thine.

Sel. Where is my boasted resolution now?
[*Sinking into his arms.*
Oh, yes! thou art the same; my heart joins with thee,
And to betray me will believe thee still:
It dances to the sounds that mov'd it first,
And owns at once the weakness of my soul.
So, when some skilful artist strikes the strings,
The magic numbers rouse our sleeping passions,
And force us to confess our grief and pleasure.
Alas! Axalla, say——dost thou not pity
My artless innocence, and easy fondness?
Oh! turn thee from me, or I die with blushing.

Ax. No, let me rather gaze, for ever gaze,
And bless the new-born glories that adorn thee;
From every blush that kindles in thy cheeks,
Ten thousand little loves and graces spring

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To revel in the roses—'t will not be,
This envious trumpet calls, and tears me from thee—

Sel. My fears increase, and doubly press me now: [ther,
I charge thee, if thy sword comes cross my fa-
Stop for a moment, and remember me.

Ax. Oh, doubt not but his life shall be my care;
Even dearer than my own. [care;

Sel. Guard that for me too.

Ax. Oh, Selima! thou hast restor'd my quiet,
The noble ardour of the war, with love
Returning, brightly burns within my breast,
And bids me be secure of all hereafter.
So cheers some pious saint a dying sinner
(Who trembled at the thoughts of pains to come) [mercy:
With Heaven's forgiveness and the hopes of
At length, the tumult of his soul appeas'd,
And every doubt and anxious scruple eas'd
Boldly he proves the dark, uncertain road,
The peace his holy comforter bestow'd,
Guides, and protects him like a guardian god.
[*Exit.*

Sel. In vain all arts a love-sick virgin tries,
Affects to frown, and seem severely wise,
In hopes to cheat the wary lover's eyes.
If the dear youth her pity strives to move,
And pleads with tenderness the cause of love,
Nature asserts her empire in her heart,
And kindly takes the faithful lover's part,
By love herself, and nature thus betray'd,
No more she trusts in pride's fantastic aid,
But bids her eyes confess the yielding maid.
[*Exit* SELIMA, *Guards following.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—TAMERLANE'S *Camp.*

Enter MONESES.

Mon. The dreadful business of the war is over:
And slaughter, that, from yester morn 'till even,
With giant steps, pass'd striding o'er the field,
Besmear'd and horrid with the blood of nations,
Now weary sits among the mangled heaps,
And slumbers o'er her prey; while from this camp
The cheerful sounds of victory and Tamerlane
Beat the high arch of Heaven. Deciding fate,
That crowns him with the spoils of such a day,
Has given it as an earnest of the world
That shortly shall be his.

Enter STRATOCLES.

My Stratocles!
Most happily return'd; might I believe
Thou bring'st me any joy?

Stra. With my best diligence,
This night I have inquir'd of what concerns you. [ror
Scarce was the sun, who shone upon the hor-
Of the past day, sunk to the western ocean,
When, by permission from the prince Axalla,
I mix'd among the tumult of the warriors
Returning from the battle: here a troop
Of hardy Parthians, red with honest wounds,
Confess'd the conquest they had well deserv'd;
There a dejected crew of wretched captives,
Sore with unprofitable hurts, and groaning
Under new bondage, follow'd sadly after
The haughty victor's heels. But that which fully [et,
Crown'd the success of Tamerlane, was Bajaz-
Fallen like the proud archangel from the height
Where once (even next to majesty divine)
Enthron'd he sat, down to the vile descent
And lowness of a slave: but oh! to speak
The rage, the fierceness, and the indignation!—
It bars all words, and cuts description short.

Mon. Then he is fallen! that comet which on high
Portended ruin; he has spent his blaze,
And shall distract the world with fears no more.
Sure it must bode me well; for oft my soul
Has started into tumult at his name,
As if my guardian angel took the alarm,
At the approach of somewhat mortal to me.
But say, my friend, what hear'st thou of Arpasia?
For there my thoughts, my every care is centred.

Stra. Though on that purpose still I bent my search,
Yet nothing certain could I gain, but this;
That in the pillage of the Sultan's tent
Some women were made prisoners, who this morning
Were to be offer'd to the emperor's view:
Their names and qualities, though oft enquir-
I could not learn. [ing,

Mon. Then must my soul still labour
Beneath uncertainty and anxious doubt,
The mind's worst state. The tyrant's ruin gives me
But a half ease.

Stra. 'Twas said, not far from hence
The captives were to wait the emperor's passage.

Mon. Haste we to find the place. Oh, my Arpasia!
Shall we not meet? Why hangs my heart thus heavy,
Like death within my bosom? Oh, 'tis well,
The joy of meeting pays the pangs of absence,
Else who could bear it?
When thy lov'd sight shall bless my eyes again,
Then I will own I ought not to complain,
Since that sweet hour is worth whole years of pain. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The inside of a magnificent Tent. Symphony of Warlike Music. Enter* TAMERLANE, AXALLA, PRINCE *of* TANAIS, ZAMA, MIRVAN, *Soldiers, and other Attendants.*

Ax. From this auspicious day the Parthian name
Shall date its birth of empire, and extend
Even from the dawning east to utmost Thule,
The limits of its sway.

Pr. Nations unknown,
Where yet the Roman eagles never flew,
Shall pay their homage to victorious Tamerlane;
Bend to his valour and superior virtue,
And own, that conquest is not given by chance,
But, bound by fatal and resistless merit,
Waits on his arms.

Tam. It is too much: you dress me
Like an usurper, in the borrow'd attributes
Of injur'd Heaven. Can we call conquest ours?
Shall man, this pigmy, with a giant's pride,
Vaunt of himself, and say, Thus have I done this?
Oh, vain pretence to greatness! Like the moon
We borrow all the brightness which we boast,
Dark in ourselves, and useless. If that hand,
That rules the fate of battles, strike for us,
Crown us with fame, and gild our clay with honour,

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'Twere most ungrateful to disown the benefit,
And arrogate a praise which is not ours.

Ax. With such unshaken temper of the soul
To bear the swelling tide of prosperous fortune,
Is to deserve that fortune: in adversity
The mind grows tough by buffeting the tempest,
Which, in success dissolving, sinks to ease,
And loses all her firmness.

Tam. Oh, Axalla!
Could I forget I am a man as thou art;
Would not the winter's cold, or summer's heat,
Sickness, or thirst, and hunger, all the train
Of Nature's clamorous appetites, asserting
An equal right in kings and common men,
Reprove me daily!—No—If I boast of aught,
Be it to have been Heaven's happy instrument,
The means of good to all my fellow-creatures:
This is a king's best praise.

Enter OMAR.

Om. Honour and fame
[*Bowing to* TAMERLANE.
For ever wait the emperor: may our prophet
Give him ten thousand thousand days of life,
And every day like this. The captive sultan,
Fierce in his bonds, and at his fate repining,
Attends your sacred will.

Tam. Let him approach.

Enter BAJAZET, *and other Turkish Prisoners in Chains, with a Guard of Soldiers.*

When I survey the ruins of this field,
The wild destruction, which thy fierce ambition
Has dealt among mankind, (so many widows
And helpless orphans has thy battle made,
That half our eastern world this day are mourners)
Well may I, in behalf of Heaven and earth,
Demand from thee atonement for this wrong.

Baj. Make thy demand to those that owe thy power,
Know, I am still beyond it; and though fortune
(Curse on that changeling deity of fools!)
Has stripp'd me of the train and pomp of greatness,
That outside of a king, yet still my soul,
Fix'd high, and of itself alone dependent,
Is ever free and royal, and even now,
As at the head of battle, does defy thee:
I know what power the chance of war has given,
And dare thee to the use on't. This vile speeching,
This after-game of words, is what most irks me;
Spare that, and for the rest 'tis equal all——
Be it as it may.

Tam. Well was it for the world,
When on their borders neighbouring princes met,
Frequent in friendly parle, by cool debates
Preventing wasteful war: such should our meeting
Have been, hadst thou but held in just regard
The sanctity of leagues so often sworn to.
Canst thou believe thy prophet, or, what's more,
That Power supreme, which made thee and thy prophet,
Will, with impunity, let pass that breach
Of sacred faith given to the royal Greek?

Baj. Thou pedant talker! ha! art thou a king
Possess'd of sacred power, Heaven's darling attribute,
And dost thou prate of leagues, and oaths, and prophets!
I hate the Greek (perdition on his name!)
As I do thee, and would have met you both,
As death does human nature, for destruction.

Tam. Causeless to hate, is not of human kind:
The savage brute, that haunts in woods remote
And desert wilds, tears not the fearful traveller,
If hunger, or some injury, provoke not.

Baj. Can a king want a cause, when empire bids
Go on? What is he born for, but ambition?
It is his hunger, 'tis his call of nature,
The noble appetite which will be satisfied,
And, like the food of gods, makes him immortal.

Tam. Henceforth I will not wonder we were foes,
Since souls that differ so by nature, hate,
And strong antipathy forbid their union.

Baj. The noble fire that warms me, does indeed differ,
Transcend thy coldness. I am pleas'd we
Nor think alike.

Tam. No—for I think like man,
Thou like a monster, from whose baleful presence
Nature starts back; and though she fix'd her stamp man,
On thy rough mass, and mark'd thee for a
Now, conscious of her error, she disclaims thee
As form'd for her destruction.——
'Tis true, I am a king, as thou hast been:
Honour and glory too have been my aim;
But though I dare face death, and all the dangers
Which furious war wears in its bloody front,
Yet would I choose to fix my name by peace,
By justice, and by mercy; and to raise
My trophies on the blessings of mankind
Nor would I buy the empire of the world
With ruin of the people whom I sway,
On forfeit of my honour.

Baj. Prophet, I thank thee.——
Damnation!—Couldst thou rob me of my glory,
To dress up this tame king, this preaching dervis?
Unfit for war, thou shouldst have lived secure
In lazy peace, and with debating senates
Shar'd a precarious sceptre, sat tamely still,
And let bold factions canton out thy power,
And wrangle for the spoils they robb'd thee of;
Whilst I, (curse on the power that stops my ardour!)
Would, like a tempest, rush amidst the nations,
Be greatly terrible, and deal, like Alha,
My angry thunder on the frighted world.

Tam. The world!—'twould be too little for thy pride:
Thou wouldst scale Heaven——

Baj. I would:—Away! my soul
Disdains thy conference.

Tam. Thou vain, rash thing,
That, with gigantic insolence, hast dar'd
To lift thy wretched self above the stars,
And mate with power Almighty: Thou art fallen!

Baj. 'Tis false! I am not fallen from aught I have been;
At least my soul resolves to keep her state,
And scorns to take acquaintance with ill fortune.

Tam. Almost beneath my pity art thou fallen;
Since, while th' avenging hand of Heaven is on thee,
And resses to the dust thy swelling soul,

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Fool-hardy, with the stronger thou contendest.
To what vast heights had thy tumultuous temper
Been hurried, if success had crown'd thy wishes: [quer'd?
Say, what had I to expect, if thou hadst con-
Baj. Oh, glorious thought! By Heaven I will enjoy it,
Though but in fancy, imagination shall
Make room to entertain the vast idea.
Oh! had I been the master but of yesterday,
The world, the world had felt me; and for thee,
I had us'd thee, as thou art to me—a dog,
The object of my scorn and mortal hatred:
I would have taught thy neck to know my weight,
And mounted from that footstool to my saddle:
Then, when thy daily servile task was done,
I would have caged thee, for the scorn of slaves,
'Till thou hadst begg'd to die; and even that mercy
I had denied thee. Now thou know'st my [mind,
And question me no farther.
Tam. Well dost thou teach me
What justice should exact from thee. Mankind [thee:
With one consent, cry out for vengeance on
Loudly they call to cut off this league-breaker,
This wild destroyer, from the face of earth.
Baj. Do it, and rid thy shaken soul at once
Of its worst fear.
Tam. Why slept the thunder
That should have arm'd the idol deity,
And given thee power, ere yester sun was set,
To shake the soul of Tamerlane. Hadst thou an arm
To make thee fear'd, thou shouldst have prov'd it on me,
Amidst the sweat and blood of yonder field,
When through the tumult of the war I sought [thee,
Fenc'd in with nations.
Baj. Curse upon the stars
That fated us to different scenes of slaughter!
Oh! could my sword have met thee!——
Tam. Thou hadst then,
As now, been in my power, and held thy life
Dependent on my gift—Yes, Bajazet,
I bid thee live.—So much my soul disdains
That thou shouldst think I can fear aught but Heaven:
Nay more; couldst thou forget thy brutal fierceness,
And form thyself to manhood, I would bid thee
Live, and be still a king, that thou mayest learn [ing
What man should be to man, in war remember-
The common tie and brotherhood of kind.
This royal tent, with such of thy domestics
As can be found, shall wait upon thy service;
Nor will I use my fortune to demand
Hard terms of peace, but such as thou mayst offer
With honour, I with honour may receive.
[TAM. *Makes signs to an officer, who unbinds* BAJAZET.
Baj. Ha! sayest thou—no—our prophet's vengeance blast me,
If thou shalt buy my friendship with thy empire. [talker!
Damnation on thee! thou smooth fawning
Give me again my chains, that I may curse thee,
And gratify my rage: or, if thou wilt
Be a vain fool, and play with thy perdition,
Remember I'm thy foe, and hate thee deadly.
Thy folly on thy head!
Tam. Be still my foe.
Great minds, like Heaven, are pleas'd in doing good,
Though the ungrateful subjects of their favours
Are barren in return: thy stubborn pride,
That spurns the gentle office of humanity,
Shall in my honour own,—and thy despite,
I have done as I ought. Virtue still does
With scorn the mercenary world regard,
Where abject souls do good, and hope reward:
Above the worthless trophies men can raise,
She seeks not honours, wealth, nor airy praise,
But with herself, herself the goddess pays.
[*Exeunt* TAMERLANE, AXALLA, PRINCE *of* TANAIS, MIRVAN, ZAMA, *and Attendants.*
Baj. Come, lead me to my dungeon; plunge me down
Deep from the hated sight of man and day,
Where, under covert of the friendly darkness,
My soul may brood, at leisure, o'er its anguish.
Om. Our royal master would with noble usage, [hope—
Make your misfortunes light: he bids you
Baj. I tell thee, slave, I have shook hands with hope,
And all my thoughts are rage, despair, and horror. [me!
Ha! wherefore am I thus!—Perdition seize
But my cold blood runs shivering to my heart,
As at some phantom, that in dead of night,
With dreadful action stalks around our beds.
The rage and fiercer passions of my breast
Are lost in new confusion.——

Enter HALY.

Arpasia!—Haly!
Ha. Oh, emperor! for whose hard fate our prophet
And all the heroes of thy sacred race
Are sad in paradise, thy faithful Haly,
The slave of all thy pleasures, in this ruin,
This universal shipwreck of thy fortunes,

Enter ARPASIA.

Has gather'd up this treasure for thy arms:
Nor even the victor, haughty Tamerlane,
(By whose command once more thy slave beholds thee)
Denies this blessing to thee, but, with honour
Renders thee back thy queen, thy beauteous bride.
Baj. Oh! had her eyes, with pity, seen my sorrows,
Had she the softness of a tender bride,
Heaven could not have bestow'd a greater blessing,
And love had made amends for loss of empire
But see, what fury dwells upon her charms!
What lightning flashes from her angry eyes!
With a malignant joy she views my ruin:
Even beauteous in her hatred, still she charms me,
And awes my fierce tumultuous soul to love.
Arp. And darest thou hope, thou tyrant! ravisher!
That Heaven has any joy in store for thee?
Look back upon the sum of thy past life,
Where tyranny, oppression, and injustice,
Perjury, murders, swell the black account;
Where lost Arpasia's wrongs stand bleeding fresh, [thee;
Thy last recorded crime. But Heaven has found
At length the tardy vengeance has o'erta'en thee.
My weary soul shall bear a little longer

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The pain of life, to call for justice on thee:
That once complete, sink to the peaceful grave,
And lose the memory of my wrongs and thee.
Baj. Thou railest! I thank thee for it—Be perverse,
And muster all the woman in thy soul;
Goad me with curses, be a very wife,
That I may fling off this tame love, and hate thee.

Enter MONESES.

Ha! keep thy temper, hear; nor take alarm
At a slave's presence. [BAJAZET *starting*.
Mon. It is Arpasia!—Leave me, thou cold fear.
Sweet as the rosy morn she breaks upon me,
And sorrow, like the night's unwholesome shade,
Gives way before the golden dawn she brings.
Baj. [*Advancing towards him.*] Ha, Christian! Is it well that we meet thus?
Is this thy faith?
Mon. Why does thy frowning brow
Put on this form of fury? Is it strange [tune,
We should meet here companions in misfor-
The captives in one common chance of war?
Nor shouldst thou wonder that my sword has fail'd
Before the fortune of victorious Tamerlane,
When thou, with nations like the sanded shore,
With half the warring world upon thy side,
Could not stand up against his dreadful battle,
That crush'd thee with its shock. Thy men can witness,
Those cowards that forsook me in the combat,
My sword was not unactive.
Baj. No—'tis false;
Where is my daughter, thou vile Greek? Thou hast
Betray'd her to the Tartar; or even worse,
Pale with thy fear, didst lose her like a coward; blame
And like a coward now, would cast the
On fortune and ill stars.
Mon. Ha! saidst thou, like a coward;
What sanctity, what majesty divine
Hast thou put on, to guard thee from my rage,
That thus thou darest to wrong me?
Baj. Out, thou slave,
And know me for thy lord——
Mon. I tell thee, tyrant,
When in the pride of power thou sat'st on high,
When like an idol thou wert vainly worshipp'd,
By prostrate wretches, born with slavish souls;
Even when thou wert a king, thou wert no more,
Nor greater than Moneses; born of a race
Royal and great as thine. What art thou now then?
The fate of war has set thee with the lowest;
And captives (like the subjects of the grave)
Losing distinction, serve one common lord.
Baj. Brav'd by this dog! Now give a loose to rage,
And curse thyself; curse thy false, cheating prophet. [Christian!
Ha! yet there's some revenge. Hear me, thou
Thou left'st that sister with me:—Thou impostor!
Thou boaster of thy honesty! Thou liar!
But take her to thee back.
Now to explore my prison—If it holds
Another plague like this, the restless damn'd
(If Mufties lie not) wander thus in hell;
From scorching flames to chilling frosts they run,
Then from their frosts to fires return again,
And only prove variety of pain.
[*Exeunt* BAJAZET *and* HALY.
Arp. Stay, Bajazet, I charge thee by my wrongs!
Stay and unfold a tale of so much horror
As only fits thy telling.—Oh, Moneses!
Mon. Why dost thou weep? why this tempestuous passion, [name?
That stops thy faltering tongue short on my
Oh, speak! unveil this mystery of sorrow,
And draw the dismal scene at once to sight.
Arp. Thou art undone, lost, ruin'd, and undone!
Mon. I will not think 'tis so, while I have thee;
While thus 'tis given to fold thee in my arms;
For while I sigh upon thy panting bosom,
The sad remembrance of past woes is lost.
Arp. Forbear to sooth thy soul with flattering thoughts,
Of evils overpast, and joys to come:
Our woes are like the genuine shade beneath,
Where fate cuts off the very hopes of day,
And everlasting night and horror reign.
Mon. By all the tenderness and chaste endearments
Of our past love, I charge thee, my Arpasia,
To ease my soul of doubts! Give me to know,
At once, the utmost malice of my fate!
Arp. Take then thy wretched share in all I suffer,
Still partner of my heart! Scarce hadst thou left [rant,
The sultan's camp, when the imperious ty-
Softening the pride and fierceness of his temper,
With gentle speech made offer of his love.
Amaz'd, as at the shock of sudden death,
I started into tears, and often urg'd
(Though still in vain) the difference of our faiths.
At last, as flying to the utmost refuge,
With lifted hands and streaming eyes, I own'd
The fraud; which when we first were made his prisoners,
Conscious of my unhappy form, and fearing
For thy dear life, I fore'd thee to put on
Thy borrow'd name of brother, mine of sister;
Hiding beneath that veil the nearer tie
Our mutual vows had made before the priest.
Kindling to rage at hearing of my story,
Then, be it so, he cried: Think'st thou thy vows, [ties?
Given to a slave, shall bar me from thy beau-
Then bade the priest pronounce the marriage rites:
Which he perform'd; whilst, shrieking with despair, [me.
I call'd, in vain, the powers of Heaven to aid
Mon. Villain! Imperial villain!——Oh, the coward! [power,
Aw'd by his guilt, though back'd by force and
He durst not, to my face, avow his purpose;
But, in my absence, like a lurking thief,
Stole on my treasure, and at once undid me.
Arp. Had they not kept me from the means of death,
Forgetting all the rules of Christian suffering,
I had done a desperate murder on my soul,
Ere the rude slaves, that waited on his will,
Had forc'd me to his——
Mon. Stop thee there, Arpasia,
And bar my fancy from the guilty scene!
Let not thought enter, lest the busy mind
Should muster such a train of monstrous images

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As would distract me. Oh! I cannot bear it.
Thou lovely hoard of sweets, where all my joys
Were treasur'd up, to have thee rifled thus!
Thus torn untasted from my eager wishes!
But I will have thee from him. Tamerlane
(The sovereign judge of equity on earth)
Shall do me justice on this mighty robber,
And render back thy beauties to Moneses.

Arp. And who shall render back my peace, my honour,
The spotless whiteness of my virgin soul?
Ah! no, Moneses—Think not I will ever
Bring a polluted love to thy chaste arms:
I am the tyrant's wife. Oh, fatal title!
And in the sight of all the saints, have sworn,
By honour, womanhood, and blushing shame,
To know no second bride-bed but my grave.

Mon. I swear it must not be, since still my eye
Finds thee as heavenly white, as angel pure,
As in the earliest hours of life thou wert:
Nor art thou his, but mine; thy first vows mine,
Thy soul is mine——

Arp. Oh! think not, that the power
Of most persuasive eloquence can make me
Forget I've been another's, been his wife.
Now, by my blushes, by the strong confusion
And anguish of my heart, spare me, Moneses,
Nor urge my trembling virtue to the precipice.
Shortly, oh! very shortly, if my sorrows
Divine aright, and Heaven be gracious to me,
Death shall dissolve the fatal obligation,
And give me up to peace, to that bless'd place
Where the good rest from care and anxious life.

Mon. Oh, teach me, thou fair saint, like thee to suffer!
Teach me, with hardy piety, to combat
The present ills; instruct my eyes to pass
The narrow bounds of life, this land of sorrow,
And, with bold hopes, to view the realms beyond
Those distant beauties of the future state.
Tell me, Arpasia—say, what joys are those
That wait to crown the wretch who suffers here?
Oh! tell me, and sustain my failing faith.

Arp. Imagine somewhat exquisitely fine,
Which fancy cannot paint, which the pleas'd mind
Can barely know, unable to describe it;
Imagine 'tis a tract of endless joys
Without satiety or interruption;
Imagine 'tis to meet, and part no more.

Mon. Grant, gentle Heaven, that such may be our lot!
Let us be bless'd together.—Oh, my soul!
Build on that hope, and let it arm thy courage
To struggle with the storm that parts us now.

Arp. Yes, my Moneses! now the surges rise,
The swelling sea breaks in between our barks,
And drives us to our fate on different rocks.
Farewell!——My soul lives with thee.——

Mon. Death is parting,
'Tis the last sad adieu 'twixt soul and body.
But this is somewhat worse——My joy, my comfort,
All that was left in life, fleets after thee;
My aching sight hangs on thy parting beauties,
Thy lovely eyes, all drown'd in floods of sorrow,
So sinks the setting sun beneath the waves,
And leaves the traveller, in pathless woods,
Benighted and forlorn——Thus, with sad eyes,
Westward he turns, to mark the light's decay,
Till, having lost the last faint glimpse of day,
Cheerless, in darkness, he pursues his way.

[*Exeunt* Moneses *and* Arpasia, *severally.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—The Inside of the royal Tent.

Enter Axalla, Selima, *and Women Attendants.*

Ax. Can there be aught in love beyond this proof,
This wonderous proof, I give thee of my faith?
To tear thee from my bleeding bosom thus!
To rend the strings of life, to set thee free,
And yield thee to a cruel father's power,
Foe to my hopes! What canst thou pay me back,
What but thyself, thou angel, for this fondness?

Sel. Thou dost upbraid me, beggar as I am,
And urge me with my poverty of love.
Perhaps thou think'st 'tis nothing for a maid
To struggle through the niceness of her sex,
The blushes and the fears, and own she loves.
Thou think'st 'tis nothing for my artless heart,
To own my weakness, and confess thy triumph.

Ax. Oh! yes I own it; my charm'd ears ne'er knew
A sound of so much rapture, so much joy.
Not voices, instruments, nor warbling birds,
Not winds, not murmuring waters join'd in concert,
Not tuneful nature, not th' according spheres,
Utter such harmony, as when my Selima,
With downcast looks and blushes, said—I love.

Sel. And yet thou say'st, I am a niggard to thee.
I swear the balance shall be held between us,
And love be judge, if, after all the tenderness,
Tears and confusion of my virgin soul,
Thou shouldst complain of aught, unjust Axalla.

Ax. Why was I ever bless'd!—Why is remembrance
Rich with a thousand pleasing images
Of past enjoyments, since 'tis but plague to me?
When thou art mine no more, what will it ease me
To think of all the golden minutes past,
To think that thou wert kind, and I was happy?
But like an angel fallen from bliss, to curse
My present state, and mourn the heaven I've lost.

Sel. Hope better for us both; nor let thy fears,
Like an unlucky omen, cross my way.
My father, rough and stormy in his nature,
To me was always gentle, and, with fondness
Paternal, ever met me with a blessing.
Oft, when offence had stirr'd him to such fury,
That not grave counsellors for wisdom fam'd,
Nor hardy captains that had fought his battles,
Presum'd to speak, but struck with awful dread,
Were hush'd as death; yet has he smil'd on me,
Kiss'd me, and bade me utter all my purpose;
Till, with my idle prattle, I had sooth'd him,
And won him from his anger.

Ax. Oh! I know
Thou hast a tongue to charm the wildest tempers.
Herds would forget to graze, and savage beasts
Stand still and lose their fierceness, but to hear thee,
As if they had reflection, and by reason
Forsook a less enjoyment for a greater.

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But, oh! when I revolve each circumstance,
My Christian faith, my service closely bound
To Tamerlane, my master, and my friend,
Tell me, my charmer, if my fears are vain!
Think what remains for me, if the fierce sultan
Should doom thy beauties to another's bed!

Sel. 'Tis a sad thought: but to appease thy doubts,
Here, in the awful sight of Heaven, I vow
No power shall e'er divide me from thy love,
Even duty shall not force me to be false.
My cruel stars may tear thee from my arms,
But never from my heart; and when the maids
Shall yearly come with garlands of fresh flowers,
To mourn with pious office o'er my grave,
They shall sit sadly down, and weeping tell
How well I lov'd, how much I suffer'd for thee:
And while they grieve my fate, shall praise my constancy.

Ax. But see, the sultan comes!——My beating heart
Bounds with exulting motion; hope and fear
Fight with alternate conquest in my breast.
Oh! can I give her from me? Yield her up?
Now mourn, thou god of love, since honour triumphs,
And crowns his cruel altars with thy spoils.

Enter BAJAZET.

Baj. To have a nauseous courtesy forc'd on me,
Spite of my will, by an insulting foe!
Ha! they would break the fierceness of my temper,
And make me supple for their slavish purpose.
Curse on their fawning arts! From Heaven itself
I would not, on such terms, receive a benefit,
But spurn it back upon the giver's hand.

[SELIMA *comes forward, and kneels to* BAJAZET.

Sel. My lord! my royal father!

Baj. Ha! what art thou?
What heavenly innocence! that in a form
So known, so loved, has left thy paradise,
For joyless prison, for this place of wo!
Art thou my Selima?

Sel. Have you forgot me?
Alas, my piety is then in vain!
Your Selima, your daughter whom you loved,
The fondling once of her dear father's arms,
Is come to claim her share in his misfortunes;
To wait and tend him with obsequious duty;
To sit, and weep for every care he feels;
To help to wear the tedious minutes out,
To soften bondage, and the loss of empire.

Baj. Now, by our prophet, if my wounded mind
Could know a thought of peace, it would be now:
Even from thy prating infancy thou wert
My joy, my little angel; smiling comfort
Came with thee, still to glad me. Now I'm curs'd
Even in thee too. Reproach and infamy
Attend the Christian dog to whom thou wert trusted.
To see thee here—'twere better see thee dead!

Ax. Thus Tamerlane, to royal Bajazet,
With kingly greetings sends: since with the brave
(The bloody business of the fight once ended)
Stern hate and opposition ought to cease;
Thy queen already to thy arms restor'd,
Receive this second gift, thy beauteous daughter;
And if there be aught farther in thy wish,
Demand with honour, and obtain it freely.

Baj. Bear back thy fulsome greeting to thy master;
Tell him, I'll none on't. Had he been a god,
All his omnipotence could not restore
My fame diminish'd, loss of sacred honour,
The radiancy of majesty eclips'd:
For aught besides, it is not worth my care;
The giver and his gifts are both beneath me.

Ax. Enough of war the wounded earth has known;
Weary at length, and wasted with destruction,
Sadly she rears her ruin'd head to show
Her cities humbled, and her countries spoil'd,
And to her mighty masters sues for peace.
Oh, Sultan! by the Power divine I swear,
With joy I would resign the savage trophies
In blood and battle gain'd, could I atone
The fatal breach 'twixt thee and Tamerlane;
And think a soldier's glory well bestow'd
To buy mankind a peace.

Baj. And what art thou,
That dost presume to meditate 'twixt the rage
Of angry kings?

Ax. A prince, born of the noblest,
And of a soul that answers to that birth,
That dares not but do well. Thou dost put on
A forc'd forgetfulness, thus not to know me,
A guest so lately to thy court, then meeting
On gentler terms.——

Sel. Could aught efface the merit
Of brave Axalla's name? yet when your daughter
Shall tell how well, how nobly she was used,
How light this gallant prince made all her bondage,
Most sure the royal Bajazet will own
That honour stands indebted to such goodness,
Nor can a monarch's friendship more than pay it.

Baj. Ha! know'st thou that, fond girl?—Go—'tis not well,
And when thou couldst descend to take a benefit
From a vile Christian, and thy father's foe,
Thou didst an act dishonest to thy race:
Henceforth, unless thou mean'st to cancel all
My share in thee, and write thyself a bastard,
Die, starve, know any evil, any pain,
Rather than taste a mercy from these dogs.

Sel. Alas! Axalla!

Ax. Weep not, lovely maid!
I swear, one pearly drop from those fair eyes
Would over-pay the service of my life;
One sigh from thee has made a large amends
For all thy angry father's frowns and fierceness.

Baj. Oh, my curs'd fortune!—Am I fallen thus low!
Dishonour'd to my face! Thou earth-born thing!
Thou clod! how hast thou dar'd to lift thy eyes
Up to the sacred race of mighty Ottoman,
Whom kings, whom even our prophet's holy offspring
At distance have beheld! And what art thou?
What glorious titles blazon out thy birth!
Thou vile obscurity! ha!—say—thou base one.

Ax. Thus challeng'd, virtue, modest as she is,
Stands up to do herself a common justice:
To answer, and assert that inborn merit,
That worth, which conscious to herself she feels.

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Were honour to be scann'd by long descent,
From ancestors illustrious, I could vaunt
A lineage of the greatest, and recount
Among my fathers names of ancient story,
Heroes and god-like patriots, who subdued
The world by arms and virtue, and, being Romans,
Scorn'd to be kings; but that be their own praise:
Nor will I borrow merit from the dead,
Myself an undeserver. I could prove
My friendship such, as thou might'st deign t' accept [office,
With honour, when it comes with friendly
To render back thy crown, and former greatness; [Selima,
And yet even this, even all is poor, when
With matchless worth, weighs down the adverse scale.
Baj. To give me back what yesterday took from me.
Would be to give like Heaven, when having finish'd
This world (the goodly work of his creation)
He bade his favourite man be lord of all.
But this——
Ax. Nor is this gift beyond my power.
Oft has the mighty master of my arms
Urg'd me, with large ambition, to demand
Crowns and dominions from his bounteous power: [it
'Tis true, I wav'd the proffer, and have held
The worthier choice to wait upon his virtues,
To be the friend and partner of his wars,
Than to be Asia's lord. Nor wonder then,
If, in the confidence of such a friendship,
I promise boldly for the royal giver,
Thy crown and empire.
Baj. For our daughter thus
Mean'st thou to barter? Ha! I tell thee, Christian,
There is but one, one dowry thou canst give,
And I can ask, worthy my daughter's love.
Ax. Oh! name the mighty ransom; task my power;
Let there be danger, difficulty, death,
T' enhance the price.
Baj. I take thee at thy word.
Bring me the Tartar's head.
Ax. Ha!
Baj. Tamerlane's!
That death, that deadly poison to my glory.
Ax. Prodigious! horrid!
Sel. Lost! for ever lost!
Baj. And couldst thou hope to bribe me with aught else! [terms?
With a vile peace, patch'd up on slavish
With tributary kingship?——No!——To merit
A recompense from me, sate my revenge.
The Tartar is my bane, I cannot bear him:
One heaven and earth can never hold us both:
Still shall we hate, and with defiance deadly
Keep rage alive, till one be lost for ever:
As if two suns should meet in the meridian,
And strive in fiery combat for the passage.—
Weep'st thou, fond girl? Now as thy king and father,
I charge thee drive this slave from thy remembrance!
Hate shall be pious in thee. Come and join [*Laying hold on her hand.*
To curse thy father's foes.
Sel. Undone for ever!
Now, tyrant duty, art thou yet obey'd?
There is no more to give you. Oh, Axalla!

[BAJAZET *leads out* SELIMA, *she looking back on* AXALLA.

Ax. 'Tis what I fear'd; fool that I was t' obey!
The coward love, that could not bear her frown,
Has wrought his own undoing. Perhaps even now
The tyrant's rage prevails upon her fears:
Fiercely he storms; she weeps, and sighs, and trembles,
But swears at length to think on me no more.
He bade me take her. But, oh, gracious honour!
Upon what terms? My soul yet shudders at it,
And stands but half recover'd of her fright.
The head of Tamerlane! monstrous impiety
Bleed, bleed to death, my heart, be virtue's martyr.
Oh, emperor! I own I ought to give thee
Some nobler mark than dying of my faith.
Then let the pains I feel my friendship prove,
'Tis easier far to die than cease to love.
[*Exit.*

SCENE II.—TAMERLANE'S *Camp. Enter severally* MONESES *and* PRINCE *of* TANAIS.

Mon. If I not press untimely on his leisure,
You would much bind a stranger to your service, [peror.
To give me means of audience from the em-
Pr. Most willingly; though for the present moment [vate.
We must entreat your stay; he holds him pri-
Mon. His counsel, I presume?
Pr. No—the affair
Is not of earth, but Heaven—A holy man,
(One whom our prophet's law calls such) a Dervis,
Keeps him in conference.
Mon. Hours of religion,
Especially of princes, claims a reverence,
Nor will be interrupted.
Pr. What his business
Imports, we know not; but with earnest suit,
This morn, he begg'd admittance. Our great master [Heaven)
(Than whom none bows more lowly to high
In reverend regard holds all that bear
Relation to religion, and, on notice
Of his request, receiv'd him on the instant.
Mon. We will attend his pleasure. [*Exeunt.*

Enter TAMERLANE *and a* DERVIS.

Tam. Thou bring'st me thy credentials from the highest,
From Alha, and our prophet. Speak thy message,
It must import the best and noblest ends.
Der. Thus speaks our holy Mahomet, who has given thee
To reign and conquer: ill dost thou repay
The bounties of his hand, unmindful of
The fountain whence thy streams of greatness flow. [down
Thou hast forgot high Heaven—hast beaten
And trampled on religion's sanctity.
Tam. Now, as I am a soldier and a king,
(The greatest names of honour) do but make
Thy imputation out, and Tamerlane
Shall do thee ample justice on himself.
So much the sacred name of Heaven awes me,
Could I suspect my soul of harbouring aught
To its dishonour, I would search it strictly,
And drive th' offending thought with fury forth.
Der. Yes, thou hast hurt our holy prophet's honour,
By fostering the pernicious Christian sect:

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Those, whom his sword pursu'd, with fell destruction,
Thou tak'st into thy bosom, to thy councils;
They are thy only friends. The true believers
Mourn to behold thee favour this Axalla.
Tam. I fear me, thou out-go'st the prophet's order,
And bring'st his venerable name to shelter
A rudeness ill-becoming thee to use,
Or me to suffer. When thou nam'st my friend,
Thou nam'st a man beyond a monk's discerning,
Virtuous and great, a warrior and a prince.
Der. He is a Christian; there our law condemns him,
Although he were even all thou speak'st, and more.
Tam. 'Tis false; no law divine condemns the virtuous,
For differing from the rules your schools devise.
Look round, how Providence bestows alike
Sunshine and rain, to bless the fruitful year,
On different nations, all of different faiths:
And (though by several names and titles worship'd)
Heaven takes the various tribute of their praise;
Since all agree to own, at least to mean,
One best, one greatest, only Lord of all.
Thus, when he view'd the many forms of nature,
He found that all was good, and bless'd the fair variety.
Der. Most impious and profane!—Nay, frown not, prince!
Full of the prophet, I despise the danger [thee
Thy angry power may threaten. I command
To hear, and to obey; since thus says Mahomet:
Why have I made thee dreadful to the nations?
Why have I given thee conquest, but to spread
My sacred law even to the utmost earth,
And make my holy Mecca the world's worship?
Go on, and wheresoe'er thy arms shall prosper,
Plant there the prophet's name; with sword and fire
Drive out all other faiths, and let the world
Confess him only.
Tam. Had he but commanded
My sword to conquer all, to make the world
Know but one Lord, the task were not so hard,
'Twere but to do what has been done already;
And Philip's son, and Cæsar did as much:
But to subdue th' unconquerable mind,
To make one reason have the same effect
Upon all apprehensions; to force this,
Or this man, just to think as thou and I do;
Impossible! Unless souls were alike
In all, which differ now like human faces.
Der. Well might the holy cause be carried on,
If Mussulmen did not make war on Mussulmen.
Why hold'st thou captive a believing monarch? [curse,
Now, as thou hop'st to 'scape the prophet's
Release the royal Bajazet, and join,
With force united, to destroy the Christians.
Tam. 'Tis well—I've found the cause that mov'd thy zeal.
What shallow politician set thee on,
In hopes to fright me this way to compliance?
Der. Our prophet only——
Tam. No—thou dost belie him,
Thou maker of new faiths! that dar'st to build
Thy fond inventions on religion's name.
Religion's lustre is, by native innocence,
Divinely pure, and simple from all arts;
You daub and dress her like a common mistress,
The harlot of your fancies; and by adding
False beauties, which she wants not, make the world
Suspect her angel's face is foul beneath,
And will not bear all lights. Hence! I have found thee.
Der. I have but one resort. Now aid me, prophet. [*Aside.*
Yet I have somewhat further to unfold;
Our prophet speaks to thee in thunder—thus—
[*The* DERVIS *draws a concealed dagger, and offers to stab* TAMERLANE.
Tam. No, villain! Heaven is watchful o'er its worshippers,
[*Wresting the dagger from him.*
And blasts the murderer's purpose. Think, thou wretch!
Think on the pains that wait thy crime, and
When I shall doom thee—— [tremble
Der. 'Tis but death at last;
And I will suffer greatly for the cause
That urg'd me first to the bold deed.
Tam. Oh, impious!
Enthusiasm thus makes villains martyrs.
[*Pausing.*
It shall be so—To die! 'twere a reward— [mine:
Now learn the difference 'twixt thy faith and
Thine bids thee lift thy dagger to my throat;
Mine can forgive the wrong, and bid thee live.
Keep thy own wicked secret, and be safe!
If thou repent'st, I have gain'd one to virtue,
And am, in that rewarded for my mercy;
If thou continuest still to be the same,
'Tis punishment enough to be a villain.
Hence! from my sight—It shocks my soul to think [*Exit* DERVIS.
That there is such a monster in my kind.
Whither will man's impiety extend?
Oh, gracious Heaven! dost thou withhold thy thunder,
When bold assassins take thy name upon 'em,
And swear they are the champions of thy cause?

Enter MONESES.

Mon. Oh, emperor! before whose awful throne
Th' afflicted never kneel in vain for justice,
[*Kneeling to* TAM.
Undone, and ruin'd, blasted in my hopes,
Here let me fall before your sacred feet,
And groan out my misfortunes, till your pity,
(The last support and refuge that is left me)
Shall raise me from the ground and bid me live.
Tam. Rise, prince, nor let me reckon up the worth,
And tell how boldly that might bid thee ask,
Lest I should make a merit of my justice,
The common debt I owe to thee, to all,
Even to the meanest of mankind, the charter
By which I claim my crown, and Heaven's protection.
Speak, then, as to a king, the sacred name
Where power is lodg'd, for righteous ends alone.
Mon. One only joy, one blessing, my fond heart
Had fix'd its wishes on, and that is lost;
That sister, for whose safety my sad soul
Endur'd a thousand fears——
Tam. I well remember,
When, ere the battle join'd, I saw thee first,
With grief uncommon to a brother's love,
Thou told'st a moving tale of her misfortunes,
Such as bespoke my pity. Is there aught

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Thou canst demand from friendship? Ask, and have it.
Mon. First, oh! let me entreat your royal goodness;
Forgive the folly of a lover's caution,
That forg'd a tale of folly to deceive you.
Said I she was my sister?—Oh! 'tis false;
She holds a dearer interest in my soul,
Such as the closest ties of blood ne'er knew;
An interest, such as power, wealth, and honour
Can't buy, but love, love only, can bestow;
She was the mistress of my vows, my bride,
By contract mine: and long ere this the priest
Had tied the knot for ever, had not Bajazet—
Tam. Ha! Bajazet!—If yet his power withholds
The cause of all thy sorrows, all thy fears,
Even gratitude for once shall gain upon him,
Spite of his savage temper, to restore her.
This morn a soldier brought a captive beauty,
Sad, though she seem'd, yet of a form more rare,
By much the noblest spoil of all the field;
Even Scipio, or a victor yet more cold,
Might have forgot his virtue at her sight.
Struck with a pleasing wonder, I beheld her,
Till, by a slave that waited near her person,
I learn'd she was the captive sultan's wife:
Straight I forbid my eyes the dangerous joy
Of gazing long, and sent her to her lord.
Mon. There was Moneses lost. Too sure my heart
(From the first mention of her wond'rous charms)
Presag'd it could be only my Arpasia.
Tam. Arpasia! didst thou say?
Mon. Yes, my Arpasia.
Tam. Sure I mistake, or fain I would mistake thee;
I nam'd the queen of Bajazet, his wife.
Mon. His queen! his wife! He brings that holy title
To varnish o'er the monstrous wrongs he has done me.
Tam. Alas! I fear me, prince, thy griefs are just;
Thou art, indeed, unhappy——
Mon. Can you pity me,
And not redress? Oh, royal Tamerlane!
[*Kneeling.*
Thou succour of the wretched, reach thy mercy
To save me from the grave, and from oblivion;
Be gracious to the hopes that wait my youth.
Oh! let not sorrow blast me, lest I wither,
And fall in vile dishonour. Let thy justice
Restore me my Arpasia; give her back,
Back to my wishes, to my transports give her,
To my fond, restless, bleeding, dying bosom.
Oh! give her to me yet while I have life
To bless thee for the bounty. Oh, Arpasia!
Tam. Unhappy, royal youth, why dost thou ask
What honour must deny? Ha! is she not
His wife, whom he has wedded, whom enjoy'd?
And wouldst thou have my partial friendship break
That holy knot, which, tied once, all mankind
Agree to hold sacred and undissolvable!
The brutal violence would stain my justice,
And brand me with a tyrant's hated name
To late posterity.
Mon. Are then the vows,
The holy vows we register'd in heaven,
But common air?
Tam. Could thy fond love forget
The violation of a first enjoyment?——
But sorrow has disturb'd and hurt thy mind.
Mon. Perhaps it has, and like an idle madman,
That wanders with a train of hooting boys,
I do a thousand things to shame my reason.
Then let me fly, and bear my follies with me,
Far, far from the world's sight. Honour and fame,
Arms and the glorious war, shall be forgotten;
No noble sound of greatness, or ambition,
Shall wake my drowsy soul from her dead sleep,
Till the last trump do summon.
Tam. Let thy virtue
Stand up and answer to these warring passions,
That vex thy manly temper. From the moment
When first I saw thee, something wond'rous noble
Shone through thy form, and won my friendship for thee,
Without the tedious form of long acquaintance;
Nor will I lose thee poorly for a woman.
Come, droop no more, thou shalt with me pursue
True greatness, till we rise to immortality.
Thou shalt forget these lesser cares, Moneses;
Thou shalt, and help me to reform the world.
Mon. So the good genius warns his mortal charge
To fly the evil fate that still pursues him
Till it have wrought his ruin. Sacred Tamerlane,
Thy words are as the breath of angels to me.
But, oh! too deep the wounding grief is fix'd,
For any hand to heal.
Tam. This dull despair
Is the soul's laziness. Rouse to the combat,
And thou art sure to conquer. War shall restore thee;
The sound of arms shall wake thy martial ardour,
And cure this amorous sickness of thy soul,
Begun by sloth, and nurs'd by too much ease.
The idle god of love supinely dreams,
Amidst inglorious shades and purling streams;
In rosy fetters and fantastic chains,
He binds deluded maids and simple swains;
With soft enjoyments wooes them to forget
The hardy toils and labours of the great:
But if the warlike trumpet's loud alarms
To virtuous acts excite, and manly arms,
The coward boy avows his abject fear,
On silken wings sublime he cuts the air,
Scared at the noble noise and thunder of the war.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—Bajazet's *Tent.*

Enter Haly, *and the* Dervis.

Ha. To 'scape with life from an attempt like this,
Demands my wonder justly.
Der. True, it may;
But 'tis a principle of his new faith;
'Tis what his Christian favourites have inspir'd,
Who fondly make a merit of forgiveness,
And give their foes a second opportunity,
If the first blow should miss.—Failing to serve
The sultan to my wish, and e'en despairing
Of further means t' effect his liberty,
A lucky accident retriev'd my hopes.

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Ha. The prophet and our master will reward
Thy zeal in their behalf; but speak thy purpose.
Der. Just entering here I met the Tartar general,
Fierce Omar.
Ha. He commands, if I mistake not,
This quarter of the army, and our guards.
Der. The same. By his stern aspect, and the fires
That kindled in his eyes, I guess'd the tumult
Some wrong had rais'd in his tempestuous soul;
A friendship of old date had given me privilege
To ask of his concerns. In short, I learn'd,
That burning for the sultan's beauteous daughter,
He had begg'd her, as a captive of the war,
From Tamerlane; but meeting with denial
Of what he thought his services might claim,
Loudly he storms, and curses the Italian,
As cause of this affront. I join'd his rage,
And added to his injuries, the wrongs
Our prophet daily meets with from Axalla.
But see, he comes. Improve what I shall tell,
And all we wish is ours.
[*They seem to talk together aside.*

Enter OMAR.

Om. No——if I forgive it,
Dishonour blast my name! Was it for this
That I directed his first steps to greatness,
Taught him to climb, and made him what he is?
When our great Cam first bent his eyes towards him,
(Thou petty prince of Parthia) and, by me
Persuaded, rais'd him to his daughter's bed,
Call'd him his son, and successor of the empire;
Was it for this, that like a rock I stood
And stemm'd a torrent of our Tartar lords,
Who scorn'd his upstart sway? When Calibes,
In bold rebellion, drew e'en half the provinces
To own his cause, I, like his better angel,
Stood by his shaking throne, and fix'd it fast;
And am I now so lost to his remembrance,
That, when I ask a captive, he shall tell me,
She is Axalla's right, his Christian minion?
Der. Allow me, valiant Omar, to demand,
Since injur'd thus, why right you not yourself?
The prize you ask is in your power.
Om. It is,
And I will seize it in despite of Tamerlane,
And that Italian dog.
Ha. What need of force,
When every thing concurs to meet your wishes?
Our mighty master would not wish a son
Nobler than Omar. From a father's hand
Receive that daughter, which ungrateful Tamerlane
Has to your worth denied.
Om. Now, by my arms,
It will be great revenge. What will your sultan
Give to the man that shall restore his liberty,
His crown, and give him power to wreak his hatred
Upon his greatest foe?
Ha. All he can ask,
And far beyond his wish.— [*Trumpets.*
Om. These trumpets speak
The emperor's approach; he comes once more
To offer terms of peace. Retire within.
I will know farther—he grows deadly to me:
And curse me, prophet, if I not repay
His hate with retribution full as mortal.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—Draws, and discovers ARPASIA *lying on a Couch.*

SONG.

Arp. To thee, O gentle sleep, alone,
Is owing all our peace,
By thee our joys are heighten'd shown,
By thee our sorrows cease.
The nymph whose hand, by fraud or force,
Some tyrant has possess'd,
By thee, obtaining a divorce,
In her own choice is bless'd.
Oh, stay! Arpasia bids thee stay;
The sadly weeping fair
Conjures thee, not to lose in day
The object of her care
To grasp whose pleasing form she sought,
That motion chas'd her sleep;
Thus by ourselves are oft'nest wrought
The griefs for which we weep.

Oh, death! thou gentle end of human sorrows,
Still must my weary eye-lids vainly wake
In tedious expectation of thy peace!
Why stand thy thousand thousand doors still open,
To take the wretched in, if stern religion
Guard every passage, and forbid my entrance?
Lucrece could bleed, and Portia swallow fire,
When urged with griefs beyond a mortal sufferance; [sia,
But here it must not be. Think then, Arpa-
Think on the sacred dictates of thy faith,
And let that arm thy virtue to perform
What Cato's daughter durst not!—Live, Arpasia,
And dare to be unhappy.

Enter TAMERLANE.

Tam. When fortune smiles upon the soldier's arms,
And adds even beauty to adorn his conquest,
Yet she ordains the fair should know no fears,
No sorrows to pollute their lovely eyes,
But should be used even nobly, as herself,
The queen and goddess of the warrior's vows.
Such welcome as a camp can give, fair sultaness,
We hope you have received; it shall be larger,
And better as it may.
Arp. Since I have borne
That miserable mark of fatal greatness,
I have forgot all difference of conditions;
Sceptres and fetters are grown equal to me,
And the best change my fate can bring is death.
Tam. When sorrow dwells in such an angel form, [ers;
Well may we guess that those above are mourn-
Virtue is wrong'd, and bleeding innocence
Suffers some wonderous violation here,
To make the saints look sad. Oh! teach my power,
To cure those ills which you unjustly suffer,
Lest Heaven should wrest it from my idle hand,
If I look on, and see you weep in vain.
Arp. Not that my soul disdains the generous aid
Thy royal goodness proffers: but, oh, emperor!

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It is not in my fate to be made happy;
Nor will I listen to the cozener, Hope,
But stand resolved to bear the beating storm
That roars around me; safe in this alone,
That I am not immortal.—Though 'tis hard,
Tis wonderous hard, when I remember thee,
(Dear native Greece!) and you, ye weeping maids,
That were companions of my virgin youth!
My noble parents! Oh, the grief of heart,
The pangs, that, for unhappy me, bring down
Their reverend ages to the grave with sorrow.
And yet there is a wo surpassing all:
Ye saints and angels, give me of your constancy,
If you expect I shall endure it long.

Tam. Why is my pity all that I can give
To tears like yours? And yet I fear 'tis all;
Nor dare I ask, what mighty loss you mourn,
Lest honour should forbid to give it back.

Arp. No, Tamerlane, nor did I mean thou shouldst:
But know, (though to the weakness of my sex
I yield these tears,) my soul is more than man.
Think I am born a Greek, nor doubt my virtue;
A Greek, from whose famed ancestors of old
Rome drew the patterns of her boasted heroes.
They must be mighty evils that can vanquish
A Spartan courage, and a Christian faith.

Enter BAJAZET.

Baj. To know no thought of rest! to have the mind
Still ministering fresh plagues, as in a circle,
Where one dishonour treads upon another;
What know the fiends beyond it?—Ha! by hell, [*Seeing* ARP. *and* TAM.
There wanted only this to make me mad.
Comes he to triumph here; to rob my love,
And violate the last retreat of happiness?

Tam. But that I read upon that frowning brow,
That war yet lives and rages in thy breast;
Once more (in pity to the suffering world)
I meant to offer peace.——

Baj. And mean'st thou too
To treat it with our empress: and to barter
The spoils which fortune gave thee for her favours?

Arp. What would the tyrant!— [*Aside.*

Baj. Seek'st thou thus our friendship?
Is this the royal usage thou didst boast?

Tam. The boiling passion that disturbs thy soul,
Spreads clouds around, and makes thy purpose dark—
Unriddle what thy mystic fury aims at.

Baj. Is it a riddle? Read it there explain'd:
There, in my shame. Now judge me thou, O prophet,
And equal Heaven, if this demand not rage!
The peasant-hind, begot and born to slavery,
Yet dares assert a husband's sacred right,
And guards his homely couch from violation:
And shall a monarch tamely bear the wrong
Without complaining?

Tam. If I could have wrong'd thee,
If conscious virtue, and all-judging Heaven,
Stood not between to bar ungovern'd appetite,
What hinder'd, but in spite of thee, my captive,
I might have used a victor's boundless power,
And sated every wish my soul could form!
But to secure thy fears, know, Bajazet,
This is among the things I dare not do.

Baj. By hell, 'tis false! else wherefore art thou present?
What cam'st thou for, but to undo my honour?
I found thee holding amorous parley with her,
Gazing and glutting on her wanton eyes,
And bargaining for pleasure yet to come:
My life, I know, is the devoted price—
But take it, I am weary of the pain.

Tam. Yet ere thou rashly urge my rage too far,
I warn thee to take heed: I am a man,
And have the frailties common to man's nature;
The fiery seeds of wrath are in my temper,
And may be blown up to so fierce a blaze,
As wisdom cannot rule. Know, thou hast touch'd me
Even in the nicest, tenderest part, my honour;
My honour! which, like power, disdains being questioned;
Thy breath has blasted my fair virtue's fame,
And mark'd me for a villain, and a tyrant.

Arp. And stand I here an idle looker-on,
To see my innocence murder'd and mangled
By barbarous hands, nor can revenge the wrong? [*To* BAJAZET.
Art thou a man, and dar'st thou use me thus?
Hast thou not torn me from my native country,
From the dear arms of my lamenting friends,
From my soul's peace, and from my injur'd love?
Hast thou not ruin'd, blotted me for ever,
And driven me to the brink of black despair?
And is it in thy malice yet to add
A wound more deep, to sully my white name,
My virtue?——

Baj. Yes, thou hast thy sex's virtues,
Their affectation, pride, ill-nature, noise,
Proneness to change, even from the joy that pleas'd 'em:
So gracious is your idol, dear variety,
That for another love you would forego
An angel's form, to mingle with the devil's;
Through every state and rank of men you wander,
Till even your large experience takes in all
The different nations of the peopled earth.

Arp. Why sought'st thou not from thy own impious tribe
A wife like one of these? For such thy race
(If human nature brings forth such) affords
Greece, for chaste virgins fam'd, and pious matrons,
Teems not with monsters like your Turkish wives,
Whom guardian eunuchs, haggard and deform'd,
Whom walls and bars make honest by constraint.
Know, I detest, like hell, the crime thou mention'st:
Not that I fear, or reverence thee, thou tyrant;
But that my soul, conscious of whence it sprung,
Sits unpolluted in its sacred temple,
And scorns to mingle with a thought so mean.

Tam. Oh, pity! that a greatness so divine
Should meet a fate so wretched, so unequal.—
Thou, blind and wilful to the good that courts thee, [*To* BAJAZET.
With open-handed bounty Heaven pursues thee,
And bids thee (undeserving as thou art,
And monstrous in thy crimes) be happy yet
Whilst thou, in fury, dost avert the blessing,
And art an evil genius to thyself.

Baj. No—Thou! thou art my greatest curse on earth!
Thou, who hast robb'd me of my crown and glory,
And now pursu'st me to the verge of life,
To spoil me of my honour. Thou! thou hypocrite!
That wear'st a pageant outside show of virtue,

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To cover the hot thoughts that glow within!
Thou rank adulterer!
Tam. Oh, that thou wert [less
The lord of all those thousands that lie breath-
On yonder field of blood, that I again
Might hunt thee, in the face of death and danger, [thee,
Through the tumultuous battle, and there force
Vanquish'd and sinking underneath my arm,
To own thou hast traduc'd me like a villain.
Baj. Ha! does it gall thee, Tartar? By revenge,
It joys me much to find thou feel'st my fury.
Yes, I will echo to thee, thou adulterer!
Thou dost profane the name of king and soldier,
And, like a ruffian bravo, cam'st with force
To violate the holy marriage-bed.
Tam. Wert thou not shelter'd by thy abject state,
The captive of my sword, by my just anger,
My breath, like thunder, should confound thy pride,
And doom thee dead, this instant with a word.
Baj. 'Tis false! my fate's above thee, and thou dar'st not.
Tam. Ha! dare not! Thou hast rais'd my ponderous rage,
And now it falls to crush thee at a blow.
A guard there!—Seize and drag him to his fate!
[*Enter a guard they seize* BAJAZET.
Tyrant, I'll do a double justice on thee;
At once revenge myself and all mankind.
Baj. Well dost thou, ere thy violence and lust
Invade my bed, thus to begin with murder:
Drown all thy fears in blood, and sin securely.
Tam. Away!
Arp. [*Kneeling.*] Oh, stay! I charge thee, by renown;
By that bright glory thy great soul pursues,
Call back the doom of death!
Tam. Fair, injured excellence,
Why dost thou kneel, and waste such precious prayers,
As might even bribe the saints to partial justice,
For one to goodness lost; who first undid thee,
Who still pursues and aggravates the wrong?
Baj. By Alha! no—I will not wear a life
Bought with such vile dishonour. Death shall free me
At once from infamy, and thee, thou traitress!
Arp. No matter, though the whistling winds grow loud,
And the rude tempest roars, 'tis idle rage:
Oh! mark it not; but let thy steady virtue
Be constant to its temper. Save his life,
And save Arpasia from the sport of talkers.
Think, how the busy, meddling world will toss
Thy mighty name about, in scurril mirth;
Shall brand thy vengeance, as a foul design,
And make such monstrous legends of our lives,
As late posterity shall blush in reading.
Tam. Oh, matchless virtue! Yes, I will obey;
Though laggard in the race, admiring yet,
I will pursue the shining path thou tread'st.
Sultan, be safe! Reason resumes her empire,
[*The guards release* BAJAZET.
And I am cool again.—Here break we off,
Lest farther speech should minister new rage.
Wisely from dangerous passions I retreat,
To keep a conquest which was hard to get;
And, oh! 'tis time I should for flight prepare,
A war more fatal seems to threaten there,
And all my rebel-blood assists the fair:
One moment more, and I too late shall find,
That love's the strongest power that lords it o'er the mind.
[*Exit* TAM. *followed by the guards.*
Baj. To what new shame, what plague am I reserv'd!
Why did my stars refuse me to die warm,
While yet my regal state stood unimpeach'd,
Nor knew the curse of having one above me?
Then too (although by force I grasp'd the joy)
My love was safe, nor felt the rack of doubt.
Why hast thou forced this nauseous life upon
Is it to triumph o'er me?—But I will, [me?
I will be free, I will forget thee all;
The bitter and the sweet, the joy and pain
Death shall expunge at once, and ease my soul.
Prophet, take notice, I disclaim thy Paradise,
Thy fragrant bowers, and everlasting shades;
Thou hast placed woman there, and all thy joys are tainted. [*Exit* BAJAZET.
Arp. A little longer yet, be strong, my heart;
A little longer let the busy spirits
Keep on their cheerful round.—It will not be!
Love, sorrow, and the sting of vile reproach,
Succeeding one another in their course,
Like drops of eating water on the marble,
At length have worn my boasted courage down:
I will indulge the woman in my soul,
And give a loose to tears and to impatience;
Death is at last my due, and I will have it.—
And see, the poor Moneses comes, to take
One sad adieu, and then we part for ever.

Enter MONESES.

Mon. Already am I onward of my way.
Thy tuneful voice comes like a hollow sound
At distance to my ears. My eyes grow heavy,
And all the glorious lights of Heaven look dim;
'Tis the last office they shall ever do me,
To view thee once, and then to close and die.
Arp. Alas! how happy have we been, Moneses!
Ye gentle days, that once were ours, what joys
Did every cheerful morning bring along!
No fears, no jealousies, no angry parents,
That for unequal births, or fortunes frown'd!
But love, that kindly join'd our hearts, to bless
Made us a blessing too to all besides. [us,
Mon. Oh, cast not thy remembrance back, Arpasia!
'Tis grief unutterable, 'tis distraction!
But let this last of hours be peaceful sorrow!
Here let me kneel, and pay my latest vows.
Be witness, all ye saints, thou Heaven and Nature,
Be witness of my truth, for you have known it!
Be witness, that I never knew a pleasure,
In all the world could offer, like Arpasia!
Be witness, that I liv'd but in Arpasia!
And, oh, be witness, that her loss has kill'd me!
Arp. While thou art speaking, life begins to fail,
And every tender accent chills like death.
Oh! let me haste then, yet, ere day declines
And the long night prevail, once more to tell thee
What, and how dear, Moneses has been to me.
What has he not been?—All the names of love,
Brothers, or fathers, husbands, all are poor:
Moneses is myself; in my fond heart,
Even in my vital blood, he lives and reigns:

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The last dear object of my parting soul
Will be Moneses; the last breath that lingers
Within my panting breast, shall sigh Moneses.
Mon. It is enough! Now to thy rest, my soul,
The world and thou have made an end at once.
Arp. Fain would I still detain thee, hold thee still:
Nor honour can forbid, that we together
Should share the poor few minutes that remain.
I swear, methinks this sad society [shades
Has somewhat pleasing in it.—Death's dark
Seem, as we journey on, to lose their horror;
At near approach, the monsters form'd by fear
Are vanish'd all, and leave the prospect clear;
Amidst the gloomy vale, a pleasing scene,
With flowers adorn'd, and never-fading green,
Inviting stands, to take the wretched in;
No wars, no wrongs, no tyrants, no despair,
Disturb the quiet of a place so fair,
But injur'd lovers finds Elysium there.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter BAJAZET, OMAR, HALY, *and the* DERVIS.

Baj. Now, by the glorious tomb that shrines our prophet,
By Mecca's sacred temple, here I swear,
Our daughter is thy bride! and to that gift
Such wealth, such power, such honours will I add,
That monarchs shall with envy view thy state,
And own thou art a demi-god to them.
Thou hast given me what I wish'd, power of revenge,
And when a king rewards, 'tis ample retribution.
Om. Twelve Tartar lords, each potent in his tribe,
Have sworn to own my cause, and draw their thousands, [side:
To-morrow, from the ungrateful Parthian's
The day declining, seems to yield to night:
Ere little more than half her course be ended,
In an auspicious hour prepare for flight;
The leaders of the troops through which we pass,
Raised by my power, devoted to my service,
Shall make our passage secret and secure.
Der. Already, mighty sultan, art thou safe,
Since, by yon passing torches' light, I guess,
To his pavilion Tamerlane retires,
Attended by a train of waiting courtiers.
All who remain within these tents are thine,
And hail thee as their lord.——
Ha! the Italian prince,
With sad Moneses, are not yet gone forth.
Baj. Ha! with our queen and daughter!
Om. They are ours:
I mark'd the slaves, who waited on Axalla;
They, when the emperor pass'd out, press'd on,
And mingled with the crowd, nor miss'd their lord:
He is your prisoner, Sir: I go this moment,
To seize, and bring him to receive his doom.
[*Exit.*
Baj. Haste, Haly, follow, and secure the Greek:
Him too I wish to keep within my power.
[*Exit* HALY.
Der. If my dread lord permit his slave to speak,
I would advise to spare Axalla's life,
Till we are safe beyond the Parthian's power:
Him, as our pledge of safety, may we hold:
And could you gain him to assist your flight,
It might import you much.
Baj. Thou counsell'st well;
And though I hate him (for he is a Christian,
And to my mortal enemy devoted,)
Yet, to secure my liberty and vengeance,
I wish he now were ours.
Der. And see, they come!
Fortune repents: again she courts your side,
And, with this first fair offering of success,
She wooes you to forget her crime of yesterday.

Enter OMAR, *with* AXALLA *Prisoner*, SELIMA *following weeping.*

Ax. I will not call thee villain; 'tis a name
Too holy for thy crime: to break thy faith,
And turn a rebel to so good a master,
Is an ingratitude unmatch'd on earth.
The first revolting angel's pride could only
Do more than thou hast done. Thou copiest well,
And keep'st the black original in view.
Om. Do rage, and vainly call upon thy master [thee,
To save his minion. My revenge has caught
And I will make thee curse that fond presumption
That set thee on to rival me in aught.
Baj. Christian, I hold thy fate at my disposal:
One only way remains to mercy open;
Be partner of my flight and my revenge,
And thou art safe. Thy other choice is death.
Om. What means the sultan?
Der. I conjure you, hold——
Your rival is devoted to destruction;
[*Aside to* OMAR.
Nor would the sultan now defer his fate,
But for our common safety.—Listen further.
[*Whispers.*
Ax. Then briefly thus. Death is the choice I make; [friend
Since, next to Heaven, my master and my
Has interest in my life, and still shall claim it.
Baj. Then take thy wish—Call in our mutes!
Sel. My father,
If yet you have not sworn to cast me off,
And turn me out to wander in misfortune;
If yet my voice be gracious in your ears;
If yet my duty and my love offend not,
Oh, call your sentence back, and save Axalla!
Baj. Rise, Selima! The slave deserves to die,
Who durst, with sullen pride, refuse my mercy:
Yet, for thy sake, once more I offer life.
Sel. Some angel whisper to my anxious soul,
What I shall do to save him.—Oh, Axalla!
Is it so easy to thee to forsake me? [ence,
Canst thou resolve, with all this cold indiffer-
Never to see me more? To leave me here
The miserable mourner of thy fate,
Condemn'd to waste my widow'd virgin youth,
My tedious days and nights, in lonely weeping,
And never know the voice of comfort more?
Ax. Search not too deep the sorrows of my breast:
Thou say'st I am indifferent and cold.
Oh! is it possible my eyes should tell
So little of the fighting storm within?
Oh! turn thee from me, save me from thy beauties!
Falsehood and ruin all look lovely there,
Oh! let my labouring soul, yet struggle through——
I will—I would resolve to die, and leave thee.
Baj. Then let him die!—He trifles with my favour
I have too long attended his resolves.
Sel. Oh! stay a minute, yet a minute longer;
[*To* BAJAZET.

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A minute is a little space in life,
There is a kind consenting in his eyes,
And I shall win him to your royal will.
Oh, my Axalla! seem but to consent.—
[*To* Ax. *aside.*
Unkind and cruel, will you then do nothing?
I find I am not worth thy least of cares.
Ax. Oh! labour not to hang dishonour on
I could bear sickness, pain, and poverty, [me!
Those mortal evils worse than death, for thee,
But this—It has the force of fate against us,
And cannot be.
Sel. See, see, Sir, he relents, [*To* BAJAZET.
Already he inclines to own your cause.
A little longer, and he is all yours.
Baj. Then mark how far a father's fondness yields.
'Till midnight I defer the death he merits,
And give him up 'till then to thy persuasion.
If by that time he meets my will, he lives;
If not, thyself shall own he dies with justice.
Ax. 'Tis but to lengthen life upon the rack.
I am resolved already.
Sel. Oh! be still,
Nor rashly urge a ruin on us both;
'Tis but a moment more I have to save thee.
Be kind, auspicious Alha, to my prayer;
More for my love, than for myself, I fear;
Neglect mankind awhile, and make him all thy care! [*Exeunt* AXALLA *and* SELIMA.
Baj. Moneses,—is that dog secur'd?
Om. He is.
Baj. 'Tis well—My soul perceives returning greatness,
As nature feels the spring. Lightly she bounds,
And shakes dishonour, like a burden, from her;
Once more imperial, awful, and herself.
So, when of old, Jove from the Titans fled,
Ammon's rude front his radiant face belied,
And all the majesty of Heaven lay hid.
At length, by fate, to power divine restor'd,
His thunder taught the world to know its Lord,
The god grew terrible again, and was again ador'd. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—BAJAZET'S *Tent.*

ARPASIA.

Sure 'tis a horror, more than darkness brings,
That sits upon the night! Fate is abroad;
Some ruling fiend hangs in the dusky air,
And scatters ruin, death, and wild distraction,
O'er all the wretched race of man below.
Not long ago, a troop of ghastly slaves
Rush'd in, and forc'd Moneses from my sight;
Death hung so heavy on his drooping spirits,
That scarcely could he say—Farewell—for ever! [pers,
And yet, methinks, some gentle spirit whis-
Thy peace draws near, Arpasia, sigh no more!
And see, the king of terrors is at hand;
His minister appears.

Enter BAJAZET *and* HALY.

Baj. [*Aside to* HALY.] The rest I leave
To thy despatch. For, oh! my faithful Haly,
Another care has taken up thy master.
Spite of the high-wrought tempest in my soul,
Spite of the pangs which jealousy has cost me,
This haughty woman reigns within my breast;
In vain I strive to put her from my thoughts,
To drive her out with empire and revenge,
Still she comes back, like a retiring tide,
That ebbs a while, but straight returns again,
And swells above the beach.
Ha. Why wears my lord
An anxious thought, for what his power commands?
When, in a happy hour, you shall, ere long,
Have borne the empress from amidst your foes,
She must be yours, be only and all yours.
Baj. On that depends my fear. Yes, I must have her;
I own, I will not, cannot go without her.
But such is the condition of our flight, [all
That should she not consent, 'twould hazard
To bear her hence by force. Thus I resolve then, [her.
By threats and prayers, by every way, to move
If all prevail not, force is left at last;
And I will set life, empire, on the venture,
To keep her mine.—Be near to wait my will.
[*Exit* HALY.
When last we parted, 'twas on angry terms;
Let the remembrance die, or kindly think
That jealous rage is but a hasty flame,
That blazes out, when love too fiercely burns.
Arp. For thee to wrong me, and for me to suffer,
Is the hard lesson that my soul has learn'd,
And now I stand prepar'd for all to come:
Nor is it worth my leisure to distinguish
If love or jealousy commit the violence;
Each have alike been fatal to my peace,
Confirming me a wretch, and thee a tyrant.
Baj. Still to deform thy gentle brow with frowns,
And still to be perverse, it is a manner
Abhorrent from the softness of thy sex:
Women, like summer storms, a while are cloudy,
Burst out in thunder, and impetuous showers;
But straight, the sun of beauty dawns abroad,
And all the fair horizon is serene.
Arp. Then, to retrieve the honour of my sex,
Here I disclaim that changing and inconstancy:
To thee I will be ever as I am.
Baj. Thou say'st I am a tyrant; think so still,
And let it warn thy prudence to lay hold
On the good hour of peace, that courts thee now.
Souls, form'd like mine, brook being scorn'd but ill.
Be well advis'd, and profit by my patience;
It is a short-liv'd virtue.
Arp. Turn thy eyes
Back on the story of my woes, barbarian!
Thou that hast violated all respects
Due to my sex, and honour of my birth.
Thou brutal ravisher! that hast undone me,
Ruin'd my love! Can I have peace with thee?
Impossible! First Heaven and hell shall join;
They only differ more.
Baj. I see, 'tis vain [ments.
To court thy stubborn temper with endear-
Resolve, this moment, to return my love,
And be the willing partner of my flight,
Or by the prophet's holy law, thou diest.
Arp. And dost thou hope to fright me with the phantom,
Death? 'Tis the greatest mercy thou canst give;
So frequent are the murders of thy reign,
One day scarce passing by unmark'd with blood,
That children, by long use, have learn'd to scorn it.
Know, I disdain to aid thy treacherous purpose.
And shouldst thou dare to force me, with my cries
I will call Heaven and earth to my assistance.

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Baj. Confusion! dost thou brave me? But my wrath
Shall find a passage to thy swelling heart,
And rack thee worse than all the pains of death.
That Grecian dog, the minion of thy wishes,
Shall be dragg'd forth, and butcher'd in thy sight; [rible;
Thou shalt behold him when his pangs are ter-
Then, when he stares, and gasps, and struggles strongly,
Even in the bitterest agony of dying;
'Till thou shalt rend thy hair, tear out thy eyes,
And curse thy pride; while I applaud my vengeance.
Arp. Oh, fatal image! All my powers give
And resolution sickens at the thought; [way,
A flood of passion rises in my breast,
And labours fiercely upward to my eyes.
Come, all ye great examples of my sex,
Chaste virgins, tender wives, and pious matrons;
Ye holy martyrs, who, with wonderous faith
And constancy unshaken, have sustain'd
The rage of cruel men, and fiery persecution,
Come to my aid, and teach me to defy
The malice of this fiend! I feel, I feel
Your sacred spirit arm me to resistance.
Yes, tyrant, I will stand this shock of fate;
Will live to triumph o'er thee, for a moment,
Then die well pleased, and follow my Moneses.
Baj. Thou talk'st it well. But talking is thy privilege;
'Tis all the boasted courage of thy sex;
Though, for thy soul, thou dar'st not meet the danger.
Arp. By all my hopes of happiness, I dare;
My soul is come within her ken of Heaven;
Charm'd with the joys and beauties of that place,
Her thoughts and all her cares she fixes there,
And 'tis in vain for thee to rage below:
Thus stars shine bright, and keep their place above,
Though ruffling winds deform this lower world.
Baj. This moment is the trial.
Arp. Let it come!
This moment then shall show I am a Greek,
And speak my country's courage in my suffering.
Baj. Here, mercy, I disclaim thee! Mark me, traitress!
My love prepares a victim to thy pride,
And when it greets thee next, 'twill be in blood. [*Exit* BAJAZET.
Arp. My heart beats higher, and my nimble spirits [round.
Ride swiftly through their purple channels
'Tis the last blaze of life. Nature revives,
Like a dim winking lamp, that flashes brightly
With parting light, and straight is dark for ever.
And see, my last of sorrows is at hand;
Death and Moneses come together to me;
As if my stars, that had so long been cruel,
Grew kind at last, and gave me all I wish.

Enter MONESES, *guarded by some* MUTES; *others attending with a cup of poison, and a bow-string.*

Mon. I charge ye, O ye ministers of fate!
Be swift to execute your master's will;
Bear me to my Arpasia; let me tell her,
The tyrant is grown kind. He bids me go,
And die beneath her feet. A joy shoots through [pet
My drooping breast; as often when the trum-
Has call'd my youthful ardour forth to battle,
High in my hopes, and ravish'd with the sound,
I have rush'd eager on amidst the foremost,
To purchase victory, or glorious death.
Arp. If it be happiness, alas! to die,
To lie forgotten in the silent grave,
To love and glory lost, and from among
The great Creator's works expung'd and blotted,
Then, very shortly, shall we both be happy.
Mon. There is no room for doubt; 'tis certain bliss:
The tyrant's cruel violence, thy loss,
Already seem more light; nor has my soul
One unrepented guilt upon remembrance,
To make me dread the justice of hereafter;
But standing now on the last verge of life,
Boldly I view the vast abyss, eternity, [me.
Eager to plunge, and leave my woes behind
Arp. By all the truth of our past loves, I vow,
To die appears a very nothing to me.
But, oh, Moneses! should I not allow
Somewhat to love, and to my sex's tenderness?
This very now I could put off my being
Without a groan; but to behold thee die!—
Nature shrinks in me at the dreadful thought,
Nor can my constancy sustain this blow.
Mon. Since thou art arm'd for all things after death,
Why should the pomp and preparation of it
Be frightful to thy eyes? There's not a pain
Which age or sickness brings, the least disorder
That vexes any part of this fine frame,
But's full as grievous. All that the mind feels
Is much, much more.—And see, I go to prove it.—

Enter a MUTE; *he makes signs to the rest, who proffer a bow-string to* MONESES.

Arp. Think, ere we part!
Mon. Of what?
Arp. Of something soft,
Tender and kind, of something wonderous sad
Oh, my full soul!
Mon. My tongue is at a loss; [left,
Thoughts crowd so fast, thy name is all I've
My kindest, truest, dearest, best Arpasia!
[*The* MUTES *struggle with him.*
Arp. I have a thousand, thousand things to utter, [lains!
A thousand more to hear yet. Barbarous vil-
Give me a minute. Speak to me, Moneses!
Mon. Speak to thee? 'Tis the business of my life,
'Tis all the use I have for vital air.
Stand off, ye slaves! To tell thee that my heart [ment,
Is full of thee; that, even at this dread mo-
My fond eyes gaze with joy and rapture on thee!
Angels, and light itself, are not so fair.

Enter BAJAZET, HALY, *and Attendants.*

Baj. Ha! wherefore lives this dog? Be quick, ye slaves!
And rid me of my pain.
Mon. For only death,
And the last night, can shut out my Arpasia.
[*The* MUTES *strangle* MONESES.
Arp. Oh, dismal! 'tis not to be borne! Ye moralists!
Ye talkers! what are all your precepts now?
Patience! Distraction! Blast the tyrant, blast him,

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Avenging lightnings! Snatch him hence, ye fiends!
Love! Death! Moneses! Nature can no more;
Ruin is on her, and she sinks at once.
[*She sinks down.*

Baj. Help, Haly! raise her up, and bear her out.

Ha. Alas! she faints.

Arp. No, tyrant, 'tis in vain.
Oh! I am now beyond thy cruel power;
The peaceful slumber of the grave is on me:
Even all the tedious day of life I've wander'd,
Bewilder'd with misfortunes:
At length 'tis night, and I have reach'd my home.
Forgetting all the toils and troubles past,
Weary I'll lay me down, and sleep, till—Oh!
[*She dies.*

Baj. Fly, ye slaves!
And fetch me cordials. No, she shall not die!
Spite of her sullen pride, I'll hold in life,
And force her to be bless'd against her will.

Ha. Already 'tis beyond the power of art;
For, see, a deadly cold has froze the blood,
The pliant limbs grow stiff, and lose their use,
And all the animating fire is quench'd:
Even beauty too is dead; an ashy pale
Grows o'er the roses; the red lips have lost
Their fragrant hue, for want of that sweet breath,
That bless'd 'em with its odours as it pass'd.

Baj. Can it be possible? Can rage and grief,
Can love and indignation be so fierce,
So mortal in a woman's heart? Confusion!
Is she escap'd then? What is royalty,
If those that are my slaves, and should live for me,
Can die, and bid defiance to my power?

Enter the Dervis.

Der. The valiant Omar sends, to tell thy greatness
The hour of flight is come, and urges haste;
Since he descries, near Tamerlane's pavilion,
Bright troops of crowding torches, who from thence,
On either hand, stretch far into the night,
And seem to form a shining front of battle.
Behold, even from this place thou may'st discern them. [*Looking out.*

Baj. By Alha, yes! they cast a day around 'em,
And the plain seems thick-set with stars, as Heaven.
Ha! or my eyes are false, they move this way;
'Tis certain so. Fly, Haly, to our daughter.
[*Exit* Haly.
Let some secure the Christian prince Axalla;
We will be gone this minute.

Enter Omar.

Om. Lost! undone!

Baj. What mean'st thou?

Om. All our hopes of flight are lost.
Mirvan and Zama, with the Parthian horse,
Inclose us round, they hold us in a toil.

Baj. Ha! whence this unexpected curse of chance.

Om. Too late I learn'd, that early in the night
A slave was suffer'd, by the princess' orders,
To pass the guard. I clove the villain down,
Who yielded to his flight: but that's poor vengeance!
That fugitive has raised the camp upon us,
And unperceiv'd, by favour of the night,
In silence they have march'd to intercept us.

Baj. My daughter! Oh, the traitress!

Der. Yet we have
Axalla in our power, and angry Tamerlane
Will buy his favourite's life, on any terms.

Om. With those few friends I have, I for a while
Can face their force: if they refuse us peace,
Revenge shall sweeten ruin, and 'twill joy me,
To drag my foe down with me, in my fall.
[*Exit* Omar.

Enter Haly, *with* Selima *weeping.*

Baj. See where she comes, with well dissembled innocence;
With truth and faith so lovely in her face,
As if she durst even disavow the falsehood.—
Hop'st thou to make amends with trifling tears,
For my lost crown, and disappointed vengeance!
Ungrateful Selima! thy father's curse!
Bring forth the minion of her foolish heart!
He dies this moment.——

Ha. Would I could not speak
The crime of fatal love! The slave who fled,
By whom we are undone, was that Axalla.

Baj. Ha! say'st thou?

Ha. Hid beneath that vile appearance,
The princess found a means for his escape.

Sel. I am undone! even nature has disclaim'd me!
My father! have I lost you all? My father!

Baj. Talk'st thou of nature, who hast broke her bands!
Thou art my bane, thou witch! thou infant parricide!
But I will study to be strangely cruel;
I will forget the folly of my fondness;
Drive all the father from my breast; now snatch thee,
Tear thee to pieces, drink thy treacherous blood,
And make thee answer all my great revenge!
Now, now, thou traitress! [*Offers to kill her.*

Sel. Plunge the poignard deep!
[*She embraces him.*
The life my father gave shall hear his summons,
And issue at the wound——Start not to feel
My heart's warm blood gush out upon your hands;
Since from your spring I drew the purple stream,
And I must pay it back, if you demand it.

Baj. Hence, from my thoughts, thou soft relenting weakness. [me!
Hast thou not given me up a prey? betray'd

Sel. Oh, not for worlds! not even for all the joys,
Love, or the prophet's paradise can give!
Amidst the fears and sorrows of my soul,
Amidst the thousand pains of anxious tenderness,
I made the gentle, kind Axalla swear
Your life, your crown, and honour should be safe.

Baj. Away! my soul disdains the vile dependence!
No, let me rather die, die like a king!
Shall I fall down at the proud Tartar's foot,
And say, Have mercy on me? Hark they come!
[*Shout.*
Disgrace will overtake my lingering hand;

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Die then! Thy father's shame and thine die with thee! [*Offers to kill her.*
Sel. For Heaven, for pity's sake!
Baj. No more, thou trifler!
[*She catches hold of his arm.*
Ha! dar'st thou bar my will? Tear off her hold!
Sel. What, not for life? Should I not plead for life?
When nature teaches even the brute creation,
To hold fast that, her best, her noblest gift.
Look on my eyes which you so oft have kiss'd,
And swore they were your best-lov'd queen's, my mother's;
Behold 'em now streaming for mercy, mercy!
Look on me, and deny me if you can!
'Tis but for life I beg. Is that a boon
So hard for me t' obtain, or you to grant?
Oh, spare me! Spare your Selima, father!
Baj. A lazy sloth hangs on my resolution:
It is my Selima!—Ha! What, my child!
And can I murder her?—Dreadful imagination!
Again they come! I leave her to my foes!
[*Shouts.*
And shall they triumph o'er the race of Bajazet!
Die, Selima! Is that a father's voice!
Rouse, rouse, my fury! Yes, she dies the victim
To my lost hopes. Out, out, thou foolish nature!
Seize her, ye slaves! and strangle her this moment! [*To the* MUTES.
Sel. Oh, let me die by you! Behold my breast!
I will not shrink! Oh, save me but from these!
Baj. Despatch! [*The* MUTES *seize her.*
Sel. But for a moment, while I pray
That Heaven may guard my royal father.
Baj. Dogs!
Sel. That you may only bless me, ere I die.
[*Shouts.*
Baj. Ye tedious villains, then the work is mine.
[*As* BAJAZET *runs at* SELIMA *with his sword, enter* TAMERLANE, AXALLA, *&c.* AXALLA *gets between* BAJAZET *and* SELIMA, *whilst* TAMERLANE *and the rest drive* BAJAZET *and the* MUTES *off the stage.*
Ax. And am I come to save thee? Oh, my joy!
Be this the whitest hour of all my life:
This one success is more than all my wars,
The noblest, dearest glory of my sword.
Sel. Alas, Axalla! Death has been around me!
My coward soul still trembles at the fright,
And seems but half secure, even in thy arms.
Ax. Retire, my fair, and let me guard thee forth:
Blood and tumultuous slaughter are about us,
And danger, in her ugliest forms, is here;
Nor will the pleasure of my heart be full,
'Till all my fears are ended in thy safety.
[*Exeunt* AXALLA *and* SELIMA.

Enter TAMERLANE, *the Prince of* TANAIS, ZAMA, MIRVAN, *and Soldiers: with* BAJAZET, OMAR, *and the* DERVIS, *Prisoners.*

Tam. Mercy at length gives up her peaceful sceptre,
And justice sternly takes her turn to govern;
'Tis a rank world, and asks her keenest sword,
To cut up villany of monstrous growth.
Zama, take care that with the earliest dawn,
Those traitors meet the fate their treason merits!
[*Pointing to* OMAR *and the* DERVIS.
For thee, thou tyrant! [*To* BAJ.] whose oppressive violence
Has ruin'd those thou shouldst protect at home;
Whose wars, whose slaughters, whose assassination,
(That basest thirst of blood! that sin of cowards!)
Whose faith, so often given, and always violated,
Have been th' offence of Heaven, and plague of earth,
What punishment is equal to thy crimes?
The doom thy rage design'd for me, be thine:
Clos'd in a cage, like some destructive beast,
I'll have thee borne about, in public view,
A great example of that righteous vengeance
That waits on cruelty, and pride like thine.
Baj. It is beneath me to decline my fate,
I stand prepar'd to meet thy utmost hate:
Yet think not, I will long thy triumph see:
None want the means, when the soul dares be free.
I'll curse thee with my last, my parting breath,
And keep the courage of my life, in death;
Then boldly venture on that world unknown:
It cannot use me worse than this has done.
[*Exit* BAJAZET, *guarded.*
Tam. Behold the vain effects of earth-born pride,
That scorn'd Heaven's laws, and all its power defied,
That could the hand, which form'd it first, forget,
And fondly say, I made myself be great!
But justly those above assert their sway,
And teach even kings what homage they should pay,
Who then rule best, when mindful to obey.
[*Exeunt omnes.*

EPILOGUE.

Too well we saw what must have been our fate,
When harmony with beauty join'd, of late,
Threaten'd the ruins of our sinking state;
Till you, from whom our being we receive,
In pity bade your own creation live;
With moving sounds you kindly drew the fair,
And fix'd, once more, that shining circle here:
The lyre you bring is half Apollo's praise;
Be ours the task to win and wear his bays.
Thin houses were before so frequent to us,
We wanted not a project to undo us;
We seldom saw your honours, but by chance,
As some folks meet their friends of Spain and France:
'Twas verse decay'd, or politics improv'd,
That had estrang'd you thus from what you lov'd.
Time was, when busy faces were a jest,
When wit and pleasure were in most request;
When cheerful theatres with crowds were grac'd:
But those good days of poetry are past;
Now sour reformers, in an empty pit,
With table-books, as at a lecture, sit,
To take notes and give evidence 'gainst wit.
Those who were once our friends, employ'd elsewhere,
Are busy now in settling peace and war:

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With careful brows at Tom's and Will's they meet,
And ask who did elections lose or get——
Our friend has lost it—Faith, I'm sorry for't,
He's a good man, and ne'er was for the court;
He to no government will sue for grace,
By want of merit safe against a place,
By spite a patriot made, and sworn t' oppose
All who are uppermost, as England's foes:
Let Whig or Tory, any side prevail,
Still 'tis his constant privilege to rail.
Another that the tax and war may cease,
Talks of the duke of Anjou's right and peace,
And, from Spain's wise example, is for taking
A viceroy of the mighty monarch's making;
Who should all rights and liberties maintain,
And English laws by learn'd dragoons explain.
Come, leave these politics, and follow wit;
Here, uncontroll'd, you may in judgment sit;
We'll never differ with a crowded pit:
We'll take you all, even on your own conditions,
Think you great men, and wonderous politicians;
And if you slight the offers which we make you,
No Brentford princes will for statesmen take you.

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HE WOULD BE A SOLDIER:

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY FREDERIC PILON.

REMARKS.

THIS comedy originally appeared at Covent Garden under unusual circumstances, having been received there after its rejection by Mr. Colman, who "did not like a line of it." The public, however, were of a different opinion; and the great success of his production amply consoled the author for his first disappointed hopes. The characters are certainly well conceived, the plot fairly developed, the sentiments rational, manly, and judicious.

Frederic Pilon was a native of Ireland: distinguished for his classical attainments and a happy style of oratory, he indulged his partiality for the Muses by attempting the stage. After many attempts in town and country, he repaired to London, and passed the little remnant of his days in literary pursuits. A cotemporary writer observes, "Pilon frequently experienced the want of that half-guinea which had been given to the luxury of the preceding day: his dissipation, however, was not of that kind which Johnson has ascribed to Savage—lonely, self-gratifying, and obscure. Pilon could subdue his ruling passion at the call either of friendship or necessity, and cheerfully deny himself the gratification he had intended. His knowledge of the world rendered him an agreeable companion, while the genfleness of his heart made him no less acceptable as a friend."

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	COVENT GARDEN, 1786.
COLONEL TALBOT,	*Mr. Aickin.*
SIR OLIVER OLDSTOCK,	*Mr. Quick.*
CAPTAIN CREVELT,	*Mr. Lewis.*
MANDEVILLE,	*Mr. Farren.*
COUNT PIERPOINT,	*Mr. Wewitzer.*
WILKINS,	*Mr. Fearon.*
CALEB,	*Mr. Edwin.*
AMBER,	*Mr. Thompson.*
JOHNSON,	*Mr. Brown.*
SERVANT TO COLONEL,	*Mr. Helme.*
CHARLOTTE,	*Mrs. Pope.*
LADY OLDSTOCK,	*Mrs. Webb.*
HARRIET,	*Mrs. Wells.*
MRS. WILKINS,	*Mrs. Brown.*
BETTY,	*Miss Stuart.*
NANCY,	*Miss Rowson.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Street.

Enter MRS. WILKINS, *followed by* JOHNSON.

Mrs. Wil. There's no such thing as stirring out of doors for the fellows now-a-days.—I beg, Sir, you would not follow me any farther.

Johns. I cannot leave you, my sweet, divine, charming girl!

Mrs. Wil. To how many, now, have you repeated the same lesson before you met me this morning?

Johns. To how many! Were a dozen such fine women as yourself to appear every day in public, there would be no such thing as walking the streets for you; a man should have a piece of flint in his breast.

Mrs. Wil. He's a good, handsome fellow, and doesn't talk badly.—Then you will persist in following me?

Johns. How can I help it? I follow a fine woman by instinct.—Do, my dear, kind, cruel angel, tell me where you live.

[*Takes hold of her hand.*

Mrs. Wil. But to what purpose? I can never see you.

Johns. Why not, my love?

Mrs. Wil. Lord, I am an old married woman! [*Faintly struggling to disengage her hand.*] You wicked devil, leave me. The neighbours will take notice, and I shall get a bad name by you.—Do go—I'm just at home.

Johns. But which is the house you live at?

Mrs. Wil. I can't tell you—besides I think I see my husband talking to the orange woman

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at the door; in the straw hat and scarlet cloak, with a little curly-pole boy in her hand, eating gingerbread.

Johns. Why, that's the George inn. 'Sdeath! do you live there?

Mrs. Wil. Oh, you devil! I shall be ruined if ever you come after me.

Johns. Zounds! it's the very house I was going to.—Isn't it kept by one Jacob Wilkins?

Mrs. Wil. Yes, it is.

Johns. We're quite at home now.—I suppose, you're old Jacob's daughter.

Mrs. Wil. I happen to be old Jacob's wife, though.

Johns. Pray, my dear, how long are you married?

Mrs. Wil. A long time, Sir.

Johns. Not a long time, I am sure, from your looks.

Mrs. Wil. Looks are very deceitful, especially those of married folks. I was married Candlemas day, five—long—months.

Johns. Poor creature! you have had a tedious time of it.

Mrs. Wil. But what's your business with Jacob Wilkins? Can't I do it?

Johns. Then you do Jacob's business sometimes?

Mrs. Wil. To be sure I do, when he's out of the way. Poor man! it's a great relief to him.

Johns. But this is a matter on which I must see himself.—Colonel Talbot, a gentleman of whom I think you must have heard, if you be Wilkins' wife, has wrote to him, and desired I would see him in consequence of that letter: were you at home when he received it?

Mrs. Wil. No, I was not, Sir: but I have often heard of Colonel Talbot; he's an Oxfordshire gentleman; his family, I hear, was the making of Wilkins. Lord! he has been a long time in the Indies, and I'm told, has made a power of money. But is he come home, Sir?

Johns. He is; and since his return has been down in Oxfordshire, in search of Wilkins, where he thought he still lived; and would have come here himself now, only he's very much indisposed.

Mrs. Wil. Bless your heart! Jacob Wilkins has been in town, and kept the George inn these ten years.

Johns. He has made a very ungrateful return to his benefactor, Colonel Talbot. My master thought him dead, not having heard from him so many years: a conduct that was unpardonable, considering his obligations to the colonel, and the great trust reposed in him.

Mrs. Wil. Great trust! Lord, Sir! what was it?

Johns. Why, Colonel Talbot left a son in his care—but come along, and I'll tell you the whole story by the way.

Mrs. Wil. We must not be seen together for the world; my husband is as jealous as the vengeance. Take a turn down the next street, and let me go home alone. Follow me in about ten minutes; but take care you don't speak to me as if you had seen me before.

Johns. My dear Mrs. Wilkins, what do you take me for? Do you suppose I never paid a visit to a married woman in my life? [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—The Bar of the George Inn.

Enter CALEB, *followed by* WILKINS, *who appears greatly agitated.*

Caleb. What do you knock me about for at this rate? Don't I slave like a horse from morning till night? I wish I had gone for a soldier as my brother did!

Wil. Your brother, you dog! I wish I had never seen either of your faces.—What shall I do? I have no son to restore him!

[*Bell rings violently.*

Cal. Coming! coming! There's a bill wanted in the General Elliot.

Wil. Let them wait.

Cal. But suppose they wont wait, who'll pay off the score?

Wil. Out of my sight, sirrah, or I'll pay off your score.—Don't you see my temper is ruffled?

Cal. Yes, and I feel it too. [*Bell rings.*] Coming! coming up, Sir! [*Exit.*

Enter MRS. WILKINS.

Mrs. Wil. My dear Mr. Wilkins, what's the matter? The whole house seems turned topsy-turvy.

Wil. I am ruined.

Mrs. Wil. Ruined! Oh, Heaven forbid!

Wil. I say, woman, I'm undone; and the sooner I'm out of England, the better.

Mrs. Wil. Lord, lord! you terrify me out of my wits, Jacob!

Wil. Suppose the best friend you had in the world had intrusted an only child to your care, and that through neglect you had lost him, what would you have to say for yourself?

Mrs. Wil. And is that your case, my dear?

Wil. It is.

Mrs. Wil. But tell me how it happened.

Wil. You have frequently heard me make mention of Colonel Talbot, in whose family I was brought up?

Mrs. Wil. To be sure I have.

Wil. It is a son of his I have lost.

Mrs. Wil. You astonish me! But how came so great a man's son to be left in your care?

Wil. Why, you must know that Colonel Talbot, previous to his going abroad, was privately married to a beautiful girl who waited on his mother: he had a son by this girl; and, as the child came into the world just as he was obliged to embark with the army for Portugal, the war before last, he left him in my care, desiring me to let him pass for my own till his return; and, in case he was killed, to continue the deception till the death of his father.

Mrs. Wil. And has the colonel never been in England since?

Wil. Never, till within these few days; therefore his son continued with me till he was twelve years old, when I lost him.

Mrs. Wil. In what manner did you lose him?

Wil. I cannot be certain: but, as he was a boy of great spirit, and ever prattling of being a soldier, I suspect he was enveigled off by a recruiting party, which at that time was beating up for men in the village.

Mrs. Wil. Didn't you acquaint his mother immediately with what had happened?

Wil. She was dead.

Mrs. Wil. You wrote to the colonel, to be sure.

Wil. There I was to blame. I couldn't summon up resolution sufficient. I thought he would have attributed the child's leaving me, to neglect or cruel treatment.

Mrs. Wil. The best advice I can give you is, to tell Colonel Talbot his son is dead.

Wil. But how shall I produce a certificate of that? Should he examine the parish regis-

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ter, and no record of such a child's death be found, I should be taken up and tried on a suspicion of murder.

Mrs. Wil. Then tell him the truth at once.

Wil. Worse and worse!—He'll suppose this a mere invention of my own, to screen my villany; else, why was I silent so long? and that I had been bribed by his relations to remove an obstacle to their inheriting both his acquired and paternal fortune.

Enter CALEB.

Cal. There's a gentleman from Colonel Talbot desires to see you.

Wil. What's to be done?—I dare not face him!

Cal. What shall I say to him, father?

Wil. Was there ever any thing so provoking as this fellow?

Mrs. Wil. I have it.—Show him into the parlour, my good boy; and tell him, Mr. Wilkins will be with him presently, my good boy!

Cal. 'My good boy!'—Egod, she good boys me to some tune this morning; I hope there's no mischief in the wind; for I'm sure those are the first good words I have had from her since she was my step-mother. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Wil. How old is your son Caleb?

Wil. There's only a week difference between his age and young Talbot's.

Mrs. Wil. Pass him on the colonel for his son.

Wil. How!

Mrs. Wil. Put a good face on the matter, and you'll not only slip your neck out of a halter, but make your fortune. I can turn Caleb round my finger. Go and speak to this gentleman, and let him know you'll introduce young Mr. Talbot to him immediately. Do as I bid you, and leave the management of the rest of the business to me.

Wil. But what reason shall I give for not writing to him so long?

Mrs. Wil. You must say you never received one of his letters; and your quitting the country will make it probable enough they might have miscarried.

Wil. Then to give his son no better education!

Mrs. Wil. You must say he would not take any better; and you may find instances enough of as dull heirs to large estates, to give colour to your story.

Wil. And make a drawer of him too!

Mrs. Wil. Well, he'll not be the first great man that has cried, 'Coming up, Sir!—What do you stand confounded for? Away, away, man; and let me break the matter to Caleb.

Wil. It goes against my conscience—but self-preservation will have it so. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Wil. [*Alone.*] Now have I my gentleman under my thumb—whenever his tongue wags with the sound of jealousy, I'll threaten to discover upon him—and I'll see my dear, sweet fellow, who followed me home to-day, as often as I please. But to prepare this great booby—Oh, here he comes.

Enter CALEB.

Cal. Here mother, I have brought you the bill.

Mrs. Wil. Well, never mind the bill—I have something very particular to say to you.—Do you know, Caleb, that your father is a man of the first character in this town?

Cal. To be sure he is, for selling the best old port and sherry in the kingdom.

Mrs. Wil. But come, sit down, and listen to me. [*They sit.*

Cal. What signifies hearing so much about father's character—who gets him that character? Why Caleb.—Is there one in the house fit to talk to a gentleman but myself?

Mrs. Wil. My dear Caleb, let me entreat you to hear me.

Cal. Dear Caleb!—Yes, I'd listen to you all day for such words as these; good words are sugar plums to me; besides, mother, you can't think how pretty folks look when they are pleased.

Mrs. Wil. Do you know, Caleb, whose son you are?

Cal. Whose son I am!—My father's to be sure.

Mrs. Wil. Certainly: but that father is not Jacob Wilkins.

Cal. No!

Mrs. Wil. Colonel Talbot, the great nabob just arrived from the Indies, is your father.

Cal. My godfather, I suppose you mean.

Mrs. Wil. I tell you, he's your own father. You were given when an infant to my husband, and he was ordered to bring you up as his son; it being necessary, for family reasons, which you'll know another time, to conceal your birth.

Cal. I always thought I was a better man's son than I appeared to be.—But, mother, isn't this all a joke?

Mrs. Wil. Can my husband convince you that I am in earnest?

Cal. He has often convinced me that he himself was in earnest, as my shoulders can witness.

Mrs. Wil. But, dear Sir, I beg ten thousand pardons for keeping my seat so long. [*Getting up, and courtesying very low.*—CALEB *keeps his seat, with a vacant stare, and chuckling laugh of joy.*]

Cal. I thought I'd come to something at last.

Mrs. Wil. Your father's gentleman, Sir, is now waiting to see you.

Cal. My father's gentleman!—I suppose I shall have a gentleman too.

Mrs. Wil. Oh, no doubt.

Cal. Then there will be a pair of us.—But you're sure now you are in earnest?

Mrs. Wil. Will you go and be convinced I am?

Cal. Come along, Mrs. Wilkins; I think, that's your name.

Mrs. Wil. At your honour's service.

Cal. Great men are apt to forget such trifles—but I'll call and see you now and then, though I am a colonel's son.

Mrs. Wil. We'll always think there's nothing too good at the George for your honour.

Cal. But, hark'e, give old Jacob a hint not to forget himself, and make too free.

Mrs. Wil. I hope, Sir, we shall never forget ourselves in your presence.

Cal. Well, well, I hope not, good woman.—A colonel's son!—What a fool I must be, not to have found out this of my own accord!—But it's a wise child knows its own father.

[*Exeunt;* MRS. WILKINS *ridiculing him.*

SCENE III.—A Drawing Room at the House of SIR OLIVER OLDSTOCK.

Enter CHARLOTTE *and* HARRIET.

Char. How you tease me about this all-accomplished Sir Charles!—I can't abide him!

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Har. Can't abide him!—I don't think it possible for any woman actually to dislike him.

Char. Yet, he's the last person breathing I should elect for my *caro sposo;* the man's well enough as an acquaintance; he's lively; does not want for understanding: but the best of him is, the talent he possesses for discovering the ridiculous, wherever it is to be found.

Har. What you praise him for, is in my mind the only exceptionable part of his character.

Char. Lord! what harm is there in a little good-humoured ill-nature?—Besides, what would you have people talk of when they meet; as politics are to the men, scandal is to our sex—these two subjects are the vast magazines of the major part of our ideas; between them the heads of half the nation are furnished.

Har. Have you seen Mandeville to-day?

Char. Poor Harriet; now do I perceive the cause of all this extraordinary zeal for the interests of the handsome baronet; you still are apprehensive, if you don't provide me with a husband, I shall take your beloved Mandeville from you.

Har. As he is sole heir to Colonel Talbot's immense fortune, I know your father will proceed to the last extremities.

Char. Dear Harriet, rest perfectly satisfied in my friendship for you; I never will have him; I don't know what I would not do to avoid it.—My heart is at present a virgin tablet, on which Love has not written a single character: however, should things come to the worst, you yourself must be my deliverer.

Har. As how?

Char. Even by taking wing with your beloved swain, for that blessed spot, where law forges no fetters for the heart; and Hymen, with a smile upon his cheek, and his torch burning clear, lights consenting votaries to the temple of real and lasting felicity. Heaven, and a generous uncle be praised, who bequeathed me ten thousand pounds independent of my father, I am not obliged to sacrifice my own and my friend's happiness!

Har. I'm ashamed, Charlotte, to have harboured a suspicion but for a moment, that a mind like yours could act unworthy of itself.

Char. Now to put my theory into practice.—Here comes Mandeville; do you step into the next room, where you may overhear our conversation, and you shall be entertained with a prologue truly anti-matrimonial.

Har. Dear Charlotte, I am already perfectly satisfied.

Char. But I insist on your going; it will entertain you. [*Exit* HARRIET.

Enter MANDEVILLE.

My dear Mandeville! I was just wishing for you; if you had staid much longer, I should have been insupportably vapoured; nothing runs in my head but our marriage; but I was thinking, as the fondest couples have certain dull hours that hang heavy upon their hands, how we two shall kill time during those spiritless seasons.

Man. I suppose we shall follow the example of other people; do all we can to make one another uneasy.

Char. That's one way, to be sure, of killing time; but we shall grow tired of that at last, don't you think so, Mandeville?

Man. When I entertain a good opinion of a lady's wit, it rids me of all apprehension on that score.

Char. Sir, your most obedient.

Man. I thought your cousin Harriet was here.

Char. My cousin Harriet!—Lord! what's my cousin Harriot to the purpose?—I shall grow jealous of you, at this rate.—I wonder, Mandeville, what star shed its influence when our marriage was first talked of; no two people breathing agreed better.

Man. I always thought you the pleasantest companion imaginable.

Char. We were continually laughing at one body's expense or another.

Man. And as soon as we are married, I fancy every body will be even with us.

Char. Heigho!

Man. What's that for, Madam?

Char. Not for a husband, I assure you; it was only a requiem to friendship, going to be laid in the grave of matrimony.

Enter HARRIET.

Har. Just now, Mr. Mandeville, as I parted from my cousin, a servant came and told me that your uncle, Colonel Talbot, was arrived.—Your father, Charlotte, has received a letter from him.—But what do you think? It seems, he has a son nobody ever heard of before.

Char. A son!—Now, Mandeville, if you can be content with your mistress, and a moderate income, I'm satisfied you may have her; as the bulk of Colonel Talbot's fortune will certainly devolve to his son, depend upon it, my father will no more press my ladyship on your worship.

Man. Madam, my uncle may dispose of his property as he pleases—I sincerely rejoice at his safe arrival in England; and, as he has an heir, I shall be the first to congratulate him on the event; and I hope that heir may prove an heir to his virtues.

Char. You are a generous fellow, Mandeville; and if it did not cost you so dear, I should congratulate you on the certain prospect you may indulge, that we two shall never be one.

Man. My dear Harriet—

Char. Now, why don't you say, my dear Mandeville? One as naturally follows the other, as the echo does the sound.

Man. The occasion, ladies, I trust, will apologize for my leaving you thus abruptly.

Char. Oh, go, go; you have my ample consent.—But, Harriet, will you let him go off so easily?

Har. How can you be so ill-natured?

Char. She says, she gives you leave to go: but it's on condition, that you do not dedicate a second of your time to any human being but herself, longer than common decency requires it.—But, Mandeville, do you and I part as we ought—a betrothed pair?

Man. Yes, Charlotte, for we part wedded friends again. [*Exit.*

Char. Now, Harriet, are all your apprehensions removed?

Har. They are, my friend; Hope sits smiling at my heart, and once more cheers it with a prospect of happiness. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—An Apartment at SIR OLIVER OLDSTOCK'S.

Enter SIR OLIVER, *alone.*

Sir O. This is a devilish lucky hit, the colonel's

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having a son; it enables me to provide for both my niece and daughter—I expect from the latter a good deal of contradiction in this business, but I like that; I shouldn't love her half so much as I do, if she hadn't spirit enough to contradict me—it shows she has an opinion of her own, and gives me an opportunity to prove that I have one also; but of a much superior kind, and, upon occasions, of a very coercive quality; it's not one time in a hundred I can get any body to contradict me; but men of large, independent fortunes never hear the truth—nobody has spirit enough to oppose them in discourse.—Well, I think I shall be as happy as a married man can be, when my girls are disposed of; my wife, to be sure, has a most unaccountable humour; to suppose I'm jealous of her, now she's in her fifty-fifth year! To do Lady Lucretia Oldstock justice, she was once a charming woman; but at present, I think her as plain a piece of goods as a man could meet between Temple-Bar and Whitechapel:—here she comes, brimful of news.

Enter LADY OLDSTOCK.

L. Old. Was ever any thing so wonderful!

Sir O. Nothing upon earth! what's the matter my love?

L. Old. Why, haven't you heard that Colonel Talbot has a son?

Sir O. A son!—a dozen, I dare be sworn, if he would but own them; an old soldier has generally children in all the quarters of the globe.

L. Old. Sir Oliver, you're a censorious man, and judge of every body by yourself.

Sir O. Upon my soul, my dear, you allow me too much credit; I never was a man of all that gallantry: no, no; I had a domestic magnet that attracted and fixed all my affections; united to such a woman as Lady Oldstock, who could be a rover?

L. Old. Why, to do you justice, Sir Oliver, you have, upon the whole, made a very good husband; and, if it was not for the weakness of your temper in one particular, we might live very happy.

Sir O. Now she's off. [*Aside.*

L. Old. If, indeed, I was one of the giddy flirts of the day, it would be another thing—but a woman, of whose truth you have had so many years' experience, to be jealous of!

Sir O. I tell you again, and again, I am not jealous.

L. Old. Ah, Sir Oliver! I wish you would make your words good; if any man of the least tolerable appearance pays me a common mark of respect, don't you immediately sneer, and say that fellow has a design upon you?

Sir O. So I do: I always think that person has a design upon another, to whom he gives their own way in every thing: no, no; if I am to choose a friend, and an agreeable companion, give me the honest fellow who contradicts me.

L. Old. Then you are not jealous?

Sir O. No.

L. Old. No?

Sir O. No; damme if ever I was jealous of you!

L. Old. You are now more provoking, if possible, than ever; when you find I hold your ridiculous suspicions in contempt, you would wound me another way, and mortify my pride, by insinuating, that I never had attractions sufficient to have a civil thing said to me, like other women.

Sir O. Then it seems, my lady, you have had your civil things said to you, like other women, in your time?

L. Old. There, there, it broke forth! What it is to be married to a jealous husband!

Sir O. Well, all this I can bear, because I like contradiction—I consider the mind like a spring; the more you press it, the more vigour you lend to its elasticity: since I can remember, I always delighted to be of a different opinion from other people; there's something wonderfully flattering to human pride in being singular—but in marriage it is absolutely necessary—man and wife are like the contending qualities of bitter and sweet, they naturally quarrel, and exist by downright opposition.

Enter CHARLOTTE.

L. Old. I'll submit my cause to the judgment of Charlotte.

Char. Submit your cause to my judgment! my dear Ma'am, by no means; in all cases of matrimonial litigation, the parties should be tried by their peers.

Sir O. Right, my girl! Now, in order to qualify you to be impannelled on suits of the kind, I was that moment thinking about moving the court of Hymen, to show cause why a rule should not be granted, to provide you with a husband.

L. Old. Whenever you marry, Charlotte, if you wish to be happy, above all things avoid a temper like your father's.

Sir O. And like your mother's also, if you wish your husband to be happy.

L. Old. I clearly perceive my company is not agreeable.

Sir O. Your strange turn of mind, I confess, Lady Oldstock, is not altogether so agreeable; but you see it does not make me angry.

L. Old. It's that that tortures me—if I could vex him, it would be a proof I had some power left; but he treats me like a child. [*Exit.*

Sir O. It's a spoiled one, if I do.

Char. Dear Sir, let me follow her.

Sir O. You sha'n't budge a step after her—soothing her in her humours is only adding fuel to fire. Your mother, Charlotte, was born a coquette, and will die one. She was a reigning toast in her youth, and to this hour expects the adulation of those days. But come, sit down, and let me talk to you. [*They sit.*] I have for some time back observed, Charlotte, that the match I proposed to you with Mandeville, does not meet your wishes.

Char. I confess, Sir, it never did—besides, I know that gentleman's affections to be engaged elsewhere.

Sir O. I understand you, he's fond of my niece, Harriet; well, in the name of happiness, let them go together; I'll never mention his name to you again, nor indeed shall I propose any match to you, upon which I may expect rational contradiction.

Char. Now, Sir, you speak like my father.—Oh, how my heart springs with gratitude and joy, to hear those generous words from your own lips!

Sir O. No, my girl, you shall never be sacrificed at the altar of Plutus—I say sacrificed—for, what is it, in fact, but a sacrifice, to throw away a fine young woman upon a man it is impossible she should like; as many fathers do every day, who love money more than their children.

Char. The liberality of these sentiments delights me, they are so exactly in conformity with my own! Dear Sir, you have given me

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such spirits!—Do you know, when you asked me to sit down, I expected to have had a quite different kind of conversation with you?

Sir O. I suppose you thought I had some golden calf to propose to you for a husband?

Char. I own I was so ungenerous.

Sir O. A fellow, with nothing but gold in his pocket and lead in his pate; ha, ha, ha!

Char. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir O. How liable are we to be mistaken in our surmises of other people's thoughts! No, no, my girl, I have no such match to propose to you—I have a husband for you, it is true, in my eye; and a rich one too—but it is not to riches you object—it is to the man; and, provided he be agreeable, I imagine no woman in her senses can suppose a husband may be too rich?

Char. Provided riches be obtained without leaving a stain upon the principles, it is happiness to possess them, as they give us so much more ample power of distributing felicity.

Sir O. Give me a kiss, you jade! You are your father's own daughter; but every body tells me you're the picture of me; and, if the colonel's son be but as like his father as you are yours, you'll be the handsomest couple in Great Britain.

Char. [*Rising.*] The colonel's son, Sir!

Sir O. Yes, my old friend, Colonel Talbot's son; one of the finest young fellows, I am told—but no fop—he has none of the vices and follies of your young butterflies of fashion.

Char. No, Sir; nor any of their accomplishments, or I'm misinformed.

Sir O. It was an excellent thought of his father's to have him brought up in a snug private way.

Char. And yet, I'm told he has lived some time in a snug public way.

Sir O. What, Charlotte, have you been listening to any scandalous reports of the youth?

Char. A pretty youth I understand he is for the husband of your daughter—I am told he was actually a waiter at some horrid place near Smithfield.

Sir O. Oh, infamous scandal!—He a waiter at some horrid place near Smithfield!—The next report, I suppose, will be, that you were bar-maid at the same place; and that I'm an old tobacconist, who supplied the house with cut and dry, from the sign of the Black Boy in a neighbouring alley.

Char. I am petrified at the very thoughts of the brute!

Sir O. Look you there now: she knows I love contradiction in my heart, and therefore seems averse to the match, because she thinks it will please me. But, come: you, and your mother and my niece shall go pay the colonel and his son a morning visit.

Char. Sir, as you insist upon it, I will go as I would to see any other great natural curiosity.

Sir O. Was ever any thing like this! she has heard a scandalous report of a man, and she wont wait to be undeceived by her own eyes and her own ears; this is downright invincible obstinacy, not rational, well-founded contradiction: and I hate the one, as much as I love the other; besides, I ever thought you a girl of too much sense, to lay any kind of stress on a tale of mere rumour.

Char. But, if rumour should speak truth?

Sir O. He's so great a liar, I would not believe him. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—An Apartment at MANDEVILLE'S.

Enter JOHNSON *and* COLONEL TALBOT.

Johns. He's a rough diamond, Sir: he requires a little polishing, I must confess.

Col. Good masters may remove his ignorance, and good company polish his manners; but there is a meanness in the turn of his person, and the cast of his features, which is insuperable; but take man in every point of view, and he will be found the creature of habit; his body, like his mind, is subdued by education.

Johns. I wonder, Sir, you never wrote to any particular friend in England, to have inquired about him, when you received no letter from this man, to whose care you committed him.

Col. Who could I trust? none of my own family!—Then, what solid friendships do you suppose are contracted at the age I left England? I was then but twenty; all my intimates were young fellows, sunk in pleasure and dissipation; if any thing like friendship had subsisted between us, the many years we were asunder had dissolved the tie; his mother, I knew, was dead, and, from Wilkins' silence, I concluded that he also had paid the debt of nature; therefore I desisted from writing, thinking it was in vain to hope for any certainty till I had myself reached England.

Johns. I should not have believed it possible your honour could have had such a son, let his education be what it may.

Col. I own, Johnson, the weakness of a father induced me to believe I should have found him very different: I fancied, I should have seen him emerging from the low contracted sphere to which his fate had consigned him, by the native energy of his own powers; and flattered myself with the pleasing dream of surprising a young man with affluence and distinction, who in obscurity had acquired virtue to deserve them.

Johns. I beg your honour's pardon:—but, as I cannot see the least likeness of you in this young gentleman's face, I suppose he resembled his mother.

Col. His mother!—She had the countenance of an angel!

Johns. Then he differs from you both most devilishly!—But, Sir, the sooner you provide him with a fencing and a dancing master, the better; the latter of these gentlemen seems indispensably necessary, if it's only to teach him to walk; for no raw recruit on the first day of drilling was ever more pigeon-toed.

Col. Where is he now?

Johns. I left him, Sir, very busy over his luncheon.

Col. His luncheon!

Johns. Yes, Sir: a small morsel he takes before dinner, just to stay his stomach, consisting of about a pound of beaf steaks and a tankard of porter.

Col. Send him to me. [*Exit* JOHNSON.]—I fear he's incorrigibly gone, beyond the power of reformation.

Enter MANDEVILLE.

Col. Dear Mandeville, what course do you advise me to pursue with this untoward boy? With all his faults, I must consider he is my son, and pity whilst he compels me to blush for him.

Man. Sir, we must endeavour to form him as well as we can: but I am rather inclined

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to think we shall never be able to give him the graces.

Col. He's not three and twenty—that's young; we have many begin later in life to acquire the rudiments of those sciences, in which they afterwards arrive to the highest pitch of eminence.—Have you been able to discover how the natural bent of his temper inclines, or if he has any strong propensities?

Man. Why, Sir, from what I can collect in my short acquaintance with him, the natural bent of his temper seems inclined to gallantry; and if he has any strong propensity, it is to the game of skittles.

Col. No matter how low and vulgar the game be, it shows a spirit of play in him, and it must be crushed: but if he has a turn for gallantry, it gives me the greatest hopes of his reformation. The society of an accomplished and beautiful woman softens and refines the roughest nature; she imparts, by a secret magic, her elegances and her graces; and to converse with her, is a kind of study that insensibly polishes her admirer.—But what reason have you to suppose he is inclined to gallantry?

Man. He has imparted all his amours to me; but one in particular, which very much diverted me, indeed:—after having been successful with bar-maids, young milliners, and tailors' daughters, out of number; Cupid shot him from a cheese-cake battery, and he fell in love with a pastry-cook's daughter; which, oh, terrible! was the cause of his having an affair of honour with an attorney's clerk, in which both parties were bound over: but in painting this Helen, who bred the contention, how shall I do him justice at second hand? Teniers lent him his pencil for her waist, and Titian for her head; for she was shaped like a Dutch cheese, and her locks were as red as a carrot.

Col. I have sent for him; and, as I shall examine him closely, in order to search if there be any latent seeds of ability, which culture may bring forth, I wish you, Mandeville, to be present, and that you will also assist me in the inquiry.

Man. Certainly; as my cousin, I think it a duty I owe him.—Oh, here he comes, with Johnson.

Enter CALEB *and* JOHNSON.

Cal. [*Speaks as entering.*] You don't know what's taste; my hair's the nattiest thing in town, as it is dressed now.

Col. Don't you know, Sir, I sent for you?

Cal. Ah, father!—Cousin! are you there too?

Man. You don't attend.

Cal. Attend! no: I hope I sha'n't attend any more.—Well, father, you sent for me: now, what do you want, my old cock?

Col. [*Turning away with disgust.*] It is in vain to think of cultivating a soil like this!

Man. His manner is terrible, to be sure: but we must correct him.

Cal. Correct him! Why, what have I done to be corrected? I thought I was corrected enough by my last father.

Col. Would that correction had taught you to speak!

Cal. That it did; and often to squeak too, till you could hear me two streets off.

Col. Speak to him Mandeville.—There is something so barbarous in every thing he says or does, that I can't bear to look at him.

Man. You'll excuse me, dear cousin, for giving you a little advice; but as I mean it well, I'm sure you'll not be offended.

Cal. Bless your heart, you can't offend me! I'm one of the best tempered boys breathing:—but what's the matter with old Firelock? he seems in the sulks.

Man. He's not pleased with your manner and address; it is too rude and abrupt: you should never approach him without evident marks of respect.

Cal. Oh! I understand you; I should always make a bow when I come into a place where he is.—Ecod, with all my heart; but what set me wrong, was hearing it said, that to have no manners at all was the best of breeding.

Man. Ceremony is altogether as ridiculous, as rudeness is offensive; you must avoid both.

Col. Have you ever read any thing in your life?

Cal. Why, do you think I can't read? Then I tell you I can; and write and cyphes too.

Man. He doesn't doubt that; he only wishes to know what kind of reading or books you are fond of.

Cal. Then you may tell him, I am fond of histories.

Man. That's a good hearing, faith! If he's fond of history, he must possess from nature a strong, inquisitive mind, under all this unpromising *d'abord*. As you are fond of history, you have no doubt dipped into the histories of Greece and Rome?

Cal. The best of their histories.

Man. Whose were they?

Cal. Why, in the first place, I have read Don Bellianis's History of Greece, and the Seven wise Masters' History of Rome.

Col. Ask him no more questions.

Cal. Then I've read the history of Colonel Jack, and the History of the English Rogue, and the History of Moll Flanders.

Man. He appears as well read in modern as ancient history.

Col. I don't know any thing more mortifying to human pride, than to pass the better part of a man's life in toil, anxiety and danger, accumulating wealth, to leave it to a fool at last.

Cal. You can't think, father, how sensible money makes a fool look, and how foolish a wise man looks without it.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Mr. Serge, your honour's taylor.

Man. He's come to take measure of my cousin for his regimentals.

Cal. Regimentals! Why, am I to be a colonel as well as my father?

Col. Sir, you're to be a soldier.

Cal. A soldier! Why, what's all this! Am I to go for a soldier, after all? Has Doll Blouze been with the parish officers?

Col. I have procured you a commission; no son of mine shall waste his youth in ease and indolence, dissipating that wealth I so hardly earned: the greater part, it is true, he shall enjoy; but he shall first prove by his courage, and his services to his country, that he deserves it.

Cal. There's not a boy within the sound of

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Bow bell of a better spirit; I'll fight any man in England of my weight and inches, with fair fistesses, for a guinea—aye, damme! if I don't, and say done first.

Man. Hadn't you better step to the tailor?

Cal. Presently, presently, cousin.—But now I think of it, I'll not step to him; let the tailor step to me. A captain step to a tailor! Impossible! that's bidding a field-piece dance the hays after a thimble.

Col. I insist upon your going this moment.

Cal. Why, the old boy's in his tantrums.—Cousin, a word in your ear: there's one thing before I go, I must beg of you.

Man. What's that?

Cal. Why, as you and I will be hand and glove, as a body may say; you'll call me Caleb, and I'll call you Tom, Frank, Harry, or—what is your name?

Man. My name is Frederick.

Cal. Frederick! what a pretty name! I wish my name was Frederick. Can't I be new-christened for one name as well as another?

Man. [*Aside.*] Till you're new born, I fancy nothing can be done with you.

Cal. But I was going to tell you—if you call me Caleb, never do it loud, especially in company.

Man. For Heaven's sake, why?

Cal. Why, if you was to cry out, as thus now, Caleb! [*Bawling out.*] I should cry, 'Coming up, Sir!' though you made a duke of me. [*Exit.*

Col. Well, Mandeville, what do you think?

Man. Hope is left us in the worst of times; however, I do not despair of making something of him yet: what I dread most, is introducing him to Charlotte.

Col. Why cannot man make over his mind, like his property, to his children? Any distinguishing quality in all other animals survives in the same species by hereditary descent for ever; man continues upon the earth only in his name and his revenues.—Oh, that he should leave behind him his least valuable part, and all that made him good or great should sink into the dust with him!

Enter JOHNSON.

Johns. Good news! good news, Sir! the Carnatic is arrived safe.—Captain Crevelt's servant is just come to acquaint you, that his master and Count Pierpoint will be here immediately.

Col. Good news, indeed, Johnson; and, heavy and afflicted as my heart is, your tidings cheer it. The count, Mandeville, is an officer of infinite merit; he was my prisoner during the war, and is warmly attached to English manners and our glorious constitution.—But, Crevelt!—to know the merit of such a man, you must be acquainted with him.

Man. Is he an Englishman?

Col. Yes, and you may judge of his merit as a soldier, when I tell you, he has risen from the ranks, at the age of three-and twenty, to the commission he now holds of captain. He's the reverse of this ill-fated boy we have been speaking to. He is self-educated; for, with scarcely any advantages but those he derived from a most noble and excellent nature, he is the man of sense, the scholar, and the polished gentleman. His father, old Crevelt, was no more than a serjeant, and served in Germany under Lord Granby: he brought this young man with him to India, whilst yet a boy: the first day he ever was in action, he saw his father fall; and he was found after the battle amongst the slain, close to his body, apparently lifeless with loss of blood, as if he had died in the pious office of defending a parent.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Captain Crevelt, Sir.

Man. Let us go and receive him; my heart burns with impatience to call such a man my friend. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—MANDEVILLE'S *House.*

Enter MANDEVILLE, CREVELT, *and* COLONEL TALBOT.

Crev. I quitted England, Mr. Mandeville, when a boy, and never was in London in my life before. I am charmed with the appearance of this noble city, in which the ease, convenience, and safety, of its poorest inhabitant seem consulted.

Col. There is no token seen in the streets of an exhausted people, drained by a tedious and expensive war, during which, Great Britain fought at more unequal odds than any nation on the earth ever did before.

Crev. So much the reverse, that I am astonished at the appearance of opulence and prosperity to be met with every where; and the pleasing sensation I feel, to find my country in that state, is indescribable.

Col. Let gloomy politicians continue to predict, and foresee calamities that exist only in imagination; whilst the genius of industry continues to smile upon the labours of the husbandman, the mechanic, and the manufacturer, and whilst strict probity is the character of England in her dealings with all other nations, the resources of this country will be found inexhaustible; and, though its glory may be veiled by a momentary cloud, it soon recovers its former splendor.

Enter CALEB *in regimentals.*

Cal. Here I am, father, in full feather.

Col. What, Sir, is your dancing-master gone already?

Cal. Bless your heart!—no master of any kind for me to-day; I never put on a new suit of clothes in my life, that I did not make holiday.

Man. [*Aside to* COL.] We had better, I think, in some degree, give way to him: you cannot expect immediately to reform manners so long confirmed by habit.

Col. [*Aside.*] I believe you're right, so I'll try what effect indulgence may have on him. Well, it shall be as you would have it; this day shall be devoted to pleasure and amusement. Crevelt, give me leave to introduce you to my son.

Crev. I don't know any circumstance of my life affects me more than the high honour I now enjoy. [*Introducing himself.*

Cal. Why, look ye, young man, as my father desires it, I'll shake hands with you, with all

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my heart: but I would not make so free with every old soldier's son.

Col. How dare you, Sir, insult a man of his merit with language so gross?

Cal. Why, isn't he an old soldier's son?—pretty company truly to introduce me to!

Crev. Sir, the humility of my birth I acknowledge, but must tell you, this is the first time it ever brought a blush into my cheek—I am choked with rage.—Unused to insult, I cannot receive it without indignation even from the son of Colonel Talbot!

Col. I insist upon your asking that gentleman's pardon.

Cal. Why, is he a gentleman?

Col. A man of his worth, his honour, and abilities, is a gentleman, though sprung in the lowest vale of society.

Cal. Nay, if you say he's a gentleman, I ask his pardon with all my heart; nothing so common now a days as one gentleman's asking pardon of another; it makes up a quarrel in a trice.

Crev. Sir, I accept your apology.

Col. [*To* CALEB.] But, Sir, I will go farther with you: you must ever consider that man with respect; learn to esteem him, and it will do you more honour than your birth has done.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. The gentleman from the India House, Sir, that was here before to-day, has called again.

Col. Let him know I'll wait on him immediately. [*Exit* SERVANT.

[*To* CALEB.] Young man, I wish to undeceive you in one particular: seize all those opportunities of instruction I mean to give you, and redeem the time you have lost, which, if you neglect, your provision from me shall be merely independence: my name you may disgrace, but I think it a crime to bestow riches on one who would abuse them; even that youth, whose birth is so inferior in your eye, I should consider as united to me by his merit in nearer ties of kindred. [*Exit.*

Cal. [*Strutting about.*] So then, I am to be disinherited after all, and for an old soldier's son too!

Crev. What's that you say, Sir?

Cal. Say, Sir?—Damme! he looks so fierce, I don't know what to say to him—these old soldiers' sons are so used to cutting of throats, it's the devil to quarrel with them.

Man. I am ashamed of you, cousin; if you proceed in this manner, you must be looked up from all society.

Cal. I'll beg his pardon again: I know that's all he wants.

Crev. I'll spare you, Sir, the mortification of descending to so humiliating an act; in respect to your father, I overlook every thing you have hitherto said: I now coolly behold all that has passed through a different medium; and rather feel for a youth, who, from his prospect of immense wealth, has been, perhaps, from his childhood, surrounded with sycophants.

Cal. I don't rightly understand you, captain; but I fancy, (only you mince the matter,) that you meant to say I was much better fed than taught. Well, no matter; are we good friends again?

Crev. Very good.

Cal. Then give me your hand. [*Aside.*] He, he, he! I can't help laughing, after all, to think of such a fellow's being a gentleman.—But I say, captain, they tell me you are a devil of a fellow for fighting: now, do you see, as I am an officer as well as yourself, I'd be glad to know how you generally found yourself before you went into the field of battle.

Crev. Much as I do at present.

Cal. What, no more frightened?

Crev. No, Sir.

Cal. Come, come; no tricks upon travellers, captain; do you think I'm such a fool as to believe you?

Crev. Sir!

Cal. [*Terrified.*] Sir!—He looks at me like a tiger—I'll ask him no more questions; he has half frighted me out of my commission already—eh! [*Looking out.*] Ecod, yonder I see my father talking to two fine girls; cousin Mandeville, good bye; captain, your servant. [*Stifling a laugh.*] A gentleman, truly! What a fine thing it is to be born one—it saves a world of trouble in learning.

[*Exit* CALEB.

Man. The story of this unhappy young man, and how his education came to be so much neglected, is too long to acquaint you of particularly, at present; but you see what he is, and I hope estimate an insult from him accordingly.

Crev. I think no more of it, but my heart bleeds for his father.

Man. You talk of leaving town to-day—why, dear Sir, will you so suddenly quit friends, who, of all things, covet your society? Is the business which calls you from us of that urgent nature you cannot postpone it for a few days at least?

Crev. It is what I ought not to do—for my relations in England, (if I have any living,) have never heard from me since I quitted the country; but, perhaps, it is better to prepare them for the meeting; so I shall write to them by this night's post, and continue your guest a little longer.

Man. Now this is truly friendly—I would not for the world have you leave town till after my cousin Talbot's wedding.

Crev. Then he's going to be married?

Man. So his father intends, as the only means of reforming him; the lady is one of those two, who came here within this half hour; and whom we left with Count Pierpoint, admiring his magnificent presents from the different princes of the East, at whose courts he has been occasionally envoy.

Crev. But which of the ladies is intended for Mr. Talbot?

Man. Charlotte—she whom you so much admired; and, short as the count's acquaintance with them is, he appears already smitten with her cousin Harriet; unluckily for him, she happens to be engaged.

Crev. But, Charlotte! It is she, then, who is intended for Mr. Talbot; I think I never saw a finer girl.

Man. She is a divine creature! and though her Adonis is so near a relation, I confess, I wish her a better husband; but I don't know how matters may terminate. She's a girl of great spirit—has a fine independency; and such is her disposition, that I am confident there is no temptation in wealth could induce her to marry any man whom she did not like.

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Enter HARRIET.

Har. Ha, ha, ha! I beg your pardon, Mr. Mandeville, for laughing so much at the expense of your cousin Talbot; but his manner, person, and conversation, are all so truly original, that gravity itself must be provoked to laughter in his company.

Man. It is very true, Harriet; he is a most extraordinary being, I must confess.

Har. He introduced himself to Charlotte this moment; and such a figure does he cut! He can neither walk, sit, nor stand still, with gazing at his person. Charlotte and he are together; she seems delighted with him.

Crev. Then, Madam, she likes him?

Har. She likes to laugh at him, Sir. Do, Mandeville, come, and take a look at him.

Man. Will you go, Captain Crevelt?

Crev. I'll just speak to Johnson, Sir, and follow you. [*Exeunt* MAN. & HAR.] I never saw that woman in my life before, who in a moment has had such a power over me. She will not marry him, they say,—but what then? Does it follow of course, that she must like me?

Enter JOHNSON.

Johns. I understand your honour wished to see me.

Crev. Yes, Johnson; as you came to London before me, I wished to ask you, if you knew any thing of the family of this young lady your master intends his son shall marry?

Johns. Why, Sir, I understand she is the daughter of Sir Oliver Oldstock, an old acquaintance of the colonel's; her father, I hear, meant she should marry Mr. Mandeville, supposing he would be my master's heir; but when a son made his appearance, like all worldly men, Sir Oliver changed his note; and the poor young lady is to become a sacrifice to this—I wish he was not my master's son.

Crev. But she wont, Johnson, be made a sacrifice.

Johns. I hope not, Sir; but, lord! what wont money do? Don't we see money every day couple age and deformity to youth and beauty; a young creature, like an angel, linked to a skeleton of dry bones.

Crev. Why, Johnson, you seem to speak with great feeling and spirit on the subject.

Johns. Ah, Captain Crevelt! what a charming couple you two would make.—I, who have seen your honour in the field, should expect a Granby or a Marlborough from such a marriage.

Crev. [*Musing.*] I promised to follow them; but the less I see her, the better for my peace: it is only feeding a passion I should banish from my heart for ever. Johnson, take no notice that I asked you any questions concerning Miss Oldstock; should I be inquired for, I am gone to the library. Books, or my own thoughts, are the only society I am fit for. [*Exit.*

Johns. Well, as long as I live, I never will think there is any thing in great blood again. Here is a son of one of the best families in the kingdom, with neither person nor mind superior to one of his father's domestics; and if we turn our eyes to the other side, we behold the offspring of an old soldier, with the soul of a prince, and the head of a prime minister.

Enter NANCY, *running.*

Nan. Mr. Johnson, Mr. Johnson, here's a letter for you, brought by the penny post; [*Gives it.*] and, short a time as you have been in London, I'm sure it is a love letter.

Johns. Aye; pray, Nancy, how have you made that discovery? Is it by the elegant penmanship of its pothook-and-hanger superscription, or by the god of love's own broad seal, stamped upon it by a wafer and thimble?

Nan. Ecod, Mr. Johnson, you're a knowing hand; I'll engage you have hooked in many a poor girl in your time.

Johns. But I haven't paid the postage.

Nan. That's always paid beforehand into the office with the letter.

Johns. But you know, Nancy, letters are conveyed now upon a new establishment, and for fear of mistakes, I'll even pay double postage. [*Kisses her.*

Nan. It's mighty well! I suppose, when you find this is a mistake, you'll be for having the overcharge back again. [*Exit* NANCY.

Johns. Now for my letter.—'Sdeath! it's from my sweet little Mrs. Wilkins! [*Reads.*]

Mrs. Wilkins' compliments to Mr. Johnson: will be glad of his company this evening to tea, as she wishes to treat with him about those little matters he brought with him from India: if the two sets of china be as handsome as he said they were, she shall take them both off his hands: she'll take, besides, some chintz and muslins for gowns, and half a dozen shawls: he need not send her any mandarins; she has more old figures than are worth house room.

P. S. Mr. Wilkins is very sorry he can't be at home the whole evening, very particular business calling him to Hogsden.

I was afraid I should have had no postscript; but all's right, I find.—Yes, my sweet Mrs. Wilkins, I will go and talk to you about those trifles I brought with me from India: but you shall have no mandarins—indeed, I thought you had one too many of these old figures. [*Exit.*

Enter CALEB, *followed by* CHARLOTTE.

Cal. Well, Miss; how do you like me? don't you think I look like a captain?

Char. Like a captain! It would be doing you injustice to compare you to any officer under his Majesty: I am really at a loss for a comparison to match you with—Come, turn about, and let me see your shapes—Mercy! what a long sword they have tied you to!

Cal. That was all my own thought: I haven't learned to fence yet; and, as I am told, a gentleman is nobody till he has fought about a score duels, I was determined, the first time I fought, not to be over-reached by any body.

Char. A very prudent resolution I must confess! valour is by no means incompatible with discretion: but pray, Sir, are you so very quarrelsome, that you expect to have all those duels upon your hands?

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Cal. Me quarrelsome!—Bless your heart, I'm as quiet as a lamb.

Char. Then why do you expect to fight so much?

Cal. Because it's the fashion; and you know a man had better be out of the world than out of the fashion.

Char. Then I think you are taking an excellent method to have your choice.

Cal. Yes; fighting's quite a gentleman-like amusement:—besides it will be put in the newspapers; and I shall read my own name in print, along with the debates of Lords and Commons; and that's the cause, I suppose, of all duels.

Char. I believe duels have been fought more than once—and, oh, fatal delusion! perhaps a valuable life lost—for a cause altogether as frivolous!

Cal. But now I am dressed, do you see me, I wish to show myself to some of my old acquaintances; therefore, suppose you and I go this evening to Bagnigge Wells, and drink tea—the hot rolls are so nice there, you can't think!

Char. Some other time; I can't possibly go this evening.

Cal. Mayhap you think I wont pay for the tea, but I will; and, moreover than that, I'll treat you to the half-play afterwards.

Char. You must, indeed, excuse me, Sir.—[*Aside.*] I wish I could get rid of him. This moment poor Crevelt passed me with a dejected air.—I followed him with a stolen glance, till I traced him into the library.—I wish I knew what was the matter with him; I never saw a man in my life I pity so much.

Cal. [*Looking at himself.*] How they'd stare at our hop, to see me in this dress!

Char. This fellow takes no notice of me; his regimentals have actually rivalled me!

Cal. [*With great delight.*] Dress, I see, is every thing: such a suit of regimentals would make any man a great officer. How this world goes! fine fellows are made by tailors, and tailors undone by fine fellows!

Char. My Narcissus is so engaged with his person, it would be foolish to lose this opportunity of getting rid of him. I'll drop carelessly into the library—I never saw so sudden an alteration in a man's looks as in poor Crevelt's. I hope he's not in love.—Poor Charlotte, if the object be not in England! [*Exit.*

Cal. [*To himself.*] To be sure, Caleb, you haven't a pair of legs! It is not every captain who can beat a march with such a pair of drumsticks—I wonder how my legs would look in a pair of new boots—I never rode of a Sunday, but in a pair of my father's old ones—Most smart captains, I observe, foot as well as horse, mount the streets in boots. So, you wont go to Bagnigge Wells? [*Looking up.*] Eh! why she's gone! Ecod, I'm glad of it!—and now the coast is clear, I'll have a ramble. What signifies my being dressed, if nobody sees me? I'll call over to Jacob Wilkins', and take a glass with him. Who knows, but one of these days, when I return from abroad a great warrior, but old Jacob may take down his sign, and hang me up over his door. [*Exit.*

Enter LADY OLDSTOCK *and* COUNT PIERPOINT.

L. Old. Really, my lord, I tremble for the consequences of this interview; if Sir Oliver should meet us, and happen to be in one of his jealous moods, it is in vain to tell him of the innocency of our conversation; he will interpret my very looks, and draw the strangest inferences from even the tone of voice with which I utter the most good-natured sentence.

Count. *Il est bien extraordinaire;* it appears to me very strange, Madam, dat people of fashion *en Angleterre* can be so *bourgeois.—Mon Dieu! en France, quand un homme est marie,* ven ve marry, by Gar, our friends cannot *nous oblige* more dan by take care of our vives.

L. Old. Oh, my lord! you're a refined people; we are at least half a century behind you in point of civilization.

Count. But on my vord, you improve every day; people de fashion in both countries vil be ver soon *les mêmes; à present, voila le difference*—at present, see the difference between France and England. *Un Anglois est trop brusque,* too rough; *un François, peut-être trop poli;* but dat be fault *sur coté droit,* on de right side—*suppose nous avons*—suppose ve have *von traité de commerce, pour un exchange des manieres;* Jack Bull is von guinea too heavy; and un Frenchman, *entre nous, peut-être un Louis d'Or* too light;—now to make a de balance even, scrape de Englis, or vat you call sweat a de English guinea, and *augmentez le Louis d'Or,* and you give de polish to de one, and de proper weight to the other.

L. Old. I blush, my lord, to think my education was so cruelly neglected, that I cannot hold a conversation with you in your own language. People of condition should always speak French.

Count. *Mais j'espère*—me hope you understand?

L. Old. Oh, perfectly, my lord; you speak the language of the Graces; and that our sex understand in every country.

Count. *Si j'entends; vous, ma belle ange!* If I understand, it is you have give me the instructions.

L. Old. How well he makes himself understood! I never heard such sweet broken English in my life before.

Count. *Mais, Madam!* may I beg leave to solicit— [*Taking her by the hand.*

L. Old. My lord! dear count! [*Seemingly confused.*

Count. Madam, may I solicit *votre pitie, pour un passion qui brûle mon âme*—my passion consume a my heart.

L. Old. Oh, heavens! what a discovery is here? How fatal to the happiness of both!—I hope, my lord, you will exert your philosophy on this occasion, and consider the insurmountable obstacle.

Count. *Obstacle, Madam! quelle obstacle* to a man of my rank and fortune?

L. Old. Oh, fy, fy, my lord! can a man of your delicacy talk in this strain?

Count. *Ah, si vous pouviez lire*—if you could read a my heart.

L. Old. Go, unhappy youth! and endeavour to extinguish a fruitless flame, that, if it continue to burn, must only prove a source of disquietude to us both: go, too-pleasing seducer, and like the faithful, but honourable Werter, leave your ill-starred, sympathizing, Charlotte to her tears! [*Affecting to weep.*

Count. My Charlotte! no, it is my Harriet.

L. Old. Harriet!—What Harriet?

Count. Your niece, Madam; that *petite ange*—

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L. Old My niece! Was my niece the object of all this adoration?

Count. Is there one else living deserve so much?

L. Old. Yes, a hundred, if you had eyes to see.

Count. *Eh bien!* Madam, what say you to my proposal?

L. Old. My niece is engaged; or, if she wasn't, you should not have her.

Count. *Mais, le Chevalier Oldstock dit le contraire.*—Sir Oliver say quite different.

L. Old. Sir Oliver's an old fool, and I suppose didn't understand you, for you speak terrible English. [*Exit.*

Count. I speak terrible Englis! *Mon Dieu!—il est bien etrange!*—just now I speak ver sweet broke Englis.

Enter SIR OLIVER.

Sir O. Well, count, what says my wife?

Count. She does refuse—she vil not consent.

Sir O. I'm glad of it.

Count. *Diable! pourquoi* you glad of it?

Sir O. Because now I shall have an opportunity of showing my authority, and letting her know, you shall have my niece in spite of her. She's my own brother's daughter; he left her an orphan in my care, and I'll dispose of her as I like; I asked Lady Oldstock's approbation, only for the pleasure of being refused it—I love contradiction.

Count. *Mon cher chevalier!* you transport me.

Sir O. Yes, count; contradiction's my hobby horse; I mount him every hour of the day; and the more he kicks and flings, the greater delight I take in riding him.—I know you think me a whimsical old fellow; but you are new to our clime and our manners—we delight in thinking for ourselves—opposition is the very soul of an Englishman.

Count. Now, *mon chère père*, me ville settle—

Sir O. Odso! that's right—mind, the foundation stone of our agreement is, that you settle in England—a niece of mine shall never breed subjects to fight against her king and country!

Count. *Monsieur*, you have my vord of honour; and now I vill go visit my pretty Miss, vat you call Harriet: *mais, Monsieur*, rest assure me vil die, and live in England. [*Exit.*

Sir O. Well said, Monsieur! cart before the horse.—But now I am alone, let me see how my accounts stand: I have secured the French nabob for my niece; now it would be a master stroke if I could obtain the English one for my daughter, and thus centre the two nabobs in my own family. This son of the colonel's is a downright savage: Charlotte never could like him; or, if she could, interest tells me I should not; therefore her liking's out of the question: there's to be a division of the colonel's property, between the son and Mandeville: I want the whole, if possible. The colonel's not fifty, and in my mind he's a better looking man than either his son or his nephew.—Zounds! here comes Mandeville: I wish I could get decently out of his way.

Enter MANDEVILLE.

Man. I have been in search of you, Sir Oliver.

Sir O. I wish I had known that; I'd have saved you a good deal of trouble.—Well, my good Sir, had you any thing particular to say to me?

Man. Is your conduct towards me consistent with honour?

Sir O. I don't understand you.

Man. How convenient it is to assume ignorance of a subject on which it is painful to hear the truth, even to the man incapable of respecting it!

Sir O. Upon my word, Mr. Mandeville, you speak to me in a very strange stile; this is not a manner in which I am accustomed to be addressed.

Man. Sir, no man honours age more than I; or more readily yields rank every respect it can claim, when that rank does not forfeit its title to esteem, by meanly sinking and degrading itself.

Sir O. Well, Sir, in what particular have I injured you, to provoke the thunder of this terrible philippic?

Man. Can you seriously ask me that question, when you sanction the addresses of Count Pierpoint to your niece?

Sir O. Well, and what then?

Man. Have you forgot your prior engagement to me?

Sir O. Mr. Mandeville, the poet says, that "Every day's a satire on the last;" now I say that every day's a contradiction to the last; as circumstances vary, or events fall out, we are compelled by necessity to change our minds. As to my niece, whom I consider in the light of a daughter, I think it my duty, in providing her with a husband, to make the best bargain I can for her.

Man. Sir, have you no regard to what the world will say on this occasion? The world, Sir; that harsh, blind, misjudging multitude; whose slander, if it soil the ermine purity of virtue, what will it say, when it has justice upon its side?

Sir O. Nothing that I value—Young man, when you have lived as many years with the world as I have, you'll learn to make your happiness independent of its opinion—Don't you see knaves and fools every day rise into consequence, and all from the opinion of the world—the opinion of the world, Sir! It's a mouthful of moonshine!

Man. I believe with you that the world is too indolent—too much occupied with its pleasures, or its miseries, to take up the business of a censor—I fear it never examines thoroughly any man's pretensions to its favour; the more he asks, the more he generally obtains from the world. But, Sir—

Sir O. But me no more this debate, Mr. Mandeville—the question is put, and I am going.—Partial as I am to a polemical mode of discourse, I find that there may be sometimes even too much contradiction. [*Exit.*

Man. What shall I do with this deceitful, unfeeling man? But can I hesitate whilst I have a particle of spirit left? I'll go this moment, state the matter to Count Pierpoint, and he shall resign, or fight for his mistress?

Enter HARRIET.

Har. Dear Mandeville, what is the matter? My uncle has just parted from you, seemingly much out of temper, and the wildness and disorder of your looks terrify me?

Man. My heart is torn to pieces, Harriet—

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Indignation at the ungenerous treatment I have met with from your uncle, added to my fears of losing you, distract me.

Har. But can you doubt your Harriet? There is no power upon earth shall force me to be another's; do then, dear Mandeville! strive to calm this tumult in your mind—Betrayed by the violence of your passion, you talked of going in search of Count Pierpoint—let me beseech you not.

Man. You were deceived Harriet, in what you heard me say—do not prevent my going—I have business of a most particular nature calls me.

Har. I know perfectly the business that calls you—but let me conjure you, by all that regard you ever professed for me, not to think of it—You say your fears of losing me, distract you—judge then of the state of my heart, by your own—Has Harriet no fears for her Mandeville, at a moment she sees him eat up with an ungovernable rage—about, perhaps, to hurry himself or a fellow-creature into eternity?

Man. Your apprehensions, Harriet, are groundless—from what I learn of the Count's character, I believe him to be a man of too nice honour, too equitable, too generous, to reduce me to the necessity of proceeding to extremities; I only wish to explain matters to him.

Har. I can recommend a much better course to you, and one much more likely to succeed—Go to your uncle, that good, that noble hearted man—tell him your story—if any body has weight with Sir Oliver, it is Colonel Talbot.

Man. Nobody has weight with him, when avarice claims his ear.

Har. You are mistaken: he is not so great a slave to avarice as you suppose him.

Man. He is your uncle, Harriet, and I cannot speak of him with harshness.

Har. I know, by your eyes, you are not so angry as you were.

Man. I will be guided by you in every thing. There is a fascinating power, Harriet, in your looks and accents, when you would persuade, that cannot be resisted; a melting softness clings about my heart as I listen and behold you; there is sure a divinity in angel-beauty! You caused the tempest in my soul, and have calmed it. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—An Apartment at MANDEVILLE'S.

CALEB *and* JOHNSON *discovered over a bottle.*

Cal. Come, my boy, since you wont go to Jacob Wilkins' with me, we'll tope a little here. Fill your glass higher—higher yet; I'll have no skylights.—This is a bumper toast.

Johns. Well, what is it?

Cal. Our noble selves. [*Drinks.*

Johns. I find that you think a sentiment, like charity, should begin at home.

Cal. I do, to be sure.

Johns. We should have begun with the king and constitution.

Cal. Then here it goes;—and, though it is the second toast now, it shall be first next bottle.

Johns. Next bottle! But, Mr. Talbot, I have a particular engagement upon my hands this evening.—I hope you'll excuse my leaving you.

Cal. You sha'n't stir a foot. [*Pushes him to his chair.*]—Your wine's so good—I wonder how any body can quit this liquor.

Johns. But suppose there's a lady in the case—you wont press me to stay surely, after I tell you that?

Cal. Damn it! Take me with you.

Johns. Impossible!

Cal. Then sit down and drink with me, for I wont part with you.

Johns. What the devil shall I do? [*Looking at his watch.*] It wants but a quarter to six, and Mrs. Wilkins will be waiting tea for me. [*Aside.*

Cal. Come, to the charge again, and a brimmer it shall be.

Johns. [*Aside.*] I shall get fuddled too. I have often in a frolic assumed drunkenness; suppose I practise that stratagem now to get away from him? [*Hiccups, &c.*

Cal. Why, now I look at you, I think you are getting a little forward.

Johns. But I am not quite so bad as you think; do, let me go, Mr. Talbot.

Cal. Do you think I have no more regard for you? I tell you, you must go to bed,—now, do, go to bed.

Johns. How the devil shall I get away from him? Zounds, Sir, I am not drunk. [*Appearing to be sober.*

Cal. Poor fellow! I am sorry to see you so far gone; but I'll take care of you for this night. No, no; no going out this night. [*Impeding him.*

Johns. 'Sdeath and fire! Will this convince you that I am sober? [*Walking firmly up the stage.*

Cal. Take another turn, and I'll tell you.

Johns. But will you let me go then?

Cal. After we have had another bottle.

Johns. Zounds! another bottle!—Well, I'll go down to the cellar for it. [*Crosses.*

Cal. Mind you don't stay.

Johns. No, no; I sha'n't stay—[*Aside.*]—long in this house, now I have got out of your clutches, young gentleman. [*Exit.*

Cal. This is a devilish honest bottle—there is half a pint in it yet.—Well, my friend is gone, so here goes his health. [*Drinks.*] Poor fellow!—I never saw a man so soon drunk and sober.—Damn it, how he stays!—I long for a glass of wine; though he's not here, ecod, I'll fill my glass—a good bottle of wine is excellent company. [*Drinks.*

Enter MANDEVILLE.

Man. What, Sir, drinking by yourself?

Cal. I'm sure that's not my fault—I shall be very glad if you'll sit down and keep me company. I expect Johnson every minute with the other bottle.

Man. I suppose, Sir, Johnson has been your companion?

Cal. Yes; and a choice companion he is; only apt to get muzzled too soon.—Come, come, let me fill you a glass.

Man. I'll drink none, Sir; nor shall you drink any more; your father desires to see you instantly.

Cal. You'll let me finish the bottle?

Man. You must drink no more! He puts me beyond all patience. [*Aside.*

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Cal. Good, then, I'll take it with me. [*Takes it up.*

Man. Set it down, Sir. [*Lays hold on him violently:* CALEB, *in a fright, drops and breaks the bottle.*]

Cal. There, [*Looking at it.*] I have set it down, and am ready to go with you; we must be good friends again now we have cracked a bottle together. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—A Library.

CREVELT, *seated, with a book.*

Crev. [*Throws the book down.*] It is to no purpose—I cannot read—This adorable girl has taken such entire possession of my mind, it has not room for any other object; when Mr. Mandeville told me she was going to be married, and to whom, my hope died within me, for then I knew all hope was lost.—She comes this way—I would avoid her, but have not the power.

Enter CHARLOTTE, *a volume of Shakspeare in her hand.*

Char. [*Reading.*] ——"*She never told her love;*
But let concealment, like a worm i'the bud,
Feed on her damask cheek: she pin'd in thought,
And with a green and yellow melancholy
She sat, like Patience on a monument,
Smiling at grief."

Bless me! Captain Crevelt, [*Starting.*] I did not see you.—I was quite absorbed in poor Viola's melancholy relation of undivulged love; this little picture is so highly finished, so delicately coloured with touches of the true pathetic, that I never read it without being wonderfully affected.—Don't you think it one of the finest passages in all Shakspeare?

Crev. I so much admire it, Madam, that I would give the world this moment for the pencil of its immortal writer, to paint one of our sex in the same state of uncomplaining despondency.

Char. I protest you spoke those last words with so serious an air; that I'm half inclined to think you are in love yourself: if that be the case, come, make me your confidante: I'll be as silent as Shakspeare's own marble Grief and Patience.

Crev. You speak, Madam, like one well versed in the passion.

Char. And is that strange, Sir, when I come with Shakspeare in my hand; a master, who teaches the whole history of the passions?

Crev. Were I to wish another laurel on the grave of Shakspeare, it should be planted by the hand of so charming a commentator.

Char. Sir, there is a laurel already planted on his grave by one of our sex, which will flourish till the spirit of his genius, and his writings, are no more remembered—but to the point—I have pronounced you in love; now let me know who your mistress is?

Crev. Madam, I dare not.

Char. Dare not! Is that a soldier's phrase? Courage, man; there is nothing impossible to spirit and perseverance: besides, the more difficulties are in the road to your mistress, the better she'll like you for surmounting them.

Crev. But suppose there was a difficulty not to be surmounted?

Char. If your mistress does not dislike you, I know of no other difficulty which is not to be surmounted.

Crev. But, even presuming that were the case, which I have by no means reason to imagine, I cannot think of her without condemning myself.

Char. Is she so much beneath you?

Crev. She's above my praise, and above my hopes.

Char. If she deserve all this adoration, she never will think herself above a man of merit.

Crev. Then, Madam, you don't think marrying for love entirely out of fashion?

Char. I never would marry for any thing else.

Crev. [*Aside.*] Then I'm undone, she loves the man for whom she is intended; and the assurance of it, that I have now received from her own lips, was meant as a reproach to a passion she has discovered, in spite of all my efforts to conceal it.

Char. [*Seeing his disorder.*] What's the matter, Sir?

Crev. I fear, Madam, I only interrupt your studies. [*Going.*

Char. How can you talk so! I don't know any one whose conversation, on so short an acquaintance, is so agreeable to me; this last has been particularly interesting.

Crev. It is plain, from the sarcasm of that reply, that she understands me—but I am justly punished for my apostacy to honour, in daring to think of her. [*Aside.*

Char. He appears confused and embarrassed all of a sudden; I fear my vanity has betrayed me too far, and that I have been mistaken in the object of his affections. [*Aside.*

Crev. I have not power to speak to her. [*Aside.*

Char. No, no; I'm not the object. [*Aside.*

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Sir, the colonel wishes to see you immediately.

Crev. What a release from torture! [*Aside.*] I shall wait on him. [*Exit* SERVANT.] Madam, your most obedient. [*Exit.*

Char. So, I have as good as told a man I like him, who, it is plain, is in love with another woman: unhappy Charlotte!

Enter SIR OLIVER; *speaks as he comes on.*

Sir O. Charlotte!

Char. Sir!

Sir O. Sir! How melancholy a monosyllable comes from a woman's mouth: it sounds as dismal as a single bell after a full peal. But, Charlotte, what's the matter? I never saw you so thoughtful before: I hope it is not your marriage that makes you uneasy.

Char. It never gave me an uneasy moment. I had made up my mind on the subject.

Sir O. Well, well; let the matter rest then: however, I must confess, I should like to see my girl well married and settled before I left the world.

Char. I don't think I shall ever marry.

Sir O. Never marry!

Char. No.

Sir O. Confound those monosyllables! Charlotte, let me have no more of them; the laconic style does not become you: I wonder from

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whom you take it; for my part, I'm fond of the figure of amplification in discourse; and I'm sure your mother deals in an eloquence, copious at times, even to redundancy.

Char. Sir, I have not spirits for conversation.

Sir O. I am surprised at that, when you have every thing your own way: you wont marry this body, nor you wont marry t'other; and I, like an easy, indulgent, old soul, humour you in every thing, fond as I am of contradiction.

Char. Haven't you all's one as held me up to sale to the highest bidder?——I was first intended for Mr. Mandeville, next destined to Colonel Talbot's new-found heir.

Sir O. His new-found bear you should say; but, Charlotte, Charlotte, how uncandid you are! when I proposed the last match I had not seen the man.

Char. Sir, you change your mind so often, and bandy me about in so extraordinary a manner, that I shall become a topic for public ridicule.

Sir O. Well, and if I do change my mind often, isn't it for your good? As one project starts up in my mind better than another, in order to take advantage of that, I must naturally contradict myself. The Spanish proverb says, a wise man often changes his mind, a fool never.

Char. According to that proverb you should be a second Solomon: who you intend me for next I cannot possibly guess; but, as I never will marry without your consent, I trust it will not be deemed undutiful, if I always retain a negative to myself, in a matter which so nearly concerns my happiness as the choice of a husband. [*Exit.*

Sir O. What's to be done? she actually sets my authority at defiance; but this comes of rich uncles leaving fat legacies to their nieces; it converts a father into a cipher.

Enter LADY OLDSTOCK *and* HARRIET.

L. Old. Sir Oliver, Sir Oliver, the whole world is condemning you.

Sir O. So much the better; a quarter of the world never was right, but the whole is always wrong; you have brought me this good news, I suppose, knowing I was out of spirits.

Har. To contract for me, without my knowledge, and with an utter stranger too! as if I had not the common privilege of a thinking, rational creature?

Sir O. Ecod, I think you have too much of that privilege: why, you ungrateful minx, do you fly in my face for endeavouring to get a count for you?

L. Old. A count! A strange kind of count—the fellow made love to me.

Sir O. Then indeed must he be a strange kind of count.

L. Old. I shall sue for a separate maintenance.

Har. And I shall sue for the little property my father left in his hands.

Sir O. Damn it, since you have begun, come, fire away from both sides, volley after volley; don't spare me, I'll make you raise the siege at last; contradiction's my element, as fire is the salamander's. I can't have too much of it; my opinion is impregnable.

Har. It's in vain to speak to him.

L. Old. Speak to him child! now he's in all his glory.

Sir O. Hobbes maintains that the whole world is in a state of warfare, and I believe him. [*Speaking to himself.*

L. Old. I say, Sir Oliver, are you deaf?

Sir O. But it is a wise law in nature.

Har. Dear uncle, will you listen to me?

Sir O. Opposition calls forth the latent powers of the mind.

L. Old. Was there ever any thing so provoking?

Sir O. Your greatest men have been formed by difficulties.

Har. Every moment is big with danger to my happiness.

Sir O. Methinks, I now resemble the memorable column of English infantry at Fontenoy, marching down between two forts, with all their batteries playing upon it: whiz, fly the small shot from the left: and bang go the great guns from the right; but on we march, firm as a wedge; without confusion without disorder, without dismay; and quit the field of battle with honour. [*Exit.*

Har. My principal fear, is a quarrel between Count Pierpoint and Mr. Mandeville.

L. Old. You had better speak to his friend, Captain Crevelt; for my part I have no influence with the count.

Har. Dear aunt, how can you talk thus? So fine a woman will never lose her influence.

L. Old. Pray, Harriet, have you ever read that elegant fellow St. Evremond's account of the lovely Ninon; she who retained her beauty and power of fascination to the age of eighty?

Har. I have never read St. Evremond, Madam.

L. Old. Then you have read nothing: he was the intimate friend of Fontaine, Racine, and Corneille; all the great men of his time valued his friendship: but what most endears him to me, was his esteem for the lovely Ninon—I shall never forget one of her letters, in which she mentions her first wearing spectacles; but said that charming woman, as I had always a grave look spectacles become me.

Har. I declare, aunt, I have always thought the same of you, when I have seen you with your spectacles on.

L. Old. But you're mistaken Harriet, if you suppose I wear spectacles from any necessity I have for them—I wear them by way of prevention.

Har. As I hope to live, here comes the count: he'll teaze me to death if I stay—I never saw you look so well, aunt.

L. Old. You may go, Harriet, and find Captain Crevelt—I'll once more try my influence with this Frenchman. [*Exit* HARRIET.

Enter COUNT PIERPOINT.

Well, count; I hope you have changed your opinion since our last conversation, and that you're become a little more anglicised.

Count. *Eh bien! Madam je ne puis pas comprendre,* I no understand.

L. Old. Why, we have changed characters; you can't understand me now, and I couldn't understand you before: but, count, I'd advise you to consider you are in England; and though it may be the etiquette in France to treat a married lady with as much attention as

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a single, it is in this country of jealous circumspection, very dangerous: it is almost sufficient to cause a separation.

Count. Ah, Madam! have a some pity on those whom your charms enslave; *quand l'amour est dans le cœur, il fait l'esprit comme lui même;* dat is, ven love is in de heart, he make a dey understand blind as himself, by gar.

L. Old. The French are certainly the most agreeable people in the world; if they transgress, they make reparation with so good a grace, that it's delightful to be on good or bad terms with them.

Count. I made von *grand faux pas;* but, like good general, me vil profit by my loss. [*Aside.*] —Madam Oldstock is vat you call von *grand bastion*, or outwork: I will take a that first, *et la petite citadel, Mademoiselle* Harriet, follow of course by gar.

L. Old. Well, count, I forgive you; but it's on condition that you are more circumspect in future.

Enter SIR OLIVER, *at the back of the stage.*

Sir O. If I could lay my hand on Burn's Justice in the library, that would set me right: but I think it's a question for gentlemen of the common law.—Eh! what's all this?

[*Seeing the* COUNT *and* L. OLD.

Count. *Madam, permettez-moi baiser votre main;* I must kiss a your von pretty hand in sign of reconciliation. [*Kissing her hand.*

Sir O. I was thinking of the common law; but here promises to arise a question for gentlemen of the civil law.

L. Old. Jealousy, count, is a tree of English growth.

Sir O. It may be a tree of English growth; but it's a tree would never flourish, if a taste for French gardening did not so often make the branches sprout.

Count. *Mon Dieu! quelle grand disproportion* in your age and the Chevalier Oldstock!

L. Old. When a woman marries very young, my lord, a dozen years' difference is nothing in the age of a husband.

Sir O. A dozen years! damme, if there's a dozen months between us.

L. Old. That's a most beautiful brilliant, count, on your finger—I think I never saw so large a one: the rich cluster of it's rays cast a light actually celestial.

Sir O. If that poor diamond could speak now, perhaps we'd find it was not very celestially come by.

Count. To reconcile me complete *permettez-moi* to make you von present.

L. Old. Dear count, I cannot think of accepting a ring of such immense value.—No, no, count, I am not such an infant as to wish to possess every thing that I admire.

Sir O. No, to be sure, you an't.—Why, count, how is all this? [*Coming forward.*

L. Old. Oh! heavens! Sir Oliver!

Sir O. Yes, my lady; does the great disproportion of our years frighten you?

Count. Upon my vord, Monsieur Oldstock, this is not behave with your usual *politesse.*

Sir O. Why, what the devil, man! aren't you content with one of my chickens but you must have my old hen into the bargain!

L. Old. Old hen!

Sir O. Yes, my lady; when I had you first you were no pullet.

L. Old. Now there will be no end to his suspicions.

Sir O. Ecod I think this is putting suspicion out of the question.—Well, my lady, what have you to say for yourself! You asked me if I wasn't deaf; now, are you dumb?—Damn it, say something, if it's only to contradict me.

Count. Monsieur Oldstock, *je suis*—I am your very good friend.

Sir O. You are count; and, what's more, I find your my wife's friend.

L. Old. Sir Oliver, conscious as I am of the purity of my thoughts, I could look down with contempt on every extravagance to which your jealous temper hurries you: but, when I consider how the fairest reputations are every day injured from the slightest foundations—if it should creep into the public prints—

Sir O. Then I'll give you a little comfort—nobody will believe it.

L. Old. The cool malignity of his temper is more provoking than his jealousy—I can't bear to have been all my life reproached for nothing. [*Exit.*

Count. Monsieur Oldstock.

Sir O. Count Pierpont, no apologies: I am not at all angry with you, nor do I entertain any suspicion of my wife.—Love of admiration is her ruling passion; and as long as she lives, she'll fancy herself an object of that admiration.

Count. *Vous savez très bien* my passion *pour Mademoiselle Harriet.*

Sir O. I know every thing—I now see your view, in all this attention to Lady Oldstock: you imprudently made her your enemy, not knowing her character; but you have very wisely rectified your mistake.—You see, count, I'm a keen old fellow; I haven't lived for nothing so many years in the world.

Count. *Mon Dieu! vous êtes un Machiavel.*

Sir O. Come along, count.—But before you go, how do you think your friend Colonel Talbot stands affected as to matrimony? Do you imagine, if a fine girl was thrown in his way, that he'd marry her?

Count. Nothing more like, on my vord; *il est un homme de galanterie; sans doute,* he has a de son, if dat be no objection.

Sir O. Objection! he should marry for that very reason, and get more sons, if it was only to convince the world that he has mended his hand in the business. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—Continues at MANDEVILLE'S.

Enter HARRIET *and* CHARLOTTE.

Har. I am half in love with Count Pierpoint for his noble behaviour.—The moment matters were properly explained to him, he withdrew his claim instantly.—Well, I never more will hear the French spoken ill of; they carry the point of honour to a pitch of heroism—but, Charlotte, what is the matter? Your spirits are intolerably depressed!

Char. You only fancy so, from the unusual gayety of your own.

Har. I have a great mind to send Captain Crevelt to you; you are just fit company for each other: two moping, melancholy fools.

Char. From some conversation I have had with him, I take it, that he is in love.

Har. And I fancy I have a fair friend much in the same situation.

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Char. He leaves town to-day.

Har. Unless you issue your sovereign commands to the contrary.

Char. My sovereign commands! How you trifle! What influence have I over him?

Har. That influence which a beautiful woman will always have over a man of exquisite sensibility.—Mandeville told me he was eternally talking of you.

Char. Talking of me! Lord, I wonder what the man can have to say about me?

Har. Oh! a thousand handsome things, I dare say: but, if you wish to be satisfied as to the particulars, you may have them from the gentleman's own mouth, for here he comes; so I'll leave you together.

Char. Then you will be so ill natured?

Har. Good natured, sweet cousin.— [*Exit.*

Char. Eternally talking of me! Whence, then, arose his sudden coldness and reserve, when I but too plainly discovered my partiality for him? Yet I may have been mistaken; a mind possessed of so much delicacy as his, might have deemed it criminal to address me on the score of love, at a time he thought I was intended for the son of his friend, Colonel Talbot—it is, it must be so—the pulses of my heart quicken at the thought—but he's here.

Enter CREVELT.

Crev. Miss Oldstock, as I mean to quit town this evening, and possibly may never see you again, I am come to solicit the honour of a few minutes' conversation.

Char. Never see me again! I hope you are not going back to India.

Crev. No, Madam, that is not my intention.

Char. Oh! then I understand you; it is that compound of every female excellence, of whom you spoke to me in such raptures, who is the cause of your leaving us.

Crev. I own it, Madam.

Char. But you talked of never seeing me again; is your mistress that jealous creature as to exact such a promise from you?

Crev. No, Madam; that is a punishment I voluntarily inflict upon myself.

Char. You do say the most gallant things, with the most sombre countenance; your wit and your face, Captain Crevelt, are the diamond and its foil; the dark shade of the one lends a more vivid glow to the other's sparkling brilliancy:—what an alteration the presence of your mistress would make in your looks; could you look thus in her presence?

Crev. In the present state of my heart, I could not look otherwise.

Char. No! not if she smiled upon you?

Crev. A smile from her would raise me from despair: but that, Madam—confusion! yonder I see Colonel Talbot; this is the second time to-day he has found me in earnest conversation with her. [*Aside.*

Char. I did not think it possible till now, Colonel Talbot could put me out of temper.

Crev. Will he not suspect that I am meanly stealing myself upon her affections, and attribute her dislike of his son to me?—But he comes; I cannot meet his eye in the present state of my feelings. [*Aside.*]—Adieu, dear Miss Oldstock.

Char. But are we never to meet again?

Crev. It is a sacrifice, Madam, that pierces and widows my heart for ever; but honour and gratitude demand it. [*Exit.*

Enter COLONEL TALBOT.

Col. Wasn't that Captain Crevelt, Miss Oldstock, that parted from you?

Char. Yes, Sir: he has just taken his leave of me, and said I shall never see him again.

Col. There is a refinement in Crevelt's temper, that to strangers makes his conduct at times appear very unaccountable; but I fancy I have discovered the cause of this extraordinary resolution.

Char. And sure, Sir, you can prevail upon him to alter it?

Col. Then my lovely girl wishes he should alter his resolution?

Char. Oh, Sir! Is it possible to be acquainted with so noble, so accomplished, so brave, a youth, and not esteem him? Never see me more!—

Col. It is as I suspected; and, indeed, as I wish; for who but Crevelt is worthy of such a woman? [*Aside.*] I hope, Miss Oldstock, you are now perfectly convinced, that I would not purchase the greatest earthly happiness at the price of your peace of mind.—Highly as my pride and natural affection would be gratified to call you daughter, I trust I can turn my eye with manly firmness from the bright, the flattering prospect; and, resigned to the dispensations of a Power who never afflicts his creature but for wise and good purposes, point out a man in every respect but birth and fortune deserving of you.

Char. Birth and fortune, colonel! despicable distinctions! when nature asserts her superior claims to reverence, by ennobling the spirit, how low it lays the insolence of ancestry, and humbles the vanity of wealth.

Col. Madam, your words penetrate my very soul; with an aching, joyless heart, I look back to those imaginary scenes of happiness, fancy had painted in meeting with a son; the only pledge of love from the first object of my affections, and whose image still warms this desolated bosom.—Birth! when I survey my own offspring, and behold poor Crevelt, I am ashamed to think so empty a thing as family pride had ever any influence over me.

Char. But you will prevail upon him to alter his resolution?

Col. On one condition, Madam.

Char. What is that, colonel?

Col. That you will receive him as my adopted son.—Your father's objections I will remove, by making him your equal in fortune.

Char. I don't know how to thank you, colonel: but, perhaps, he's already gone.

Col. Gone, without seeing me first, impossible!—But what says my sweet girl to the proposal I have made her?

Char. You are so good, so disinterested, and so generous, that it is impossible not to acquiesce in any proposal of yours: but yet I will not make you an absolute promise; mind that, colonel; till I find you have effectually accomplished my request, and induced Captain Crevelt to alter his resolution. [*Exit.*

Col. Luckily, Sir Oliver has taken a very great liking to him; and told me that he would insist upon his passing a few days at his house, previous to visiting his relations.

Enter COUNT *and* MANDEVILLE.

Count. *J'espère, Monsieur Mandeville,* you

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are perfectly satisfy—*sur mon honneur*, had I known Mademoiselle Harriet was *engagé*, I never would pay *l'adresse*.

Man. I believe it, count; and hope you will forgive the warmth I was at first betrayed into.

Count. *Mon Dieu! il est l'effervescence d'une grande âme;* no brave man ever resign *sa maîtresse avec sang froid.*

Col. Now, Mandeville, to completely remove your fears in regard to Harriet, know, I have made your peace with her uncle—would you believe it? he actually proposed his daughter to me—however, by the dint of argument, added to the influence of an old friendship, I at last brought him to reason.

Enter SIR OLIVER.

Sir O. Colonel, colonel, is this strict observance of treaty? the carriages are waiting for us at the door—were we not all to set off for my house immediately? did you not promise to pass ten days with me when you had contradicted me into consent at last?

Count. Monsieur Oldstock, your niece was very pretty to be sure; *mais, mon Dieu! votre fille* be very pretty *aussi;* me understand she vill not marry young Monsieur Talbot, and *mon ami* the colonel vill not have her—*eh bien,* vat you say to me for von husband?

Sir O. With all my heart and soul, count—I don't know a French gentleman of a long time I have taken such a liking to—damn me! if you have not a fine roast-beef countenance.

Col. I fancy, count, that lady's affections are also engaged.

Count. *Je suis très malheureux!* all de English lady be engaged! but me be not surprised; for, if de foreigner set so much value on de English lady, vat must their own countrymen, who know them better, do?

Sir O. Why, what the deuce, colonel, is all this? You wont marry my daughter yourself; you wont suffer your son, whatever her inclinations may be, to marry him; and now you put the count against her.

Col. Will you leave the lady to her own choice?

Sir O. The worst of it is, I must do that.—Count, a word in your ear—to her yourself—you're a devilish straight, well-looking fellow; no appearance of frogs about you, except upon your coat.

Count. I wish it vid all my heart. [*Exit.*

Col. How unsubstantial are all the projects of man, in whatever hope flatters him with happiness—this unhappy boy distracts me!

Sir O. Damn me! if I wouldn't send him down into Wales or Yorkshire—for about fifteen pounds a-year, you may get him decently boarded and clad, and educated into the bargain.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. I have been in search of Mr. Talbot, Sir, since you spoke to me; and have just heard that he is gone to one Jacob Wilkins', an innkeeper near Smithfield.

Col. I am exposed, you see, already.

Sir O. It's your own fault if you continue to be exposed; come along, Colonel; yonder, I see Captain Crevelt putting the women into the carriages. We'll drive round by this Wilkins', and take this young Mohawk by surprise; the moment you get possession of him, banish him into Wales.

Col. I will myself go in person to Wilkins', and from his own lips learn every particular respecting this unhappy youth, from the hour I left him in his care; and as you propose going home that way, Sir Oliver, I will trespass so far upon your patience as to request you will wait for me whilst I make this inquiry.

Man. Dear Sir, don't make yourself so unhappy.

Col. What is there wealth can purchase I cannot possess? my feelings are at once a satire and a lesson to avarice. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—A Room at JACOB WILKINS'.

JOHNSON *and* MRS. WILKINS *discovered at tea.*

Mrs. Wil. I'm sure I shall never forget the first time I was in this room; where you see Mr. Wilkins has his honour the colonel's picture up—dear heart, what a handsome man he is! it's a great pity he does not marry.

Johns. He's very much altered—consider, it's many years since that picture was painted; his face is parched to the complexion of an old drum head, and his hair is perfectly silver.

Mrs. Wil. What effect silver hair may have upon your great ladies, I will not pretend to say; but this I'll swear to; bait your hook properly with gold, and a poor girl is a trout you may take with a single hair of any colour. If it was not for his money, do you think I'd ever have married old Jacob Wilkins?

Johns. Why, no, I hardly think you would; but why, my dear creature, has his name escaped your lips? should he possess such a treasure? the man worthy of you should always meet you with the ardour of a lover, and dart, as I do, with transport into your arms.

Enter BETTY.

Bet. O, Madam! Madam! my master is come home, and is raving like mad at your leaving the bar, and drinking tea up stairs.

Mrs. Wil. He doesn't know I have any body with me?

Bet. Lord, Ma'am, to be sure he doesn't; I told him you were not well, and that you found the bar too cold for you.

Mrs. Wil. You're an excellent girl.

Johns. How the devil will you get me out?

Bet. I hear his cough at the foot of the stairs—dear Madam, he's coming up.

Johns. 'Sdeath, I'll run and shut myself up in that little room yonder.

Mrs. Wil. By no means! that's our own bedchamber; his bureau is in it; and as he pays his brewer to-day, perhaps it's there he's going now for money.

Bet. I have it, Madam; I'll let down this window curtain, and the gentleman may get behind it; if my master asks why it is down, you may say you were so ill, the light was too much for you.

[*Drops the window curtain before* JOHNSON.

Mrs. Wil. Such a servant is worth her weight in gold.

Bet. Here, Madam; tie this handkerchief about your head; appear very bad indeed—there, Madam—let him come now when he pleases, we are ready for him. [*Exit.*

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Enter WILKINS *and* AMBER.

Wil. So, Mr. Amber, you have a curiosity to see the upper part of my house; you can't think how pleasant it is; my wife can tell you what a prospect there is on my upper story.

Am. Poor Mrs. Wilkins is quite muffled up; she's very bad, poor woman; I'm sorry we disturb her.

Wil. Why, Fanny, my love, what's the matter? you were very well when I went out.

Mrs. Wil. I have been seized, all of a sudden, with such a terrible pain on one side of my face, I can hardly get my words out.

Wil. I am sorry for this, Fanny—but what wiseacre has let this curtain down? I can't bear to shut out the light of a fine day.

Mrs. Wil. Has the brute a mind to be the death of me? [*Seizing him by the arm.*

Wil. Will it do you any good to keep me in the dark?

Mrs. Wil. To be sure it will, when I can't bear the light.

Am. Friend Wilkins, friend Wilkins, the light is too much for her.

Mrs. Wil. You're a considerate man, Mr. Amber, and I dare, say, make an excellent husband.

Wil. Well, well, then let the curtain remain down—come, Fanny, give your old Jacob a kiss.

Mrs. Wil. I'm too fond of you, Jacob, and you take advantage of that.

Wil. No, but I don't—kiss me again, you fond fool, it will do you good.

Am. Ah! you're a happy couple; but you take the right method to be so, by giving way to one another.

Wil. But now we are up stairs, friend Amber, sit down, and I'll go bring some money out of the next room, and pay you.

Mrs. Wil. I beg of you, Jacob, to take him down stairs and pay him: even your talking sets my head distracted.

Wil. My dear, I sha'n't be two minutes settling with him; it will affront him if you turn him out of the room; you shall have the place to yourself immediately. [*Exit.*

Re-enter BETTY.

Bet. Madam, you're undone, if you don't come down stairs immediately: Ned, the new waiter, saw Mr. Johnson, and he as good as told me he'd acquaint my master.

Mrs. Wil. What shall I do? I'm afraid to leave the room.

Bet. You needn't stop a minute; it's only squeezing Ned's hand, and slipping a sly half-guinea into it, and all will be right.

Mrs. Wil. O, Betty, I wish he was well out of the house—you'll excuse me, Mr. Amber, a little; I'm wanted down stairs.

[*Exeunt* MRS. WILKINS *and* BETTY.

Am. Don't notice me, child; business must be minded—but let me see—suppose I sign my receipt, and have it ready for him.

[*Taking out his pocket-book and ink-horn.*

Enter WILKINS.

Wil. Here is the money, my old boy; have you got your receipt ready?

Am. I was going to sign it; but my eyes are so dim, I can't see with that curtain down.

Wil. As my wife's not here to complain of the light, I'll draw it up for you.

[*Draws up the curtain.*

Am. That will do, I see plain enough now.

Wil. And so do I too—O the Jezabel!

Enter MRS. WILKINS.

Mrs. Wil. Ruined!

Am. My dear Mrs. Wilkins, I beg ten thousand pardons for letting so much light into the room, but I declare I could not see to write my receipt.

Wil. Well, Mr. Johnson, what brought you here?—what have you to say for yourself—are you come to rob my house?

Am. O! O! I fear the dimness of my eyes has made others too clear-sighted—but, friend Wilkins, don't be too hasty in judging.

Wil. 'Sdeath and fire, man, sha'n't I believe my own eyes?

Am. Not always—we are all apt to be suspicious at times—I'll wish you a good evening—there is my receipt:—the fondest couples will spar now and then—but I never like to meddle in family quarrels.—Wilkins, you certainly have a fine prospect on your upper story—good evening, good Mrs. Wilkins. [*Exit.*

Wil. Go, Madam; pack up your alls, and leave my house immediately—if you are in want of a morsel of bread, it would give me pleasure to refuse it to you. As for you, Sir, I'll take care your business shall be done with Colonel Talbot—I'll see you both beggars, and that will be some satisfaction to me.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Colonel Talbot is coming up stairs, Sir, to speak to you.

Johns. Confusion! I'm undone!

Enter COLONEL TALBOT.

Col. Johnson, here!

Wil. Yes, Sir, Johnson; your worthy gentleman is here on a visit to that wretch, my wife.

Mrs. Wil. Wretch, Mr. Wilkins!

Wil. Yes, Madam, an ungrateful wretch.

Col. I'm sorry, Johnson, for this; I was given to understand you were come in search of my son.

Mrs. Wil. Wretch! I'll discover all, if I'm ruined for ever. [*Aside.*] He's not your son, Sir— [*Going up to the Colonel.*

Wil. Devil! devil! what is she going to say?

Col. Not my son! speak again, woman.

Wil. But, dear colonel, sure you wont believe what this wicked woman will say?

Col. Away, villain, and let me hear her—alarmed nature starts up in my heart, and opens a thousand ears to listen to her.

Mrs. Wil. He lost your son, Sir, when he was a boy of twelve years old; and you may be sure, Sir, it wasn't the kindest usage made the child leave him; the booby he palmed upon you is his own.

Col. Unprincipled, inhuman villain! let me hear the whole truth from your own lips, or, by every power that's sacred and divine, this moment is your last.

Wil. Dear Sir, put up your sword, and I'll tell you every thing.—What she says is partly true; your son strayed from me when he was

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about twelve years old; but, had he been my own, I couldn't have used him better: as a proof of it, his mother, in her last illness, came, as she often did, privately to see him, and was so well pleased with my wife's and my treatment of her son, that she gave me a fifty-pound bank note—I shall never forget the day; it was the last time I ever saw her: she hung a small picture of herself, set in gold, about the child's neck, and wept bitterly over him.

Col. Can you produce that picture?

Wil. Your son took it with him: he was so fond of it, I could never keep it out of his hands but by locking it up; which I sometimes did, as the severest of all punishments I could inflict upon him.

Col. I must have better proof this tale is true, before I let you escape that justice I fear is due to your wickedness.—Johnson, take him from my sight, and let him be secured; I cannot bear to look at him.—Tell the company, waiting for me in carriages at the door, to come in; for I am so agitated, and anxious for more particulars, I cannot quit this detested spot.

Johns. They are here, Sir.

[*Exit* JOHNSON, WILKINS, *and* WIFE.

Enter CREVELT, MANDEVILLE, CHARLOTTE, HARRIET, SIR OLIVER, LADY OLDSTOCK, *and* COUNT.

Crev. Dear Sir, what is the matter? Observing a confusion in the house immediately after you went in, we were alarmed for your safety.

Col. Oh, Crevelt! I am the unhappiest of fathers; that creature, whom you all suppose my son, is not so.

Char. Good fortune be praised!

Col. He's son to the fellow who keeps this house. He says, my poor child strayed from him when a boy; but this tale is so improbable, that I rather fear he has fallen a victim to this fellow's villany and avarice.

Crev. Dear Sir, compose yourself, and hope human nature cannot be so depraved; it wrings my heart to see you in this distress.—But who is this villain?

Col. His name is Wilkins.—When I committed my child to his care, he lived at Henley: he pretends he lost him at twelve years old; and, oh! agony to think! if he, indeed, be living, he is at this moment a wandering outcast and a beggar.

Crev. Merciful heaven! What do I hear? Can it be possible! Shall I, in my loved and honoured patron, find a fond and living father? Sir, did that man lose a son of yours at twelve years of age?

Col. Yes, Crevelt; I have no son but you now.

Crev. I am your son, Sir—your happy son! that son you lost.

Col. You! You, Crevelt!

Crev. Yes, Sir, the veteran, whose name I bear, took me with him, at the age you mention, from Henley, where I lived with the man you have just named, whom I always thought my father; it was the pride of poor Crevelt's heart to have me believed his son: I bore his name, and publicly acknowledged him as my father; for you, Sir, could not have loved me better; his dying request to me was, still to retain the name of Crevelt, and never forget the man who made me a soldier.

Col. My son! my son! The hand of Providence has surely directed every circumstance of your life; you were brought to me a stranger and a child; I became your parent by resistless instinct; in battle once I owed my life to you, and now a second time you save it.

Char. Oh! Harriet. There is a chord of delight in my heart never touched before: and sure, he who made that heart, now moves its springs to ecstasy by the finger of an angel.

Col. He talked of your taking with you a picture of your mother—had you ever any such thing?

Crev. I have it still, Sir, and ever wore it next my heart. [*Producing the picture from his bosom.*] You see the frame is shattered;—it was by a musquet ball the day every body thought I was killed.

Col. It is indeed your mother; and see here those specks under the eye; are they my child's blood, or the tears of a fond parent?

[JOHNSON *to* CALEB *without.*] You must not come in; I have already explained every thing effectually.

Enter CALEB, *very abruptly, and* JOHNSON.

Cal. I tell you I will come in: zounds! will nobody father me?

Col. Young man, you have been deceived; you are Wilkins' son, not mine.

Cal. Pho, pho! Father, do you think I know no better?

Johns. If you don't come out this moment, and no longer disturb my master, I'll take you by the shoulder.

Cal. Why here's a fellow for you—forgets he is talking to a captain!

Col. That is a rank you are so utterly unfit for, that it would only expose you to unhappiness and ridicule; therefore your commission shall be sold; and for being one day my son, the purchase money shall be appropriated to set you up in business.

Johns. Well, what keeps you now?

Cal. You are in a devil of a hurry, Mr. Johnson: I find I must put up with old Jacob again; but let me ask you one question, an't I to be entitled to half-pay for my services?

Johns. You shall have full-pay if you don't go about your business.

[*Shakes his cane at him.*

Cal. Well, if I can't be a half-pay captain I'll be a no-pay captain—for, once a captain and always a captain. [*Exit.*

Sir O. Captain Crevelt—I beg your pardon, Captain Talbot,—give me your hand; you want nothing now but a wife, and if my daughter Charlotte—

Count. *Eh bien!* Monsieur Chevalier, you have forgot—

Sir O. Why, no, count, I have not forgot; but you must know, that whatever my respect for you may be, there is not that man living whose alliance I so much desire as Colonel Talbot's; besides, I understand there is another branch of the family of my mind.

Count. Chevalier, I love and I respect the English, and, by gar, me will have a wife among you.

Man. It is not in words to express my pleasure—To make a bosom friend, and find a near relation, in less time than others form a common acquaintance, overflows my heart with transport.

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L. Old. I could wish also to show how this affecting discovery touches me, if I was not apprehensive, Sir Oliver, of your unfortunate, suspicious temper.

Sir O. Captain Talbot, be so good as to step this way—do give my wife a kiss; I know, my dear, your lips itch for it; and with all her faults, believe me, she has a heart that beats in unison to the feelings of all present, and a tear for misery and friendship.

Col. Miss Oldstock, it is your father's wish and mine to unite our families—now that I have a son I can propose to you, there is only your acceptance of him necessary to make me happy.

Char. Why, Sir, if the gentleman has but courage to speak for himself—

Sir O. As I don't expect the pleasure of contradiction from either party on this occasion, I'll join their hands, [*Joining their hands.*] without waiting for an answer—there—colonel, you are now one of my family.

Col. That assurance, Sir Oliver, seals and completes my happiness.—You, Mandeville, shall share a portion of my fortune as a son; and my happiness shall wait on you and your lovely Harriet.—And now, [*Addressing the audience.*] if this court-martial, to whom we appeal, acquit us with honour, I shall bless the hour my boy said, *He would be a Soldier.*

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MISS IN HER TEENS:

A FARCE,

IN TWO ACTS.

BY DAVID GARRICK, Esq.

REMARKS.

THIS Farce, by that exquisite master of theatrical composition, David Garrick, cannot fail to please every beholder: —it evinces both the consummate judgment and the dramatical accuracy of its author, who has here presented the world with one of the chastest and most humourous pieces, according to the rules of art, to be found in the whole circle of the Drama The characters of Captain Loveit and Miss Biddy, the hero and heroine, are well drawn, and the manners and language made use of by both, are such as might naturally be expected to arise from persons in a similar situation. As to the three characters Fribble, Flash, and Jasper, they are sufficiently exposed and held up to ridicule; and Puff, Captain Loveit's man, performs the part assigned him with the keenest foresight.

The parts assigned to Sir Simon Loveit and the Aunt, in the original, have been judiciously omitted of late years.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	As originally acted, 1747.	DRURY LANE, 1805.
Sir Simon Loveit,	*Mr Taswell.*	
Captain Loveit,	*Mr. Havard.*	*Mr. Bartley.*
Fribble,	*Mr. Garrick.*	*Mr. Russel.*
Flash,	*Mr. Woodward,*	*Mr. R. Palmer.*
Puff,	*Mr. Yates.*	*Mr. Purser.*
Jasper,	*Mr. Blakes.*	*Mr. Fisher.*
Miss Biddy,	*Mrs. Green.*	*Mrs. Jordan.*
Aunt,	*Mrs. Cross.*	
Tag,	*Mrs. Clive.*	*Mrs. Harlowe.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Street.

Enter Captain Loveit *and* Puff.

Capt. L. This is the place we were directed to; and now, Puff, if I can get no intelligence of her, what will become of me?

Pu. And me too, Sir—You must consider I am a married man, and can't bear fatigue as I have done.—But pray, Sir, why did you leave the army so abruptly, and not give me time to fill my knapsack with common necessaries? Half a dozen shirts and your regimentals are my whole cargo.

Capt. L. I was wild to get away; and as soon as I obtained my leave of absence, I thought every moment an age 'till I returned to the place where I first saw this young, charming, innocent, bewitching creature.

Pu. With fifteen thousand pounds for her fortune—Strong motives, I must confess. And now, Sir, as you are pleased to say you must depend upon my care and abilities in this affair, I think I have a just right to be acquainted with the particulars of your passion, that I may be the better enabled to serve you.

Capt. L. You shall have 'em.—When I first left the university, which is now seven months since, my father, who loves his money better than his son, and would not settle a farthing upon him—

Pu. Mine did so by me, Sir—

Capt. L. Purchased me a pair of colours at my own request; but before I joined the regiment, which was going abroad, I took a ramble into the country with a fellow-collegian, to see a relation of his who lived in Berkshire.

Pu. A party of pleasure, I suppose.

Capt. L. During a short stay there I became acquainted with this young creature; she was just come from the boarding-school, and though she had all the simplicity of her age and the country, yet it was mixed with such sensible vivacity, that I took fire at once.

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Pu. I was tinder myself at your age. But pray, Sir, did you take fire before you knew of her fortune?

Capt. L. Before, upon my honour.

Pu. Folly and constitution. But on, Sir.

Capt. L. I was introduced to the family by the name of Rhodophil (for so my companion and I had settled it;) at the end of three weeks I was obliged to attend the call of honour in Flanders.

Pu. Your parting, to be sure, was heart-breaking.

Capt. L. I feel it at this instant.—We vowed eternal constancy, and I promised to take the first opportunity of returning to her: I did so; but we found the house was shut up; and all the information, you know, that we could get from the neighbouring cottage was, that Miss and her aunt were removed to town, and lived somewhere near this part of it.

Pu. And now we are got to the place of action, propose your plan of operation.

Capt. L. My father lives but in the next street, so I must decamp immediately for fear of discoveries; you are not known to be my servant, so make what inquiries you can in the neighbourhood, and I shall wait at the inn for your intelligence.

Pu. I'll patrole hereabouts, and examine all that pass; but I've forgot the word, Sir—Miss Biddy—

Capt. L. Bellair.

Pu. A young lady of wit, beauty, and fifteen thousand pounds fortune——But, Sir——

Capt. L. What do you say, Puff?

Pu. If your honour pleases to consider that I had a wife in town, whom I left somewhat abruptly half a year ago, you'll think it, I believe, but decent to make some inquiry after her first: to be sure, it would be some small consolation to me to know whether the poor woman is living, or has made away with herself, or——

Capt. L. Pr'ythee, don't distract me; a moment's delay is of the utmost consequence; I must insist upon an immediate compliance with my commands. [*Exit.*

Pu. The devil's in these fiery young fellows; they think of nobody's wants but their own. He does not consider that I am flesh and blood as well as himself. However, I may kill two birds at once; for I sha'n't be surprised if I meet my lady walking the streets—But who have we here? Sure I should know that face.

Enter JASPER, *from a house.*

Who's that? My old acquaintance, Jasper?

Jas. What, Puff! are you here?

Pu. My dear friend! Well, and now, Jasper, still easy and happy! *Toujours le même!*—What intrigues now? What girls have you ruined, and what cuckolds made, since you and I beat up together, eh?

Jas. Faith, business hath been very brisk during the war; men are scarce, you know; not that I can say I ever wanted amusement in the worst of times. But harkye, Puff——

Pu. Not a word aloud, I am incognito.

Jas. Why, faith, I should not have known you, if you had not spoke first; you seem to be a little *en dishabille* too, as well as incognito. Whom do you honour with your service now? Are you from the wars?

Pu. Piping hot, I assure you; fire and smoke will tarnish; a man that will go into such service as I have been in, will find his clothes the worse for wear, take my word for it: But how is it with you, friend Jasper? What, you still serve, I see? You live at that house, I suppose?

Jas. I don't absolutely live, but I am most of my time there: I have within these two months entered into the service of an old gentleman, who hired a reputable servant, and dressed him as you see, because he has taken it into his head to fall in love.

Pu. False appetite and second childhood! But pr'ythee, what's the object of his passion?

Jas. No less than a virgin of sixteen, I assure you.

Pu. Oh, the toothless old dotard!

Jas. And he mumbles, and plays with her till his mouth waters; and then he chuckles till he cries, and calls it his Bid and his Bidsy, and is so foolishly fond.

Pu. Bidsy! what's that?——

Jas. Her name is Biddy.

Pu. Biddy! What, Miss Biddy Bellair?

Jas. The same.——

Pu. I have no luck, to be sure. [*Aside.*]——Oh! I have heard of her; she's of a pretty good family, and has some fortune, I know. But are things settled? Is the marriage fixed?

Jas. Not absolutely; the girl, I believe, detests him; but her aunt, a very good, prudent, old lady, has given her consent, if he can gain her niece's; how it will end I can't tell——but I am hot upon't myself.

Pu. The devil! not marriage, I hope.

Jas. That is not yet determined.

Pu. Who is the lady, pray?

Jas. A maid in the same family, a woman of honour, I assure you: she has one husband already, a scoundrel sort of a fellow that has run away from her, and listed for a soldier; so, towards the end of the campaign, she hopes to have a certificate he's knocked o'th' head: if not, I suppose we shall settle matters another way.

Pu. Well, speed the plough. But, harkye, consummate without the certificate, if you can, keep your neck out of the collar—do—I have wore it these two years, and damnably galled I am.

Jas. I'll take your advice; but I must run away to my master, who will be impatient for an answer to his message which I have just delivered to the young lady; so, dear Mr. Puff, I am your most obedient humble servant.

Pu. And I must to our agent's for my arrears. If you have an hour to spare, you'll hear of me at George's, or the Tilt-yard.—*Au revoir*, as we say abroad. [*Exit* JASPER.] Thus we are as civil and as false as our betters. Jasper and I were always the *beau monde* exactly; we ever hated one another heartily, yet always shake hands.—But now to my master, with a head full of news and a heart full of joy. [*Going, starts.*

Angels and ministers of grace, defend me!

It can't be! By Heavens, it is that fretful porcupine, my wife! I can't stand it; what shall I do? I'll try to avoid her.

Enter TAG.

Tag. It must be he! I'll swear to the rogue at a mile's distance; he either has not seen me, or wont know me: if I can keep my temper, I'll try him further. Pray, good Sir, if I may be so bold.——

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Pu. I have nothing for you, good woman; don't trouble me.

Tag. If your honour pleases to look this way—

Pu. The kingdom is overrun with beggars; I suppose the last I gave to has sent this; but I have no more loose silver about me, so, pr'ythee, woman, don't disturb me.

Tag. I can hold out no longer; oh, you villain, you! Where have you been, scoundrel? Do you know me now, varlet? [*Seizes him.*

Pu. Here, watch, watch! zounds, I shall have my pocket picked.

Tag. Own me this minute, hang-dog, and confess every thing, or, by the rage of an injured woman, I'll raise up the neighbourhood, throttle you, and send you to Newgate.

Pu. Amazement! what, my own dear Tag! Come to my arms, and let me press you to my heart, that pants for thee, and only thee, my true and lawful wife——Now my stars have overpaid me for the fatigue and danger of the field; I have wandered about like Achilles in search of faithful Penelope, and the gods have brought me to this happy spot. [*Embraces her.*

Tag. The fellow's cracked, for certain.—Leave your bombastic stuff, and tell me, rascal, why you left me, and where you have been these six months, eh?

Pu. We'll reserve my adventures for our happy winter's evenings—I shall only tell you now, that my heart beat so strong in my country's cause, and being instigated by either honour or the devil (I can't tell which,) I set out for Flanders, to gather laurels, and lay 'em at thy feet.

Tag. You left me to starve, villain, and beg my bread, you did so.

Pu. I left you too hastily, I must confess, and often has my conscience stung me for it.—I am got into an officer's service, have been in several actions, gained some credit by my behaviour, and am now returned with my master to indulge the genteeler passions.

Tag. Don't think to fob me off with this nonsensical talk; what have you brought me home besides?

Pu. Honour, and immoderate love.

Tag. I could tear your eyes out.

Pu. Temperance, or I walk off.

Tag. Temperance, traitor, temperance!—What can you say for yourself? Leave me to the wide world—

Pu. Well, I have been in the wide world too, han't I? What would the woman have?

Tag. Reduce me to the necessity of going to service. [*Cries.*

Pu. Why, I'm in service too, your lord and master an't I, you saucy jade you?—Come, where dost live, hereabouts? Hast got good vails? Dost go to market? Come, give me a kiss, darling, and tell me where I shall pay my duty to thee.

Tag. Why there I live, at that house.

[*Pointing to the house* JASPER *came out of.*

Pu. What, there! that house!

Tag. Yes, there, that house.—

Pu. Huzza! We're made for ever, you slut you! Huzza! Every thing conspires this day to make me happy—Prepare for an inundation of joy! My master is in love with your Miss Biddy over head and ears, and she with him: I know she is courted by some old fool, and her aunt is not against the match; but now we are come, the town will be relieved, and the governor brought over; in plain English, our fortune is made; my master must marry the lady, and the old gentleman may go to the devil.

Tag. Hey-day? What's all this?

Pu. Say no more, the dice are thrown, doublets for us; away to your young mistress, while I run to my master; tell her—Rhodophil! Rhodophil! will be with her immediately; then if her blood does not mount to her face like quicksilver in a weatherglass, and point to extreme hot, believe the whole to be a lie, and your husband no politician.

Tag. This is news indeed! I have had the place but a little while, and have not quite got into the secrets of the family; but part of your story is true, and if you bring your master, and Miss is willing, I warrant we'll be too hard for the old folks.

Pu. I'll about it straight!—but hold, Tag, I had forgot—Pray, how does Mr. Jasper do?

Tag. Mr. Jasper!—What do you mean?—I—I—I—

Pu. What, out of countenance, child; oh, fy! Speak plain, my dear—and the certificate, when comes that, eh, love?

Tag. He has sold himself and turned conjurer, or he would never have known it. [*Aside.*

Pu. Are not you a jade? Are you not a Jezabel?—Arn't you a—

Tag. O ho, temperance, or I walk off—

Pu. I know I am not finished yet, and so I am easy; but more thanks to my fortune than your virtue, Madam.

Tag. Away to your master, I'll prepare his reception within.

Pu. Shall I bring the certificate with me? [*Exit.*

Tag. Go, you graceless rogue, you richly deserve it. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—A Chamber.

Enter BIDDY.

Bid. How unfortunate a poor girl am I! dare not tell my secret to any body, and if it don't I'm undone—Heigho! [*Sighs.*

Enter TAG.

Pray, Tag, is my aunt gone to her lawyer about me? Heigho!

Tag. What's that sigh for, my dear young mistress?

Bid. I did not sigh, not I— [*Sighs.*

Tag. Nay, never gulp 'em down, they are the worst things you can swallow. There's something in that little heart of yours, that swells it and puffs it, and will burst it at last, if you don't give it vent.

Bid. What would you have me tell you? [*Sighs.*

Tag. Come, come, you are afraid I'll betray you, but you had as good speak; I may do you some service you little think of.

Bid. It is not in your power, Tag, to give me what I want. [*Sighs.*

Tag. Not directly, perhaps; but I may be the means of helping you to it; as, for example—If you should not like to marry the old man your aunt designs for you, one may find a way to break—

Bid. His neck, Tag.

Tag. Or the match; either will do, child.

Bid. I don't care which indeed, so I was clear of him—I don't think I'm fit to be married.

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Tag. To him, you mean—you have no objection to marriage, but the man, and I applaud you for it: But come, courage, Miss, never keep it in; out with it all—

Bid. If you'll ask me any questions, I'll answer 'em; but I can't tell you any thing of myself, I shall blush if I do.

Tag. Well then—In the first place, pray tell me, Miss Biddy Bellair, if you don't like somebody better than old Sir Simon Loveit?

Bid. Heigho!

Tag. What's heigho, Miss?

Bid. When I say heigho! it means, yes.

Tag. Very well; and this somebody is a young handsome fellow?

Bid. Heigho!

Tag. And if you were once his, you would be as merry as the best of us?

Bid. Heigho!

Tag. So far so good; and since I have got you to wet your feet, souse over head at once, and the pain will be over.

Bid. There—then. [*A long sigh.*] Now help me out, Tag, as fast as you can.

Tag. When did you hear from your gallant?

Bid. Never since he went to the army.

Tag. How so?

Bid. I was afraid the letters would fall into my aunt's hands, so I would not let him write to me; but I had a better reason then.

Tag. Pray, let's hear that too.

Bid. Why, I thought if I should write to him and promise him to love nobody else, and should afterwards change my mind, he might think I was inconstant, and call me a coquette.

Tag. What a simple innocent it is! [*Aside.*] And have you changed your mind, Miss?

Bid. No indeed, Tag, I love him the best of any of 'em.

Tag. Of any of 'em! Why, have you any more?

Bid. Pray don't ask me.

Tag. Nay, Miss, if you only trust me by halves, you can't expect—

Bid. I will trust you with every thing.—When I parted with him, I grew melancholy; so, in order to divert me, I have let two others court me till he returns again.

Tag. Is that all, my dear? Mighty simple, indeed. [*Aside.*

Bid. One of 'em is a fine blustering man, and is called Captain Flash; he's always talking of fighting and wars; he thinks he's sure of me, but I shall balk him: we shall see him this afternoon, for he pressed strongly to come, and I have given him leave, while my aunt's taking her afternoon's nap.

Tag. And who is the other, pray?

Bid. Quite another sort of a man; he speaks like a lady for all the world, and never swears, as Mr. Flash does, but wears nice white gloves, and tells me what ribands become my complexion, where to stick my patches, who is the best milliner, where they sell the best tea, and which is the best wash for the face and the best paste for the hands; he is always playing with my fan, and showing his teeth; and when ever I speak, he pats me—so—and cries—The devil take me, Miss Biddy, but you'll be my perdition——Ha, ha, ha!

Tag. Oh, the pretty creature! and what do you call him, pray?

Bid. His name is Fribble, and you shall see him too; for by mistake I appointed them at the same time; but you must help me out with 'em.

Tag. And suppose your favourite should come too?

Bid. I should not care what became of the others.

Tag. What's his name?

Bid. It begins with an R—h—o——

Tag. I'll be hanged if it is not Rhodophil.

Bid. I am frightened at you! You are a witch.

Tag. I am so, and can tell your fortune too. Look me in the face. The gentleman you love most in the world will be at our house this afternoon; he arrived from the army this morning, and dies till he sees you.

Bid. Is he come, Tag? Don't joke with me—

Tag. Not to keep you longer in suspense, you must know, the servant of your Strephon, by some unaccountable fate or other, is my lord and master; he has just been with me, and told me of his master's arrival and impatience—

Bid. Oh, my dear, dear Tag, you have put me out of my wits—I am all over in a flutter. I shall leap out of my skin—I don't know what to do with myself—Is he come, Tag?—I am ready to faint—I'd give the world I had put on another dress to-day.

Tag. I assure you, Miss, you look charmingly!

Bid. Do I indeed, though? I'll alter my hair immediately.

Tag. We'll go to dinner first, and then I'll assist you.

Bid. Dinner! I can't eat a morsel—I don't know what's the matter with me—my ears tingle, my heart beats, my face flushes, and I tremble every joint of me—I must run in and look at myself in the glass this moment.—

[*Exit.*

Tag. Yes, she has it, and deeply too; this is no hypocrisy—

Not art but nature now performs her part,
And every word's the language of the heart.

[*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The same.*

Enter CAPTAIN LOVEIT, BIDDY, TAG, *and* PUFF.

Capt. L. To find you still constant, and to arrive at such a critical juncture, is the height of fortune and happiness.

Bid. Nothing shall force me from you; and if I am secure of your affections——

Pu. I'll be bound for him, Madam, and give you any security you can ask.

Tag. Every thing goes on to our wish, Sir; I just now had a second conference with my old lady, and she was so convinced by my arguments, that she returned instantly to the lawyer to forbid the drawing out of any writings at all, and she is determined never to thwart Miss's inclinations, and left it to us to give the old gentleman his discharge at the next visit.

Capt. L. Shall I undertake the old dragon?

Tag. If we have occasion for help, we shall call for you.

Bid. I expect him every moment, therefore I'll tell you what, Rhodophil, you and your man shall be locked up in my bed-chamber till we have settled matters with the old gentleman.

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Capt. L. Do what you please with me.

Bid. You must not be impatient, though.

Capt. L. I can undergo any thing with such a reward in view; one kiss and I'll be quite resigned—And now show me the way.

[*Exeunt.*

Tag. Come, sirrah, when I have got you under lock and key I shall bring you to reason.

Pu. Are your wedding-clothes ready, my dove? The certificate's come.

Tag. Go follow your captain, sirrah—March—You may thank heaven I had patience to stay so long. [*Exit with* PUFF.

Re-enter BIDDY.

Bid. I was very much alarmed for fear my two gallants should come in upon us unawares; we should have had sad work if they had; I find I love Rhodophil vastly, for, though my other sparks flatter me more, I can't abide the thoughts of 'em now—I have business upon my hands enough to turn my little head; but, 'egad, my heart's good, and a fig for dangers—Let me see, what shall I do with my two gallants? I must, at least, part with 'em decently. Suppose I set 'em together by the ears? The luckiest thought in the world! for, if they wont quarrel (as I believe they wont) I can break with them for cowards, and very justly dismiss 'em my service; and if they will fight, and one of them should be killed, the other will certainly be hanged or run away; and so I shall very handsomely get rid of both.

Re-enter TAG.

Well, Tag, are they safe?

Tag. I think so; the door's double locked, and I have the key in my pocket.

Bid. That's pure; but have you given them any thing to divert 'em?

Tag. I have given the captain one of your old gloves to mumble; but my Strephon is diverting himself with the more substantial comforts of a cold venison pasty.

Bid. What shall we do with the next that comes?

Tag. If Mr. Fribble comes first, I'll clap him up into my lady's store-room; I suppose he is a great maker of marmalade himself, and will have an opportunity of making some critical remarks upon our pastry and sweetmeats.

Bid. When one of 'em comes, do you go and watch for the other, and as soon as you see him, run in to us and pretend it is my aunt, and so we shall have an excuse to lock him up till we want him.

Tag. You may depend upon me.—Here is one of 'em—

Enter FRIBBLE.

Bid. Mr. Fribble, your servant—

Frib. Miss Biddy, your slave—I hope I have not come upon you abruptly; I should have waited upon you sooner, but an accident happened that discomposed me so, that I was obliged to go home again to take drops.

Bid. Indeed you don't look well, Sir.—Go, Tag, and do as I bid you.

Tag. I will, Madam. [*Exit.*

Bid. I have set my maid to watch my aunt, that we mayn't be surprised by her.

Frib. Your prudence is equal to your beauty, Miss; and I hope your permitting me to kiss your hands, will be no impeachment to your understanding.

Bid. I hate the sight of him. [*Aside.*]—I was afraid I should not have had the pleasure of seeing you; pray let me know what accident you met with, and what's the matter with your hand. I sha'n't be easy till I know.

Frib. Well, I vow, Miss Biddy, you're a good creeter—I'll endeavour to muster up what little spirits I have, and tell you the whole affair—Hem!—But first you must give me leave to make you a present of a small pot of my lip-salve: my servant made it this morning; the ingredients are innocent, I assure you; nothing but the best virgin-wax, conserve of roses, and lily of the valley water.

Bid. I thank you, Sir; but my lips are generally red, and when they an't, I bite 'em.

Frib. I bite my own sometimes, to pout 'em a little; but this will give them a softness, colour, and an agreeable moister—Thus let me make an humble offering at that shrine where I have already sacrificed my heart.

[*Kneels and gives the lip-salve.*

Bid. Upon my word, that's very prettily expressed; you are positively the best company in the world—I wish he was out of the house. [*Aside.*

Frib. But to return to my accident, and the reason why my hand is in this condition—I beg you'll excuse the appearance of it, and be satisfied that nothing but mere necessity could have forced me to appear thus muffled before you.

Bid. I am very willing to excuse any misfortune that happens to you, Sir. [*Courtesies.*

Frib. You are vastly good, indeed—Thus it was—Hem!—You must know, Miss, there is not an animal in the creation I have so great an aversion to, as those hackney-coach fellows—As I was coming out of my lodgings, says one of 'em to me,—"Would your honour have a coach?"—"No, man," said I, "not now," with all the civility imaginable.—"I'll carry you and your doll too," said he, "Miss Margery, for the same price."—Upon which the masculine beasts about us fell a laughing; then I turned round in a great passion, "Curse me," says I, "fellow, but I'll trounce thee."—And as I was holding out my hand in a threatening poster—thus—he makes a cut at me with his whip, and striking me over the nail of my finger, it gave me such exquisite torter that I fainted away; and while I was in this condition, the mob picked my pocket of my purse, my scissars, my Mecca smelling-bottle, and my huswife.

Bid. I shall laugh in his face. [*Aside.*]—I am afraid you are in great pain; pray sit down, Mr. Fribble; but I hope your hand is in no danger? [*They sit.*

Frib. Not in the least, Ma'am; pray don't be apprehensive—A milk poultice, and a gentle sudorific to-night, with a little manna in the morning, I am confident will relieve me entirely.

Bid. But pray, Mr. Fribble, do you make use of a huswife?

Frib. I can't do without it, Ma'am; there is a club of us, all young bachelors, the sweetest society in the world; and we meet three times a week at each other's lodgings, where we drink tea, hear the chat of the day, invent fashions for the ladies, make models of 'em, and cut out patterns in paper. We were the first inventors of knotting, and this fringe is

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the original produce and joint labour of our little community.

Bid. And who are your pretty set, pray?

Frib. There's Phil. Whiffle, Jacky Wagtail, my Lord Trip, Billy Dimple, Sir Dilbery Diddle, and your humble—

Bid. What a sweet collection of happy creatures!

Frib. Indeed, and so we are, Miss—But a prodigious *fracas* disconcerted us some time ago at Billy Dimple's—Three drunken naughty women of the town burst into our club-room, cursed us all, threw down the china, broke six looking-glasses, scalded us with the slop-basin, and scratched poor Phil. Whiffle's cheek in such a manner, that he has kept his bed these three weeks.

Bid. Indeed, Mr. Fribble, I think all our sex have great reason to be angry; for if you are so happy now you are bachelors, the ladies may wish and sigh to very little purpose.

Frib. You are mistaken, I assure you; I am prodigiously rallied about my passion for you, I can tell you that, and am looked upon as lost to our society already; he, he, he!

Bid. Pray, Mr. Fribble, now you have gone so far, don't think me imprudent if I long to know how you intend to use the lady who has been honoured with your affections?

Frib. Not as most other wives are used, I assure you; all the domestic business will be taken off her hands; I shall make the tea, comb the dogs, and dress the children myself, so that, though I'm a commoner, Mrs. Fribble will lead the life of a woman of quality; for she will have nothing to do, but lie in bed, play at cards, and scold the servants.

Bid. What a happy creature she must be!

Frib. Do you really think so? Then pray let me have a little serious talk with you—Though my passion is not of a long standing, I hope the sincerity of my intentions—

Bid. Ha, ha, ha!

Frib. Go, you wild thing! [*Pats her.*] The devil take me, but there is no talking to you—How can you use me in this barbarous manner? if I had the constitution of an alderman, it would sink under my sufferings—hooman nater can't support it.

Bid. Why, what would you do with me, Mr. Fribble.

Frib. Well, I vow I'll beat you if you talk so—Don't look at me in that manner——Flesh and blood can't bear it—I could—but I wont grow indecent—

Bid. But pray, Sir, where are the verses you were to write upon me? I find if a young lady depends too much upon such fine gentlemen as you, she'll certainly be disappointed.

Frib. I vow, the flutter I was put into this afternoon has quite turned my senses—here they are though——and I believe you'll like 'em.

Bid. There can be no doubt of it.

[*Courtesies.*

Frib. I protest, Miss, I don't like that courtesy—Look at me, and always rise in this manner. [*Rises.*] But, my dear creeter, who put on your cap to-day? They have made a fright of you, and it is as yellow as old Lady Crowfoot's neck.—When we are settled, I'll dress your head myself.

Bid. Pray read the verses to me, Mr. Fribble.

Frib. I obey—Hem!——William Fribble, Esq. to Miss Biddy Bellair——greeting.

No ice so hard, so cold as I,
'Till warm'd and soften'd by your eye;
And now my heart dissolves away
In dreams by night, in sighs by day;
No brutal passion fires my breast,
Which loathes the object when possess'd;
But one of harmless, gentle kind,
Whose joys are centred—in the mind;
Then take with me love's better part,
His downy wing, but not his dart.

How do you like 'em?

Bid. Ha, ha, ha! I swear they are very pretty——but I don't understand 'em.

Frib. These light pieces are never so well understood in reading as singing; I have set 'em my myself, and will endeavour to give 'em you—La—la—I have an abominable cold, and can't sing a note; however the tune's nothing; the manner's all. [*Sings.*

No ice so hard, &c.

Enter TAG, *running.*

Tag. Your aunt, your aunt, your aunt, Madam!

Frib. What's the matter?

Bid. Hide, hide Mr. Fribble, Tag, or we are ruined.

Frib. Oh! for Heaven's sake, put me any where, so I don't dirty my clothes.

Bid. Put him into the store-room, Tag, this moment.

Frib. Is it a damp place, Mrs. Tag? the floor is boarded, I hope?

Tag. Indeed it is not, Sir.

Frib. What shall I do? I shall certainly catch my death! Where's my cambric handkerchief, and my salts? I shall certainly have my hysterics! [*Runs in.*

Bid. In, in, in—So, now let the other come as soon as he will; I did not care if I had twenty of 'em, so they would but come one after another.

Re-enter TAG.

Was my aunt coming?

Tag. No, 'twas Mr. Flash, I suppose, by the length of his stride, and the cock of his hat. He'll be here this minute—What shall we do with him?

Bid. I'll manage him, I warrant you, and try his courage; be sure you are ready to second me—we shall have pure sport.

Tag. Hush! here he comes.

Enter FLASH, *singing.*

Flash. Well, my blossom, here am I! What hopes for a poor dog, eh? How! the maid here! then I've lost the town, damme! Not a shilling to bribe the governor; she'll spring a mine, and I shall be blown to the devil.

Bid. Don't be ashamed, Mr. Flash; I have told Tag the whole affair, and she's my friend, I can assure you.

Flash. Is she? then she wont be mine, I am certain. [*Aside.*] Well, Mrs. Tag, you know, I suppose, what's to be done; this young lady and I have contracted ourselves; and so, if you please to stand bridemaid, why we'll fix the wedding-day directly.

Tag. The wedding-day, Sir?

Flash. The wedding-day, Sir? Ay, Sir, the wedding-day, Sir; what have you to say to that, Sir?

Bid. My dear Captain Flash, don't make such a noise, you'll wake my aunt.

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Flash. And suppose I did, child, what then?

Bid. She'd be frightened out of her wits.

Flash. At me, Miss! frightened at me? *Tout au contraire*, I assure you; you mistake the thing, child; I have some reason to believe I am not quite so shocking. [*Affectedly.*

Tag. Indeed, Sir, you flatter yourself: but pray, Sir, what are your pretensions?

Flash. The lady's promises, my own passion, and the best mounted blade in the three kingdoms. If any man can produce a better title, let him take her; if not, the devil mince me, if I give up an atom of her.

Bid. He's in a fine passion, if he would but hold it. [*Aside.*

Tag. Pray, Sir, hear reason a little.

Flash. I never do, Madam; it is not my method of proceeding; here is my logic! [*Draws his sword.*] Sa, sa—my best argument is cart over arm, Madam, ha, ha; [*Lunges.*] and if he answers that, Madam, through my small guts, my breath, blood, and mistress are all at his service.—Nothing more, Madam.

Bid. This'll do, this'll do.

Tag. But, Sir, Sir, Sir!

Flash. But, Madam, Madam, Madam! I profess blood, Madam; I was bred up to it from a child; I study the book of fate, and the camp is my university; I have attended the lectures of Prince Charles upon the Rhine, and Bathiani upon the Po, and have extracted knowledge from the mouth of a cannon; I'm not to be frightened with squibs, Madam, no, no.

Bid. Pray, dear Sir, don't mind her; but let me prevail with you to go away this time—Your passion is very fine, to be sure; and when my aunt and Tag are out of the way, I'll let you know when I'd have you come again.

Flash. When you'd have me come again, child? And suppose I never would come again, what do you think of that now, ha? You pretend to be afraid of your aunt; your aunt knows what's what too well to refuse a good match when 'tis offered—Lookye, Miss, I âm a man of honour; glory is my aim; I have told you the road I am in; and do you see here, child? [*Showing his sword.*] no tricks upon travellers.

Bid. But pray, Sir, hear me.

Flash. No, no, no; I know the world, Madam: I am as well known at Covent-garden, as the dial, Madam; I'll break a lamp, bully a constable, bam a justice, or bilk a box-keeper, with any man in the liberties of Westminster. What do you think of me now, Madam?

Bid. Pray don't be so furious, Sir.

Flash. Come, come, come, few words are best; somebody's happier than somebody, and I am a poor, silly fellow; ha, ha!—That's all—Look you, child, to be short (for I'm a man of reflection) I have but a *bagatelle* to say to you: I am in love with you up to hell and desperation; may the sky crush me if I am not.—But since there is another more fortunate than I, adieu, Biddy! Prosperity to the happy rival, patience to poor Flash; but the first time we meet—gunpowder be my perdition, but I'll have the honour to cut a throat with him.

Bid. [*Stopping him.*] You may meet with him now, if you please.

Flash. Now, may I?—Where is he? I'll sacrifice the villain! [*Aloud.*

Tag. Hush! he's but in the next room.

Flash. Is he? Ram me [*Low.*] into a mortar-piece, but I'll have vengeance; my blood boils to be at him—Don't be frightened, Miss!

Bid. No, Sir, I never was better pleased, I assure you.

Flash. I shall soon do his business.

Bid. As soon as you please; take your own time.

Tag. I'll fetch the gentleman to you immediately. [*Going.*

Flash. [*Stopping her.*] Stay, stay a little; what a passion I am in!—Are you sure he is in the next room?—I shall certainly tear him to pieces—I would fain murder him like a gentleman too.—Besides, this family sha'n't be brought into trouble upon my account.—I have it—I'll watch for him in the street, and mix his blood with the puddle of the next kennel. [*Going.*

Bid. [*Stopping him.*] No, pray, Mr. Flash, let me see the battle; I shall be glad to see you fight for me; you sha'n't go, indeed. [*Holding him.*

Tag. [*Holding him.*] Oh, pray let me see you fight; there were two gentlemen fit yesterday, and my mistress was never so diverted in her life—I'll fetch him out. [*Exit.*

Bid. Do, stick him, stick him, Captain Flash; I shall love you better for it.

Flash. Damn your love; I wish I was out of the house. [*Aside.*

Bid. Here he is—Now speak some of your hard words, and run him through—

Flash. Don't be in fits now. [*Aside to* BIDDY.

Bid. Never fear me.

Enter TAG *and* FRIBBLE.

Tag. [*To* FRIBBLE.] Take it on my word, Sir, he is a bully, and nothing else.

Frib. [*Frightened.*] I know you are my good friend; but perhaps you don't know his disposition.

Tag. I am confident he is a coward.

Frib. Is he? Nay, then I'm his man.

Flash. I like his looks; but I'll not venture too far at first.

Tag. Speak to him, Sir.

Frib. I will—I understand, Sir—hem—that you—by Mrs. Tag here—Sir—who has informed me—hem—that you would be glad to speak with me—Demme! [*Turns off.*

Flash. I can speak to you, Sir—or to any body, Sir—or I can let it alone, and hold my tongue—if I see occasion, Sir, dammee! [*Turns off.*

Bid. Well said, Mr. Flash, be in a passion.

Tag. [*To* FRIBBLE.] Don't mind his looks; he changes colour already; to him, to him. [*Pushes him.*

Frib. Don't hurry me, Mrs. Tag, for Heaven's sake! I shall be out of breath before I begin, if you do.—Sir—[*To* FLASH.] if you can't speak to a gentleman in another manner, Sir, why then I'll venture to say, you had better hold your tongue—Oons!

Flash. Sir, you and I are of different opinions.

Frib. You and your opinion may go to the devil—Take that. [*Turns off to* TAG.

Tag. Well said, Sir, the day's your own.

Bid. What's the matter, Mr. Flash? Is all your fury gone? Do you give me up?

Frib. I have done his business. [*Struts about.*

Flash. Give you up, Madam! No, Madam, when I am determined in my resolutions I am

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always calm: tis our way, Madam; and now I shall proceed to business—Sir, I beg to say a word to you in private.

Frib. Keep your distance, fellow, and I'll answer you—That lady has confessed a passion for me; and as she has delivered up her heart into my keeping, nothing but my 'art's blood shall purchase it. Damnation!

Tag. Bravo! bravo!

Flash. If those are the conditions, I'll give you earnest for it directly. [*Draws.*] Now, villain, renounce all right and title this minute, or the torrent of my rage will overflow my reason, and I shall annihilate the nothingness of your soul and body in an instant.

Frib. I wish there was a constable at hand to take us both up; we shall certainly do one another a prejudice.

Tag. No, you wont, indeed, Sir; pray bear up to him; if you would but draw your sword, and be in a passion, he would run away directly.

Frib. Will he? [*Draws his sword.*] Then I can no longer contain myself—Hell and the furies! Come on, thou savage brute!

Tag. Go on, Sir.

[*Here they stand in fighting postures, while* BIDDY *and* TAG *push them forward.*

Flash. Come on.

Bid. Go on.

Frib. Come on, rascal.

Tag. Go on, Sir.

Enter CAPTAIN LOVEIT, *and* PUFF.

Capt. L. What's the matter, my dear?

Bid. If you wont fight, here's one that will. Oh, Rhodophil, these two sparks are your rivals, and have pestered me these two months with their addresses; they forced themselves into the house, and have been quarrelling about me, and disturbing the family; if they wont fight, pray kick them out of the house.

Capt. L. What's the matter, gentlemen?

[*They both keep their fencing posture.*

Flash. Don't part us, Sir.

Frib. No, pray, Sir, don't part us; we shall do you a mischief.

Capt. L. Puff, look, to the other gentleman, and call a surgeon.

Bid. & Tag. Ha, ha, ha!

Pu. Bless me! how can you stand under your wounds, Sir?

Frib. Am I hurt, Sir?

Pu. Hurt, Sir! why you have—let me see—pray stand in the light—one, two, three, through the heart; and let me see—hum—eight through the small guts! Come, Sir, make it up the round dozen, and then we'll part you.

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Capt. L. Come here, Puff.

[*Whispers and looks at* FLASH.

Pu. 'Tis the very same, Sir.

Capt. L. [*To* FLASH.] Pray, Sir, have I not had the pleasure of seeing you abroad?

Flash. I have served abroad.

Capt. L. Had not you the misfortune, Sir, to be missing at the last engagement in Flanders?

Flash. I was found among the dead in the field of battle.

Pu. He was the first that fell, Sir; the wind of a cannon-ball struck him flat upon his face; he had just strength enough to creep into a ditch, and there he was found after the battle in a most deplorable condition.

Capt. L. Pray, Sir, what advancement did you get by the service of that day?

Flash. My wounds rendered me unfit for service, and I sold out.

Pu. Stole out, you mean.—We hunted him by scent to the water-side; thence he took shipping for England; and, taking the advantage of my master's absence, has attacked the citadel, which we are luckily come to relieve, and drive his honour into the ditch again.

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Frib. He, he, he!

Capt. L. And now, Sir, how have you dared to show your face in open day, or wear even the outside of a profession you have so much scandalized by your behaviour? I honour the name of a soldier, and as a party concerned am bound not to see it disgraced. As you have forfeited your title to honour, deliver up your sword this instant.

Flash. Nay, good captain—

Capt. L. No words, Sir. [*Takes his sword.*

Frib. He's a sad scoundrel! I wish I had kicked him.

Capt. L. The next thing I command—leave this house, change the colour of your clothes and fierceness of your looks; appear from top to toe the wretch, the very wretch, thou art:—If ever I meet thee in the military dress again, or if you put on looks that belie the native baseness of thy heart, be it where it will, this shall be the reward of thy impudence and disobedience. [*Kicks him; he runs off.*

Bid. Oh my dear Rhodophil!

Frib. What an infamous rascal it is! I thank you, Sir, for this favour; but I must after and cane him.

[*Going, he is stopped by the* CAPTAIN.

Capt. L. One word with you too, Sir.

Frib. With me, Sir!

Capt. L. You need not tremble; I wont use you roughly.

Frib. I am certain of that, Sir; but I am sadly troubled with weak nerves.

Capt. L. Thou art of a species too despicable for correction? therefore, be gone; and if I see you here again, your insignificancy sha'n't protect you.

Frib. I am obliged to you for your kindness; well, if ever I have any thing to do with intrigues again!— [*Exit.*

All. Ha, ha, ha.

Pu. Shall I ease you of your trophy, Sir?

Capt. L. Take it, Puff, as a small recompense for thy fidelity; thou canst better use it than its owner.

Pu. I wish your honour had a patent to take such trifles from every pretty gentleman that could spare 'em; I would set up the largest cutler's shop in the kingdom.

Capt. L. Well said, Puff.

Bid. But pray, Mr. Fox, how did you get out of your hole? I thought you was locked in

Capt. L. I shot the bolt back when I heard a noise; and, thinking you was in danger, I broke my confinement without any other consideration than your safety. [*Kisses her hand.*

Bid. I'm afraid the town will be ill-natured enough to think I have been a little coquettish in my behaviour; but I hope, as I have been constant to the captain, I shall be excused diverting myself with pretenders.

Ladies, to fops and braggarts ne'er be kind,
No charms can warm 'em, and no virtues bind;
Each lover's merit by his conduct prove,
Who fails in honour, will be false in love.

[*Exeunt.*

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PROLOGUE.

WRITTEN BY A FRIEND.

Too long has farce, neglecting nature's laws,
Debas'd the stage, and wrong'd the comic cause;
To raise a laugh has been her sole pretence,
Though dearly purchas'd at the price of sense;
This child of folly gain'd increase with time;
Fit for the place, succeeded *pantomime;*
Reviv'd her honours, join'd her motley band,
And song and low conceit o'errun the land.
More generous views inform our author's breast,
From real life his characters are dress'd;
He seeks to trace the passions of mankind,
And, while he spares the person, paints the mind.
In pleasing contrast, he attempts to show
The vapouring bully, and the fribbling beau,
Cowards alike, that full of martial airs,
And this as tender as the silk he wears.
Proud to divert, not anxious for renown,
Oft has the bard essay'd to please the town;
Your full applause outpaid his little art,
He boasts no merit but a grateful heart;
Pronounce your doom, he'll patiently submit,
Ye sovereign judges of all works of wit!
To you the ore is brought, a lifeless mass,
You give the stamp, and then the coin may pass.
Now, whether judgment prompt you to forgive,
Whether you bid this trifling offspring live,
Or with a frown shall send the sickly thing
To sleep whole ages under dulness' wing;
To your known candour we will always trust,
You never were, nor can you be, unjust.

EPILOGUE.

BY THE SAME FRIEND.

Good folks, I'm come at my young lady's bidding,
To say, you all are welcome to her wedding.
Th' exchange she made, what mortal here can blame?
Show me the maid that would not do the same.
For sure, the greatest monster ever seen,
Is doting *sixty* coupled to *sixteen!*
When wintery age had almost caught the fair,
Youth, clad in sunshine, snatch'd her from despair;
Like a new *Semele* the virgin lay,
And clasp'd her lover in the blaze of day.
Thus may each maid, the toils almost entrapp'd in,
Change *old Sir Simon* for the *brisk young Captain.*
I love these men of arms; they know their trade:
Let dastards sue, the sons of fire invade!
They cannot bear around the bait to nibble,
Like pretty, powder'd, patient *Mr. Fribble:*
To dangers bred, and skilful in command,
They storm the strongest fortress, sword in hand!
Nights without sleep, and floods of tears when waking,
Show'd poor Miss *Biddy* was in piteous taking;
She's now quite well; for maids in that condition,
Find the young lover is the best physician;
And without helps of art or books of knowledge,
They cure more women, faith, than all the college!
But to the point—I come with low petition,
For, faith, poor *Bayes* is in a sad condition;
The huge, tall hangman stands to give the blow,
And only waits your pleasures—Ay, or no.
If you should—*pit, box,* and *gallery,* 'egad,
Joy turns his senses, and the man runs mad!
But if your ears are shut, your hearts are rock,
And you pronounce the sentence——Block to block,
Down kneels the bard, and leaves you, when he's dead,
The empty tribute of an author's head.

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THE DISTRESSED MOTHER:

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

TRANSLATED

BY AMBROSE PHILIPS,

FROM THE ANDROMAQUE OF RACINE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

PYRRHUS, Son of Achilles.
PHŒNIX, Counsellor to Pyrrhus.
ORESTES, Son of Agamemnon.
PYLADES, Friend to Orestes.

ANDROMACHE, Hector's Widow.
CEPHISA, Confidante to Andromache.
HERMIONE, Daughter to Menelaus.
CLEONE, Confidante to Hermione.

Attendants on PYRRHUS and ORESTES, &c.

SCENE.—A great Hall in the Court of PYRRHUS, at Buthrotos, the capital city of Epirus.

PROLOGUE.

WRITTEN BY MR. STEELE.

SINCE fancy by itself is loose and vain,
The wise, by rules, that airy power restrain:
They think those writers mad, who, at their ease,
Convey this house and audience where they please:
Who Nature's stated distances confound,
And make this spot all soils the sun goes round.
'Tis nothing when a fancied scene's in view,
To skip from Covent-Garden to Peru.
But Shakspeare's self transgress'd: and shall each elf,
Each pigmy genius quote great Shakspeare's self!
What critic dares prescribe what's just and fit,
Or mark out limits for such boundless wit!
Shakspeare could travel through earth, sea, and air,
And paint out all the powers and wonders there.
In barren deserts he makes Nature smile,
And gives us feasts in his Enchanted Isle.
Our author does his feeble force confess,
Nor dares pretend such merit to transgress;
Does not such shining gifts of genius share,
And therefore makes propriety his care.
Your treat with studied decency he serves;
Not only rules of time and place preserves,
But strives to keep his character entire,
With French correctness, and with British fire.

This piece, presented in a foreign tongue,
When France was glorious, and her monarch young,
A hundred times a crowded audience drew,
A hundred times repeated, still 'twas new.
Pyrrhus provok'd, to no wild rants betray'd,
Resents his generous love, so ill repaid;
Does like a man resent, a prince upbraid.
His sentiments disclose a royal mind,
Nor is he known a king from guards behind.

Injured Hermione demands relief;
But not from heavy narratives of grief:
In conscious majesty her pride is shown;
Born to avenge her wrongs, but not bemoan.

Andromache—If in our author's lines,
As in the great original, she shines,
Nothing but from barbarity she fears;
Attend with silence, you'll applaud with tears.

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ACT I.

SCENE I.—The Palace of PYRRHUS.

Enter ORESTES, PYLADES, *and Attendants.*

Orest. Oh Pylades! what's life without a friend?
At sight of thee my gloomy soul cheers up;
My hopes revive, and gladness dawns within me.
After an absence of six tedious moons,
How could I hope to find my Pylades,
My joy, my comfort, on this fatal shore?
Even in the court of Pyrrhus! in these realms,
These hated realms, so cross to all my wishes.
Oh, my brave friend! may no blind stroke of fate
Divide us more, and tear me from myself.
Pyl. Oh prince! Oh my Orestes! Oh my friend!—
Thus let me speak the welcome of my heart. [*Embracing.*
Since I have gain'd this unexpected meeting,
Bless'd be the powers who barr'd my way to Greece,
And kept me here! e'er since the unhappy day
When warring winds (Epirus full in view)
Sunder'd our barks on the loud, stormy main.
Orest. It was, indeed, a morning full of horror!
Pyl. A thousand boding cares have rack'd my soul
In your behalf. Often, with tears, I mourn'd
The fatal ills, in which your life's involv'd;
And grudg'd you dangers which I could not share.
I fear'd to what extremities the black despair
That prey'd upon your mind, might have betray'd you,
And lest the gods, in pity to your woes,
Should hear your prayers, and take the life you loath'd.
But now with joy I see you!—The retinue,
And numerous followers that surround you here,
Speak better fortunes, and a mind dispos'd
To relish life.
Orest. Alas! my friend, who knows
The destiny to which I stand reserv'd!
I come in search of an inhuman fair;
And live or die, as she decrees my fate.
Pyl. You much surprise me, prince!—I thought you cur'd
Of your unpitied, unsuccessful passion.
Why, in Epirus, should you hope to find
Hermione less cruel, than at Sparta?
I thought her pride, and the disdainful manner
In which she treated all your constant sufferings,
Had broke your fetters, and assur'd your freedom:
Asham'd of your repulse, and slighted vows,
You hated her; you talk'd of her no more:
Prince, you deceiv'd me.
Orest. I deceiv'd myself.
Do not upbraid the unhappy man that loves thee.
Thou know'st I never hid my passion from thee;
Thou saw'st it in its birth and in its progress;
And when at last the hoary king her father,
Great Menelaus, gave away his daughter,
His lovely daughter, to the happy Pyrrhus,
Th' avenger of his wrongs, thou saw'st my grief,
My torture, my despair; and how I dragg'd,
From sea to sea a heavy chain of woes.
Oh Pylades! my heart has bled within me,
To see thee, press'd with sorrows not thy own,
Still wandering with me like a banish'd man!
Watchful, and anxious for thy wretched friend,
To temper the wild transports of my mind,
And save me from myself.
Pyl. Why thus unkind?
Why will you envy me the pleasing task
Of generous love, and sympathizing friendship?
Orest. Thou miracle of truth—but hear me on.
When in the midst of my disastrous fate,
I thought how the divine Hermione,
Deaf to my vows, regardless of my plaints,
Gave up herself, in all her charms, to Pyrrhus;
Thou mayest remember, I abhorr'd her name,
Strove to forget her and repay her scorn.
I made my friends, and even myself, believe
My soul was freed. Alas! I did not see,
That all the malice of my heart was love.
Triumphing thus, and yet a captive still,
In Greece I landed: and in Greece I found
The assembled princes all alarm'd with fears,
In which their common safety seem'd concern'd.
I join'd them: for I hop'd that war and glory
Might fill my mind, and take up all my thoughts:
And, that my shatter'd soul, impair'd with grief,
Once more would reassume its wonted vigour,
And every idle passion quit my breast.
Pyl. The thought was worthy Agamemnon's son.
Orest. But see the strange perverseness of my stars,
Which throws me on the rock I strove to shun!
The jealous chiefs, and all the states of Greece,
With one united voice, complain of Pyrrhus;
That now, forgetful of the promise given,
And mindless of his godlike father's fate,
Astyanax he nurses in his court;
Astyanax, the young, surviving hope
Of ruin'd Troy; Astyanax, descended
From a long race of kings; great Hector's son.
Pyl. A name still dreadful in the ears of Greece;
But, prince, you'll cease to wonder why the child
Lives thus protected in the court of Pyrrhus,
When you shall hear, the bright Andromache,
His lovely captive, charms him from his purpose:
The mother's beauty guards the helpless son.
Orest. Your tale confirms what I have heard; and hence
Spring all my hopes. Since my proud rival wooes
Another partner to his throne and bed,
Hermione may still be mine. Her father,
The injur'd Menelaus, thinks already
His daughter slighted, and th' intended nuptials
Too long delay'd. I heard his loud complaints
With secret pleasure; and was glad to find
Th' ungrateful maid neglected in her turn,
And all my wrongs aveng'd in her disgrace.
Pyl. Oh, may you keep your just resentments warm!
Orest. Resentments! Oh, my friend, too soon I found
They grew not out of hatred! I'm betray'd:
I practise on myself; and fondly plot
My own undoing. Goaded on by love,
I canvass'd all the suffrages of Greece:
And here I come their sworn ambassador,
To speak their jealousies and claim this boy.
Pyl. Pyrrhus will treat your embassy with scorn.
Full of Achilles, his redoubted sire,
Pyrrhus is proud, impetuous, headstrong, fierce;
Made up of passions: Will he then be sway'd,
And give to death the son of her he loves?

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Orest. Oh, would he render up Hermione,
And keep Astyanax, I should be bless'd!
He must; he shall. Hermione is my life,
My soul, my rapture!—I'll no longer curb
The strong desire that hurries me to madness:
I'll give a loose to love: I'll bear her hence;
I'll tear her from his arms; I'll—O, ye gods!
Give me Hermione or let me die!——
But tell me, Pylades; how stand my hopes?
Is Pyrrhus still enamour'd with her charms?
Or dost thou think he'll yield me up the prize,
The dear, dear prize, which he has ravish'd from me?

Pyl. I dare not flatter your fond hopes so far;
The king, indeed, cold to the Spartan princess,
Turns all his passion to Andromache,
Hector's afflicted widow. But in vain,
With interwoven love and rage, he sues
The charming captive, obstinately cruel.
Oft he alarms her for her child confin'd
Apart; and when her tears begin to flow,
As soon he stops them, and recalls his threats.
Hermione a thousand times has seen
His ill-requited vows return to her;
And takes his indignation all for love.
What can be gather'd from a man so various?
He may, in the disorder of his soul,
Wed her he hates, and punish her he loves.

Orest. But tell me how the wrong'd Hermione
Brooks her slow nuptials, and dishonour'd charms?

Pyl. Hermione would fain be thought to scorn
Her wavering lover, and disdain his falsehood;
But, spite of all her pride, and conscious beauty,
She mourns in secret her neglected charms;
And oft has made me privy to her tears:
Still threatens to be gone; yet still she stays;
And sometimes sighs, and wishes for Orestes.

Orest. Ah, were those wishes from her heart, my friend,
I'd fly in transport—— [*Flourish within.*

Pyl. Hear!—the king approaches
To give you audience. Speak your embassy
Without reserve: urge the demands of Greece;
And, in the name of all her kings, require,
That Hector's son be given into your hands.
Pyrrhus, instead of granting what they ask,
To speed his love and win the Trojan dame,
Will make it merit to preserve her son.
But, see; he comes.

Orest. Meanwhile, my Pylades,
Go, and dispose Hermione to see
Her lover, who is come thus far to throw
Himself, in all his sorrows, at her feet.
[*Exit* PYLADES.

Enter PYRRHUS, PHŒNIX, *and Attendants.*

Before I speak the message of the Greeks,
Permit me, Sir, to glory in the title
Of their ambassador; since I behold
Troy's vanquisher, and great Achilles' son.
Nor does the son rise short of such a father:
If Hector fell by him, Troy fell by you.
But what your father never would have done,
You do: you cherish the remains of Troy;
And by an ill-tim'd pity keep alive
The dying embers of a ten years' war.
Have you so soon forgot the mighty Hector?
The Greeks remember his high brandish'd sword,
That fill'd their states with widows and with orphans,
For which, they call for vengeance on his son.
Who knows what he may one day prove? Who knows
But he may brave us in our ports; and, fill'd
With Hector's fury, set our fleets on blaze.
You may, yourself, live to repent your mercy.
Comply, then, with the Grecians' just demands:
Satiate their vengeance, and preserve yourself.

Pyr. The Greeks are for my safety more concern'd
Than I desire. I thought your kings were met
On more important counsel. When I heard
The name of their ambassador, I hop'd
Some glorious enterprise was taking birth.
Is Agamemnon's son despatch'd for this?
And do the Grecian chiefs, renown'd in war,
A race of heroes, join in close debate,
To plot an infant's death?—What right has Greece
To ask his life? Must I, must I alone
Of all the sceptred warriors be denied
To treat my captive as I please? Know, prince,
When Troy lay smoking on the ground, and each
Proud victor shar'd the harvest of the war,
Andromache and this her son were mine;
Were mine by lot; and who shall wrest them from me?
Ulysses bore away old Priam's queen;
Cassandra was your own great father's prize;
Did I concern myself in what they won;
Did I send embassies to claim their captives?

Orest. But, Sir, we fear for you, and for ourselves.
Troy may again revive, and a new Hector
Rise in Astyanax. Then think betimes——

Pyr. Let dastard souls be timorously wise:
But tell them, Pyrrhus knows not how to form
Far-fancied ills, and dangers out of sight.

Orest. Sir, call to mind the unrivall'd strength of Troy;
Her walls, her bulwarks, and her gates of brass;
Her kings, her heroes and embattled armies!

Pyr. I call them all to mind; and see them all
Confus'd in dust; all mix'd in one wide ruin;
All but a child, and he in bondage held.
What vengeance can we fear from such a Troy?
If they have sworn t' extinguish Hector's race,
Why was their vow for twelve long months deferr'd?
Why was he not in Priam's bosom slain?
He should have fallen among the slaughter'd heaps,
'Whelm'd under Troy. His death had then been just.
When age and infancy, alike in vain,
Pleaded their weakness; when the heat of conquest
And horrors of the sight rous'd all our rage,
And blindly hurried us through scenes of death.
My fury then was without bounds: but now,
My wrath appeas'd, must I be cruel still?
And deaf to all the tender calls of pity,
Like a cool murderer, bathe my hands in blood;
An infant's blood?—No, prince—go, bid the Greeks
Mark out some other victim; my revenge
Has had its fill. What has escap'd from Troy
Shall not be sav'd to perish in Epirus.

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Orest. I need not tell you, Sir, Astyanax
Was doom'd to death in Troy; nor mention how
The crafty mother sav'd her darling son:
The Greeks do now but urge their former sentence;
Nor is't the boy, but Hector, they pursue;
The father draws their vengeance on the son:
The father, who so oft in Grecian blood
Has drench'd his sword; the father, whom the Greeks
May seek even here.—Prevent them, Sir, in time.
Pyr. No! let them come; since I was born to wage
Eternal wars. Let them now turn their arms
On him, who conquer'd for them: let them come,
And in Epirus seek another Troy.
'Twas thus they recompens'd my godlike sire;
Thus was Achilles thank'd. But, prince, remember,
Their black ingratitude then cost them dear.
Orest. Shall Greece then find a rebel son in Pyrrhus?
Pyr. Have I then conquer'd to depend on Greece?
Orest. Hermione will sway your soul to peace
And mediate 'twixt her father and yourself:
Her beauty will enforce my embassy.
Pyr. Hermione may have her charms; and I
May love her still, though not her father's slave.
I may in time give proofs that I'm a lover;
But never must forget that I'm a king.
Meanwhile, Sir, you may see fair Helen's daughter;
I know how near in blood you stand allied.
That done, you have my answer, prince. The Greeks,
No doubt, expect your quick return.
[*Exit* ORESTES, *&c.*
Phœn. Sir, do you send your rival to the princess?
Pyr. I am told, that he has loved her long.
Phœn. If so,
Have you not cause to fear the smother'd flame
May kindle at her sight, and blaze anew,
And she be brought to listen to his passion?
Pyr. Ay, let them, Phœnix, let them love their fill!
Let them go hence; let them depart together:
Together let them sail for Sparta: all my ports
Are open to them both. From what constraint,
What irksome thoughts, should I be then relieved?
Phœn. But, Sir——
Pyr. I shall another time good Phœnix,
Unbosom to thee all my thoughts—for, see,
Andromache appears.

Enter ANDROMACHE *and* CEPHISA.

Pyr. May I, Madam,
Flatter my hopes so far as to believe
You come to seek me here?
Andr. This way, Sir, leads
To those apartments where you guard my son.
Since you permit me once a day, to visit
All I have left of Hector and of Troy,
I go to weep a few sad moments with him.
I have not yet, to-day, embrac'd my child;
I have not held him in my widow'd arms.
Pyr. Ah, Madam, should the threats of Greece prevail,
You'll have occasion for your tears, indeed!
Andr. Alas, what threats! What can alarm the Greeks!
There are no Trojans left!
Pyr. Their hate to Hector
Can never die: the terror of his name
Still shakes their souls; and makes them dread his son.
Andr. A mighty honour for victorious Greece,
To fear an infant, a poor friendless child!
Who smiles in bondage; nor yet knows himself
The son of Hector, and the slave of Pyrrhus.
Pyr. Weak as he is, the Greeks demand his life;
And send no less than Agamemnon's son,
To fetch him hence.
Andr. And, Sir, do you comply
With such demands?—This blow is aim'd at me:
How should the child avenge his slaughter'd sire?
But, cruel men! they will not have him live
To cheer my heavy heart, and ease my bonds.
I promis'd to myself in him a son,
In him a friend, a husband, and a father.
But I must suffer sorrow heap'd on sorrow;
And still the fatal stroke must come from you.
Pyr. Dry up those tears, I must not see you weep.
And know, I have rejected their demands.
The Greeks already threaten me with war;
But, should they arm, as once they did for Helen,
And hide the Adriatic with their fleets;
Should they prepare a second ten years' siege,
And lay my towers and palaces in dust:
I am determin'd to defend your son;
And rather die myself than give him up.
But, Madam, in the midst of all these dangers,
Will you refuse me a propitious smile?
Hated of Greece, and press'd on every side,
Let me not, Madam, while I fight your cause,
Let me not combat with your cruelties,
And count Andromache among my foes.
Andr. Consider, Sir, how this will sound in Greece!
How can so great a soul betray such weakness?
Let not men say, so generous a design
Was but the transport of a heart in love.
Pyr. Your charms will justify me to the world.
Andr. How can Andromache, a captive queen,
O'erwhelm'd with grief, a burden to herself,
Harbour a thought of love? Alas! what charms
Have these unhappy eyes, by you condemn'd
To weep for ever?—Talk of it no more.
To reverence the misfortune of a foe;
To succour the distress'd; to give the son
To an afflicted mother; to repel
Confederate nations, leagu'd against his life;
Unbrib'd by love, unterrified by threats,
To pity, to protect him: these are cares,
These are exploits worthy Achilles' son.
Pyr. Will your resentments, then, endure for ever!
Must Pyrrhus never be forgiven? 'Tis true,
My sword has often reek'd in Phrygian blood,
And carried havoc through your royal kindred;
But you, fair princess, amply have aveng'd
Old Priam's vanquish'd house: and all the woes
I brought on them, fall short of what I suffer.
We both have suffer'd in our turns: and now
Our common foe should teach us to unite.

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Andr. Where does the captive not behold a foe?
Pyr. Forget the term of hatred, and behold
A friend in Pyrrhus! Give me but to hope,
I'll free your son; I'll be a father to him:
Myself will teach him to avenge the Trojans.
I'll go in person to chastise the Greeks,
Both for your wrongs and mine. Inspir'd by you,
What would I not achieve? Again shall Troy
Rise from its ashes: this right arm shall fix
Her seat of empire; and your son shall reign.
Andr. Such dreams of greatness suit not my condition:
His hopes of empire perish'd with his father.
No; thou imperial city, ancient Troy,
Thou pride of Asia, founded by the gods!
Never, oh, never must we hope to see
Those bulwarks rise, which Hector could not guard!
Sir, all I wish for, is some quiet exile,
Where, far from Greece remov'd, and far from you,
I may conceal my son, and mourn my husband.
Your love creates me envy. Oh, return!
Return to your betroth'd Hermione.
Pyr. Why do you mock me thus? You know, I cannot.
You know my heart is yours: my soul hangs on you:
You take up every wish: my waking thoughts,
And nightly dreams, are all employ'd on you.
'Tis true, Hermione was sent to share
My throne and bed; and would with transport hear
The vows which you neglect.
Andr. She has no Troy,
No Hector to lament: she has not lost
A husband by your conquests. Such a husband!
(Tormenting thought!) whose death alone has made
Your sire immortal: Pyrrhus and Achilles
Are both grown great by my calamities.
Pyr. Madam, 'tis well! 'Tis very well! I find,
Your will must be obey'd. Imperious captive,
It shall. Henceforth I blot you from my mind:
You teach me to forget your charms; to hate you:
For know, inhuman beauty, I have lov'd
Too well to treat you with indifference.
Think well upon it: my disorder'd soul
Wavers between th' extremes of love and rage;
I've been too tame; I will awake to vengeance!
The son shall answer for the mother's scorn.
The Greeks demand him: nor will I endanger
My realms, to pleasure an ungrateful woman.
Andr. Then he must die! Alas, my son must die!
He has no friend, no succour left, beside
His mother's tears, and his own innocence.
Pyr. Go, Madam; visit this unhappy son.
The sight of him may bend your stubborn heart;
And turn to softness your unjust disdain.
I shall once more expect your answer. Go,
And think, while you embrace the captive boy,
Think that his life depends on your resolves.
[*Exeunt* PYRRHUS, *&c.*
Andr. I'll go; and in the anguish of my heart,
Weep o'er my child—If he must die, my life
Is wrapp'd in his; I shall not long survive.
'Tis for his sake that I have suffer'd life,
Groan'd in captivity, and out-liv'd Hector.
Yes, my Astyanax, we'll go together!
Together to the realms of night we'll go!
There to thy ravish'd eyes thy sire I'll show,
And point him out among the shades below.
[*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

HERMIONE *and* CLEONE.

Her. Well, I'll be rul'd Cleone: I will see him;
I have told Pylades that he may bring him;
But trust me, were I left to my own thoughts,
I should forbid him yet.
Cleo. And why forbid him?
Is he not, Madam, still the same Orestes?
Orestes, whose return you oft have wish'd?
The man whose sufferings you so oft lamented,
And often prais'd his constancy and love?
Her. That love, that constancy, so ill requited,
Upbraids me to myself! I blush to think
How I have used him; and would shun his presence.
What will be my confusion when he sees me
Neglected and forsaken, like himself?
Will he not say, is this the scornful maid,
The proud Hermione, that tyranniz'd
In Sparta's court, and triumph'd in her charms?
Her insolence at last is well repaid.—
I cannot bear the thought!
Cleo. You wrong yourself
With unbecoming fears. He knows too well
Your beauty and your worth. Your lover comes not
To offer insults; but to repeat his vows,
And breathe his ardent passion at your feet.
But, Madam, what's your royal father's will?
What orders do your letters bring from Sparta?
Her. His orders are, if Pyrrhus still deny
The nuptials, and refuse to sacrifice
This Trojan boy, I should with speed embark,
And with their embassy return to Greece.
Cleo. What would you more? Orestes comes in time
To save your honour. Pyrrhus cools apace:
Prevent his falsehood, and forsake him first.
I know you hate him; you have told me so.
Her. Hate him! My injur'd honour bids me hate him.
Th' ungrateful man to whom I fondly gave
My virgin heart; the man I lov'd so dearly;
The man I doted on; Oh, my Cleone!
How is it possible I should not hate him!
Cleo. Then give him over, Madam. Quit his court;
And with Orestes—
Her. No! I must have time
To work up all my rage! To meditate
A parting full of horror! My revenge
Will be but too much quicken'd by the traitor.
Cleo. Do you then wait new insults, new affronts! [you!
To draw you from your father! Then to leave
In his own court to leave you—for a captive!
If Pyrrhus can provoke you, he has done it.
Her. Why dost thou heighten my distress? I fear [heart.
To search out my own thoughts, and sound my
Be blind to what thou seest: believe me cured:
Flatter my weakness; tell me I have conquer'd;
Think that my injur'd soul is set against him;
And do thy best to make me think so too.
Cleo. Why would you loiter here, then?

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Her. Let us fly!
Let us begone! I leave him to his captive:
Let him go kneel, and supplicate his slave.
Let us begone!—But what, if he repent?
What, if the perjur'd prince again submit,
And sue for pardon? What, if he renew
His former vows?—But, oh, the faithless man!
He slights me! drives me to extremities!—However,
I'll stay, Cleone, to perplex their loves;
I'll stay, till by an open breach of contract,
I make him hateful to the Greeks. Already
Their vengeance have I drawn upon the son,
Their second embassy shall claim the mother:
I will redouble all my griefs upon her!
Cleo. Ah, Madam, whither does your rage transport you?
Andromache, alas! is innocent.
A woman plung'd in sorrow; dead to love:
And when she thinks on Pyrrhus, 'tis with horror.
Her. Would I had done so too!—He had not then
Betray'd my easy faith—But I, alas!
Discover'd all the fondness of my soul!
I made no secret of my passion to him,
Nor thought it dangerous to be sincere:
My eyes, my tongue, my actions spoke my heart.
Cleo. Well might you speak without reserve to one
Engaged to you by solemn oaths and treaties.
Her. His ardour, too, was an excuse to mine:
With other eyes he saw me then!—Cleone,
Thou may'st remember, every thing conspir'd
To favour him: my father's wrongs aveng'd;
The Greeks triumphant; fleets of Trojan spoils;
His mighty sire's, his own immortal fame;
His eager love;—all, all conspir'd against me!
But I have done: I'll think no more of Pyrrhus.
Orestes wants not merit; and he loves me.
My gratitude, my honour, both plead for him:
And if I've power over my own heart, 'tis his.
Cleo. Madam, he comes——
Her. Alas, I did not think
He was so near!—I wish I might not see him.

Enter ORESTES.

How am I to interpret, Sir, this visit?
Is it a compliment of form or love?
Orest. Madam, you know my weakness.—'Tis my fate
To love unpitied: to desire to see you;
And still to swear each time shall be the last.
My passion breaks through my repeated oaths:
And every time I visit you I'm perjur'd.
Even now I find my wounds all bleed afresh:
I blush to own it; but I know no cure.
I call the gods to witness, I have tried
Whatever man could do, (but tried in vain,)
To wear you from my mind. Through stormy seas,
And savage climes, in a whole year of absence,
I courted dangers, and I long'd for death.
Her. Why will you, prince, indulge this mournful tale?
It ill becomes the ambassador of Greece
To talk of dying and of love. Remember
The kings you represent: shall their revenge
Be disappointed by your ill-timed passion?
Discharge your embassy: 'tis not Orestes
The Greeks desire should die.
Orest. My embassy
Is at an end, for Pyrrhus has refus'd
To give up Hector's son. Some hidden power
Protects the boy.
Her. Faithless, ungrateful man. [*Aside.*
Orest. I now prepare for Greece. But ere I go,
Would hear my final doom pronounc'd by you—
What do I say——I do already hear it!
My doom is fix'd: I read it in your eyes.
Her. Will you then still despair? be still suspicious?
What have I done? Wherein have I been cruel?
'Tis true, you find me in the court of Pyrrhus:
But 'twas my royal father sent me hither.
And who can tell but I have shared your griefs?
Have I ne'er wept in secret? Never wish'd
To see Orestes?
Orest. Wish'd to see Orestes!——
Oh joy! oh ecstasy! My soul's intranc'd!
Oh, charming princess! Oh, transcendent maid!
My utmost wish!—Thus, thus let me express
My boundless thanks!——I never was unhappy—
Am I Orestes?
Her. You are Orestes,
The same unalter'd, generous, faithful lover:
The prince whom I esteem, whom I lament,
And whom I fain would teach my heart to love!
Orest. Ay, there it is!—I have but your esteem,
While Pyrrhus has your heart!
Her. Believe me, prince,
Were you as Pyrrhus, I should hate you!
Orest. No!——
I should be bless'd! I should be lov'd as he is!
Yet all this while I die by your disdain,
While he neglects your charms and courts another.
Her. And who has told you, prince, that I'm neglected?
Has Pyrrhus said——(Oh, I shall go distracted!)
Has Pyrrhus told you so?——Or is it you,
Who think thus meanly of me?——Sir, perhaps,
All do not judge like you!——
Orest. Madam, go on!
Insult me still: I'm used to bear your scorn.
Her. Why am I told how Pyrrhus loves or hates?
—Go, prince, and arm the Greeks against the rebel;
Let them lay waste his country; raze his towns;
Destroy his fleets; his palaces;—himself!—
Go, prince, and tell me then how much I love him.
Orest. To hasten his destruction, come yourself;
And work your royal father to his ruin.
Her. Meanwhile he weds Andromache!
Orest. Ah, princess!
What is't I hear?
Her. What infamy for Greece,
If he should wed a Phrygian, and a captive!
Orest. Is this your hatred, Madam?—'Tis in vain
To hide your passion; every thing betrays it:
Your looks, your speech, your anger: nay, your silence;
Your love appears in all; your secret flame
Breaks out the more, the more you would conceal it.
Her. Your jealousy perverts my meaning still,
And wrests each circumstance to your disquiet;
My very hate is constru'd into fondness.

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Orest. Impute my fears, if groundless, to my love.
Her. Then hear me prince. Obedience to a father
First brought me hither; and the same obedience
Detains me here, till Pyrrhus drive me hence,
Or my offended father shall recall me.
Tell this proud king, that Menelaus scorns
To match his daughter with a foe of Greece;
Bid him resign Astyanax, or me.
If he persists to guard the hostile boy,
Hermione embarks with you for Sparta.
[*Exit* HERMIONE *and* CLEONE.
Orest. Then is Orestes bless'd! My griefs are fled!
Fled like a dream!—Methinks I tread in air!
Pyrrhus, enamour'd of his captive queen,
Will thank me if I take her rival hence:
He looks not on the princess with my eyes!
Surprising happiness!—Unlook'd-for joy!
Never let love despair!—the prize is mine!
Be smooth ye seas! and ye propitious winds,
Breathe from Epirus to the Spartan coasts!
I long to view the sails unfurl'd!—But, see!
Pyrrhus approaches in a happy hour.

Enter PYRRHUS, *and* PHŒNIX.

Pyr. I was in pain to find you, prince. My warm
Ungovern'd temper would not let me weigh
The importance of your embassy, and hear
You argue for my good.——I was to blame.
I since have pois'd your reasons; and I thank
My good allies: their care deserves my thanks.
You have convinc'd me that the weal of Greece,
My father's honour, and my own repose,
Demand that Hector's race should be destroy'd.
I shall deliver up Astyanax;
And you, yourself shall bear the victim hence.
Orest. If you approve it, Sir, and are content
To spill the blood of a defenceless child;
The offended Greeks, no doubt, will be appeas'd.
Pyr. Closer to strain the knot of our alliance,
I have determin'd to espouse Hermione.
You come in time to grace our nuptial rites:
In you the kings of Greece will all be present;
And you have right to personate her father,
As his ambassador, and brother's son:
Go, prince, renew your visit; tell Hermione,
To-morrow I receive her from your hands.
Orest. [*Aside.*] Oh, change of fortune! Oh, undone Orestes? [*Exit.*
Pyr. Well, Phœnix, am I still a slave to love?
What think'st thou now? Am I myself again?
Phœn. 'Tis as it should be: this discovers Pyrrhus;
Shows all the hero. Now you are yourself!
The son, the rival of the great Achilles!
Greece will applaud you; and the world confess,
Pyrrhus has conquer'd Troy a second time!
Pyr. Nay, Phœnix, now I but begin to triumph:
I never was a conqueror 'till now!
Believe me, a whole host, a war of foes,
May sooner be subdued than love. Oh, Phœnix,
What ruin have I shunn'd! The Greeks, enrag'd,
Hung o'er me, like a gathering storm, and soon
Had burst in thunder on my head, while I
Abandon'd duty, empire, honour, all,
To please a thankless woman!—One kind look
Had quite undone me!
Phœn. Oh, my royal master!
The gods, in favour to you, made her cruel.
Pyr. Thou saw'st with how much scorn she treated me!
When I permitted her to see her son,
I hop'd it might have work'd her to my wishes.
I went to see the mournful interview,
And found her bath'd in tears and lost in passion.
Wild with distress, a thousand times she call'd
On Hector's name: and when I spoke in comfort,
And promis'd my protection to her son,
She kiss'd the boy; and call'd again on Hector:
Then strain'd him in her arms; and cried, 'Tis he!
'Tis he himself! his eyes, his every feature!
His very frown, and his stern look already!
'Tis he: 'Tis my lov'd lord whom I embrace;
Does she then think, that I preserve the boy
To soothe and keep alive her flame for Hector?
Phœn. No doubt she does, and thinks you favour'd in it;
But let her go, for an ungrateful woman!
Pyr. I know the thoughts of her proud stubborn heart:
Vain of her charms, and insolent in beauty,
She mocks my rage; and when it threatens loudest,
Expects 'twill soon be humbled into love.
But we shall change our parts; and she shall find,
I can be deaf, like her; and steel my heart.
She's Hector's widow; I Achilles' son!
Pyrrhus is born to hate Andromache.
Phœn. My royal master talk of her no more;
I do not like this anger. Your Hermione
Should now engross your thoughts. 'Tis time to see her;
'Tis time you should prepare the nuptial rites;
And not rely upon a rival's care:
It may be dangerous.
Pyr. But tell me, Phœnix,
Dost thou not think, the proud Andromache
Will be enrag'd when I shall wed the princess?
Phœn. Why does Andromache still haunt your thoughts?
What is't to you, be she enrag'd or pleas'd?
Let her name perish: think of her no more!
Pyr. No, Phœnix!—I have been too gentle with her,
I've check'd my wrath, and stifled my resentment:
She knows not yet to what degree I hate her.
Let us return;——I'll brave her to her face:
I'll give my anger its free course against her.
Thou shalt see, Phœnix, how I'll break her pride!
Phœn. Oh, go not, Sir!—There's ruin in her eyes,
You do not know your strength: you'll fall before her;
Adore her beauty, and revive her scorn.
Pyr. That were indeed a most unmanly weakness!
Thou dost not know me, Phœnix!
Phœn. Ah, my prince!
You are still struggling in the toils of love.
Pyr. Canst thou then think I love this woman still!
One who repays my passion with disdain!
A stranger, captive, friendless and forlorn;
She and her darling son within my power:

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His life a forfeit to the Greeks: Yet I
Preserve her son; would take her to my throne;
Would fight her battles, and avenge her wrongs;
And all this while she treats me as her foe!
Phœn. You have it in your power to be reveng'd.
Pyr. Yes:—and I'll show my power! I'll give her cause
To hate me! her Astyanax shall die.——
What tears will then be shed! How will she then,
In bitterness of heart, reproach my name!
Then, to complete her woes, will I espouse
Hermione:—'Twill stab her to the heart!
Phœn. Alas! you threaten like a lover still!
Pyr. Phœnix, excuse the struggle of my soul:
'Tis the last effort of expiring love.
Phœn. Then hasten, Sir, to see the Spartan princess;
And turn the bent of your desires on her.
Pyr. Oh! 'tis a heavy task to conquer love,
And wean the soul from her accustom'd fondness.
But, come:—A long farewell to Hector's window.
'Tis with a secret pleasure I look back,
And see the many dangers I have pass'd.
The merchant thus, in dreadful tempests toss'd,
Thrown by the waves on some unlook'd for coast,
Oft turns and sees, with a delighted eye,
'Midst rocks and shelves the broken billows fly!
And while the outrageous winds the deep deform,
Smiles on the tumult, and enjoys the storm.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

PYLADES *and* ORESTES.

Pyl. For Heaven's sake, Sir, compose your ruffled mind,
And moderate your rage!
Orest. No, Pylades!
This is no time for counsel.——I am deaf.
Talk not of reason! I have been too patient.
Life is not worth my care. My soul grows desperate.
I'll bear her off, or perish in the attempt.
I'll force her from his arms:——By Heaven I will!
Pyl. Well, 'tis agreed, my friend:—We'll force her hence,
But still consider, we are in Epirus.
The court, the guards, Hermione herself,
The very air we breathe, belongs to Pyrrhus.
Good gods! what tempted you to seek her here?
Orest. Lost to myself, I knew not what I did!
My purposes were wild. Perhaps I came
To menace Pyrrhus, and upbraid the woman.
Pyl. This violence of temper may prove fatal.
Orest. It must be more than man to bear these shocks,
These outrages of fate, with temper!
He tells me that he weds Hermione;
And will to-morrow take her from my hand!—
My hand shall sooner tear the tyrant's heart!—
Pyl. Your passion blinds you, Sir; he's not to blame.
Could you but look into the soul of Pyrrhus,
Perhaps, you'd find it tortur'd, like your own.
Orest. No, Pylades! 'Tis all design—His pride,
To triumph over me, has chang'd his love.
The fair Hermione, before I came,
In all her bloom of beauty was neglected.
Ah, cruel gods! I thought her all my own!
She was consenting to return to Sparta:
Her heart, divided betwixt rage and love,
Was on the wing to take its leave of Pyrrhus.
She heard my sighs; she pitied my complaints;
She prais'd my constancy;——The least indifference
From this proud king, had made Orestes happy.
Pyl. So your fond heart believes!
Orest. Did I not see
Her hate, her rage, her indignation rise
Against the ungrateful man?
Pyl. Believe me, prince,
'Twas then she lov'd him most! Had Pyrrhus left her,
She would have form'd some new pretext to stay.
Take my advice, think not to force her hence;
But fly yourself from her destructive charms.
Her soul is link'd to Pyrrhus: Were she yours,
She would reproach you still, and still regret
Her disappointed nuptials.——
Orest. Talk no more!
I cannot bear the thought! She must be mine!
Did Pyrrhus carry thunder in his hand,
I'd stand the bolt, and challenge all his fury,
Ere I resign'd Hermione.——By force
I'll snatch her hence, and bear her to my ships;
Have we forgot her mother Helen's rape?
Pyl. Will then Orestes turn a ravisher!
And blot his embassy?
Orest. Oh, Pylades!
My grief weighs heavy on me:—'Twill distract me!
Oh leave me to myself!——Let not thy friendship
Involve thee in my woes. Too long already,
Too long hast thou been punish'd for my crimes.
It is enough, my friend!——It is enough!
Let not thy generous love betray thee farther:
The gods have set me as their mark to empty
Their quivers on me.—Leave me to myself.
Mine be the danger: mine the enterprize.
All I request of thee is to return,
And in my place convey Astyanax
(As Pyrrhus has consented) into Greece.
Go, Pylades——
Pyl. Lead on, my friend, lead on!
Let us bear off Hermione! No toil,
No danger can deter a friend:—Lead on!
Draw up the Greeks; summon your numerous train:
The ships are ready and the wind sets fair:
There eastward lies the sea; the rolling waves
Break on those palace-stairs. I know each pass,
Each avenue and outlet of the court.
This very night we'll carry her on board.
Orest. Thou art too good!——I trespass on thy friendship,
But, oh! excuse a wretch, whom no man pities,
Except thyself: one just about to lose
The treasure of his soul: whom all mankind
Conspire to hate, and one who hates himself.
When will my friendship be of use to thee?
Pyl. The question is unkind.—But now remember
To keep your counsels close, and hide your thoughts;
Let not Hermione suspect—No more——
I see her coming, Sir——
Orest. Away, my friend;

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I am advis'd; my all depends upon it.
[*Exit* PYLADES.

Enter HERMIONE *and* CLEONE.

Orest. Madam, your orders are obey'd; I have seen [you.
Pyrrhus, my rival; and have gain'd him for
The king resolves to wed you.
Her. So I am told:
And farther, I'm inform'd that you, Orestes,
Are to dispose me for the intended marriage.
Orest. And are you, Madam, willing to comply?
Her. Could I imagine Pyrrhus lov'd me still?
After so long delays, who would have thought
His hidden flames would show themselves at last,
And kindle in his breast, when mine expir'd?
I can suppose, with you, he fears the Greeks;
That it is interest, and not love, directs him;
And that my eyes had greater power o'er you.
Orest. No, princess, no! it is too plain he loves you.
Your eyes do what they will, and cannot fail
To gain a conquest, where you wish they should;
Her. What can I do? alas! my faith is promis'd.
Can I refuse what is not mine to give?
A princess is not at her choice to love;
All we have left us is a blind obedience:
And yet, you see, how far I had complied,
And made my duty yield to your entreaties.
Orest. Ah, cruel maid! you knew—but I have done.
All have a right to please themselves in love:
I blame not you. 'Tis true, I hop'd;—but you
Are mistress of your heart, and I'm content.
'Tis fortune is my enemy, not you.
But, Madam, I shall spare you farther pain
On this uneasy theme, and take my leave.
[*Exit.*
Her. Cleone, couldst thou think he'd be so calm:
Cleo Madam, his silent grief sits heavy on him.
He's to be pitied. His too eager love
Has made him busy to his own destruction,
His threats have wrought this change of mind in Pyrrhus.
Her. Dost thou think Pyrrhus capable of fear!
Whom should the intrepid Pyrrhus fear? the Greeks? [quest,
Did he not lead their harass'd troops to con-
When they despair'd, when they retir'd from Troy,
And sought for shelter in their burning fleets?
Did he not then supply his father's place!
No, my Cleone, he is above constraint;
He acts unforc'd; and where he weds he loves.
Cleo. Oh, that Orestes had remain'd in Greece!
I fear to-morrow will prove fatal to him.
Her. Wilt thou discourse of nothing but Orestes?
Pyrrhus is mine again!—Is mine for ever!
Oh, my Cleone! I am wild with joy!
Pyrrhus, the bold! the brave! the godlike Pyrrhus!
—O, I could tell thee numberless exploits,
And tire thee with his battles—Oh Cleone—
Cleo. Madam, conceal your joy—I see Andromache:
She weeps, and comes to speak her sorrows to you.
Her. I would indulge the gladness of my heart!
Let us retire: her grief is out of season.

Enter ANDROMACHE *and* CEPHISA.

Andr. Ah, Madam! whither, whither do you fly?
Where can your eyes behold a sight more pleasing
Than Hector's widow suppliant and in tears?
I come not an alarm'd, a jealous foe,
To envy you the heart your charms have won:
The only man I sought to please is gone;
Kill'd in my sight, by an inhuman hand.
Hector first taught me love; which my fond heart
Shall ever cherish, till we meet in death.
But, oh, I have a son!—And you, one day,
Will be no stranger to a mother's fondness:
But Heaven forbid that you should ever know
A mother's sorrow for an only son.
Her joy, her bliss, her last surviving comfort!
When every hour she trembles for his life!
Your power o'er Pyrrhus may relieve my fears.
Alas, what danger is there in a child,
Sav'd from the wreck of a whole ruin'd empire?
Let me go hide him in some desert isle:
You may rely upon my tender care
To keep him far from perils of ambition:
All he can learn of me, will be to weep.
Her. Madam, 'tis easy to conceive your grief:
But it would ill become me, to solicit
In contradiction to my father's will:
'Tis he who urges to destroy your son.
Madam, if Pyrrhus must be wrought to pity,
No woman does it better than yourself;
If you gain him, I shall comply of course.
[*Exit* HER. *and* CLEONE.
Andr. Didst thou not mind with what disdain she spoke?
Youth and prosperity have made her vain;
She has not seen the fickle turns of life.
Ceph. Madam, were I as you, I'd take her counsel!
I'd speak my own distress; one look from you
Will vanquish Pyrrhus, and confound the Greeks— [sion.
See, where he comes—Lay hold on this occa-

Enter PYRRHUS *and* PHŒNIX.

Pyr. Where is the princess?—Did you not inform me
Hermione was here? [*To* PHŒNIX.
Phœn. I thought so, Sir.
Andr. Thou seest what mighty power my eyes have on him! [*To* CEPH.
Pyr. What says she, Phœnix?
Andr. I have no hope left!
Phœn. Let us begone: Hermione expects you.
Ceph. For Heaven's sake, Madam, break this sullen silence.
Andr. My child's already promis'd——
Ceph. But not given.
Andr. No, no! my tears are vain! his doom is fix'd!
Pyr. See if she deigns to cast one look upon
Proud woman! [us!
Andr. I provoke him by my presence.
Let us retire.
Pyr. Come let us satisfy

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The Greeks; and give them up this Phrygian boy.
Andr. Ah, Sir! recall those words—What have you said!
If you give up my son, Oh, give up me!—
You, who so many times have sworn me friendship: [me?
Oh, Heavens!—will you not look with pity on
Is there no hope? Is there no room for pardon?
Pyr. Phœnix will answer you: my word is past.
Andr. You, who would brave so many dangers for me.
Pyr. I was your lover then: I now am free.
To favour you, I might have spar'd his life:
But you would ne'er vouchsafe to ask it of me.
Now, 'tis too late.
Andr. Ah, Sir, you understood
My tears, my wishes, which I durst not utter,
Afraid of a repulse. Oh, Sir, excuse
The pride of royal blood, that checks my soul.
You know, alas! I was not born to kneel,
To sue for pity, and to own a master.
Pyr. No! in your heart you curse me! you disdain
My generous flame, and scorn to be oblig'd!
This very son, this darling of your soul,
Would be less dear, did I preserve him for you.
Your anger, your aversion fall on me;
You hate me more than the whole league of Greece: [ments.
But I shall leave you to your great resent-
Let us go, Phœnix, and appease the Greeks.
Andr. Then, let me die! and let me go to Hector,
Ceph. But, Madam——
Andr. What can I do more! The tyrant
Sees my distraction, and insults my tears.
[*To* CEPH.
—Behold how low you have reduc'd a queen!
These eyes have seen my country laid in ashes;
My kindred fall in war; my father slain;
My husband dragg'd in his own blood; my son
Condemn'd to bondage, and myself a slave;
Yet, in the midst of these unheard of woes,
'Twas some relief to find myself your captive;
And that my son, deriv'd from ancient kings,
Since he must serve, had Pyrrhus for his master.
When Priam kneel'd the great Achilles wept:
I hop'd I should not find his son less noble.
I thought the brave were still the most compassionate.
Oh, do not, Sir, divide me from my child!
If he must die——
Pyr. Phœnix, withdraw awhile.
[*Exit* PHŒNIX.
Rise, Madam—Yet you may preserve your [son.
I find whenever I provoke your tears,
I furnish you with arms against myself.
I thought my hatred fix'd before I saw you.
Oh, turn your eyes upon me while I speak!
And see, if you discover in my looks
An angry judge, or an obdurate foe.
Why will you force me to desert your cause?
In your son's name I beg we may be friends;
Let me entreat you to secure his life!
Must I turn suppliant for him? Think, oh think,
'Tis the last time, you both may yet be happy!
I know the ties I break; the foes I arm:
I wrong Hermione; I send her hence;
And with her diadem I bind your brows.
Consider well; for 'tis of moment to you!
Choose to be wretched, Madam, or a queen.
My soul, consum'd with a whole year's despair,
Can bear no longer these perplexing doubts;
Enough of sighs, and tears, and threats I've tried;
I know, if I'm depriv'd of you I die:
But oh, I die, if I wait longer for you!
I leave you to your thoughts. When I return,
We'll to the temple; there you'll find your son;
And there be crown'd, or give him up for ever.
[*Exit.*
Ceph. I told you, Madam, that, in spite of Greece, [tune.
You would o'er-rule the malice of your for-
Andr. Alas! Cephisa, what have I obtain'd!
Only a poor short respite for my son.
Ceph. You have enough approv'd your faith to Hector;
To be reluctant still would be a crime.
He would himself persuade you to comply.
Andr. How—wouldst thou give me Pyrrhus for a husband?
Ceph. Think you 'twill please the ghost of your dead husband,
That you should sacrifice his son? Consider,
Pyrrhus once more invites you to a throne;
Turns all his power against the foes of Troy;
Remembers not Achilles was his father;
Retracts his conquest, and forgets his hatred.
Andr. But how can I forget it? How can I
Forget my Hector, treated with dishonour;
Depriv'd of funeral rites; and vilely dragg'd,
A bloody corse, about the walls of Troy?
Can I forget the good old king his father,
Slain in my presence; at the altar slain!
Which vainly, for protection, he embrac'd?
Hast thou forgot that dreadful night, Cephisa,
When a whole people fell? Methinks I see
Pyrrhus enrag'd, and breathing vengeance, enter
Amidst the glare of burning palaces;
I see him hew his passage through my brothers;
And, bath'd in blood, lay all my kindred waste.
Think in this scene of horror, what I suffer'd!
This is the courtship I receiv'd from Pyrrhus;
And this the husband thou wouldst give me! No,
We both will perish first! I'll ne'er consent.
Ceph. Since you resolve Astyanax shall die,
Haste to the temple, bid your son farewell.
Why do you tremble, Madam?
Andr. O Cephisa!
Thou hast awakened all the mother in me.
How can I bid farewell to the dear child,
The pledge, the image of my much-lov'd lord!
Alas, I call to mind the fatal day,
When his too forward courage led him forth
To seek Achilles.
Ceph. Oh, the unhappy hour!
'Twas then Troy fell, and all her gods forsook her.
Andr. That morn, Cephisa, that ill-fated morn,
My husband bid thee bring Astyanax;
He took him in his arms; and, as I wept,
My wife, my dear Andromache said he,
(Heaving with stifled sighs to see me weep)
What fortune may attend my arms, the gods
Alone can tell. To thee I give the boy;
Preserve him as the token of our loves!
If I should fall, let him not miss his sire
While thou surviv'st; but by thy tender care
Let the son see that thou didst love his father.

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Ceph. And will you throw away a life so precious?
At once extirpate all the Trojan line?
Andr. Inhuman king! What has he done to suffer?
If I neglect your vows, is he to blame?
Has he reproach'd you with his slaughter'd kindred?
Can he resent those ills he does not know?
But, oh! while I deliberate he dies. [thee;
No, no, thou must not die while I can save
Oh! let me find out Pyrrhus—Oh, Cephisa!
Do thou go find him.
Ceph. What must I say to him?
Andr. Tell him I love my son to such excess—
But dost thou think he means the child shall die?
Can love rejected turn to so much rage?
Ceph. Madam, he'll soon be here——Resolve on something.
Andr. Well then, assure him—
Ceph. Madam, of your love?
Andr. Alas, thou know'st it is not in my power.
Oh, my dead lord! Oh, Priam's royal house!
Oh, my Astyanax! At what a price
Thy mother buys thee!—Let us go.
Ceph. But whither?
And what does your unsettled heart resolve?
Andr. Come, my Cephisa, let us go together,
To the sad monument which I have rais'd
To Hector's shade; where in the sacred urn
The ashes of the hero lie inclos'd;
The dear remains which I have sav'd from Troy;
There let me weep, there summon to my aid,
With pious rites, my Hector's awful shade;
Let him be witness to my doubts, my fears,
My agonizing heart, my flowing tears:
Oh! may he rise in pity from his tomb,
And fix his wretched son's uncertain doom.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

ANDROMACHE *and* CEPHISA.

Ceph. Bless'd be the tomb of Hector, that inspires
These pious thoughts: or is it Hector's self,
That prompts you to preserve your son! 'Tis [he
Who still presides o'er ruin'd Troy; 'tis he
Who urges Pyrrhus to restore Astyanax.
Andr. Pyrrhus has said he will; and thou hast heard him
Just now renew the oft-repeated promise.
Ceph. Already in the transports of his heart,
He gives you up his kingdom, his allies,
And thinks himself o'erpaid for all in you.
Andr. I think I may rely upon his promise;
And yet my heart is overcharg'd with grief.
Ceph. Why should you grieve? You see he bids defiance
To all the Greeks; and to protect your son
Against their rage, has plac'd his guards about him;
Leaving himself defenceless for his sake:
But, Madam, think, the coronation pomp
Will soon demand your presence in the temple:
'Tis time you lay aside these mourning weeds.
Andr. I will be there; but first would see my son.
Ceph. Madam, you need not now be anxious for him,
He will be always with you, all your own,
To lavish the whole mother's fondness on him.
What a delight to train beneath your eye,
A son, who grows no longer up in bondage!
A son, in whom a race of kings revives:
But, Madam, you are sad, and wrapp'd in thought,
As if you relish'd not your happiness.
Andr. Oh, I must see my son once more, Cephisa!
Ceph. Madam, he now will be no more a captive;
Your visits may be frequent as you please.
To-morrow you may pass the live-long day—
Andr. To-morrow! Oh, Cephisa!—But no more!
Cephisa, I have always found thee faithful:
A load of care weighs down my drooping heart.
Ceph. Oh! that 'twere possible for me to ease you.
Andr. I soon shall exercise thy long-tried faith.
Meanwhile I do conjure thee, my Cephisa,
Thou take no notice of my present trouble:
And when I shall disclose my secret purpose,
That thou be punctual to perform my will.
Ceph. Madam, I have no will but yours. My life
Is nothing, balanc'd with my love to you.
Andr. I thank thee, good Cephisa, my Astyanax
Will recompense thy friendship to his mother.
But come; my heart's at ease: assist me now
To change this sable habit. Yonder comes
Hermione; I would not meet her rage.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter HERMIONE *and* CLEONE.

Cleo. This unexpected silence, this reserve,
This outward calm, this settled frame of mind,
After such wrongs and insults, much surprise me!
You, who before could not command your rage,
When Pyrrhus look'd but kindly on his captive;
How can you bear unmov'd, that he should wed her? [fill?
And seat her on a throne which you should
I fear this dreadful stillness in your soul!
'Twere better, Madam—
Her. Have you call'd Orestes?
Cleo. Madam, I have; his love is too impatient
Not to obey with speed the welcome summons.
His love-sick heart o'erlooks his unkind usage:
His ardour's still the same—Madam, he's here.

Enter ORESTES.

Orest. Ah, Madam, is it true? Does, then, Orestes
At length attend you by your own commands?
What can I do——
Her. Orestes, do you love me?
Orest. What means that question, princess, Do I love you!
My oaths, my perjuries, my hopes, my fears,
My farewell, my return, all speak my love.
Her. Avenge my wrongs, and I'll believe them all.
Orest. It shall be done—my soul has catch'd the alarm.
We'll spirit up the Greeks—I'll lead them on—
Your cause shall animate our fleets and armies.
Let us return: let us not lose a moment,
But urge the fate of this devoted land:
Let us depart.
Her. No, prince, let us stay here!

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I will have vengeance here—I will not carry
This load of infamy to Greece, nor trust
The chance of war to vindicate my wrongs.
Ere I depart, I'll make Epirus mourn.
If you avenge me, let it be this instant;
My rage brooks no delay—Haste to the temple,
Haste prince, and sacrifice him.

Orest. Whom!

Her. Why, Pyrrhus.

Orest. Pyrrhus! Did you say, Pyrrhus?

Her. You demur!
Oh, fly, begone! give me no time to think!
Talk not of laws—he tramples on all laws—
Let me not hear him justified——away!

Orest. You cannot think I'll justify my rival.
Madam, your love has made him criminal.
You shall have vengeance; I'll have vengeance
But let our hatred be profess'd and open: [too:
Let us alarm all Greece, denounce a war;
Let us attack him in his strength, and hunt him down
By conquest: should I turn base assassin,
'Twould sully all the kings I represent.

Her. Have I not been dishonour'd! set at nought! [fer
Expos'd to public scorn!——and will you suf-
The tyrant who dares use me thus, to live?
Know, prince, I hate him more than once I lov'd him; [him;
The gods alone can tell how once I lov'd
Yes, the false, perjur'd man, I once did love him;
And, spite of all his crimes and broken vows,
If he should live, I may relapse—who knows
But I to-morrow may forgive his wrongs?

Orest. First let me tear him piece-meal—he shall die.
But, Madam, give me leisure to contrive
The place, the time, the manner of his death:
Yet I'm a stranger in the court of Pyrrhus;
Scarce have I set my foot within Epirus,
When you enjoin me to destroy the prince.
It shall be done this very night.

Her. But now.
This very hour, he weds Andromache:
The temple shines with pomp; the golden throne
Is now prepar'd; the joyful rites begin;
My shame is public—Oh, be speedy, prince!
My wrath's impatient—Pyrrhus lives too long!
Intent on love, and heedless of his person,
He covers with his guards the Trojan boy.
Now is the time; assemble all your Greeks;
Mine shall assist them; let their fury loose:
Already they regard him as a foe.
Begone, Orestes—kill the faithless tyrant:
My love shall recompense the glorious deed.

Orest. Consider, Madam——

Her. You but mock my rage!
I was contriving how to make you happy.
Think you to merit by your idle sighs,
And not attest your love by one brave action?
Go, with your boasted constancy! and leave
Hermione to execute her own revenge!
I blush to think how my too easy faith
Has twice been baffled in one shameful hour!

Orest. Hear me but speak!—you know I'll die to serve you!

Her. I'll go myself: I'll stab him at the altar; [blood,
Then drive the poignard reeking with his
Through my own heart. In death we shall unite:
Better to die with him than live with you!

Orest. That were to make him bless'd; and me more wretched:
Madam, he dies by me:—Have you a foe,
And shall I let him live? My rival, too?
Ere yon meridian sun declines, he dies:
And you shall say, that I deserve your love.

Her. Go, prince; strike home! and leave the rest to me.
Let all your ships be ready for our flight.
[*Exit* ORESTES.

Cleo. Madam, you'll perish in this bold attempt.

Her. Give me my vengeance, I'm content to perish.
I was to blame to trust it with another:
In my own hands it had been more secure.
Orestes hates not Pyrrhus as I hate him:
I should have thrust the dagger home; have seen
The tyrant curse me with his parting breath,
And roll about his dying eyes, in vain,
To find Andromache, whom I would hide.
Oh, would Orestes, when he gives the blow,
Tell him he dies my victim!—Haste, Cleone;
Charge him to say, Hermione's resentments,
Not those of Greece, have sentenc'd him to death.
Haste, my Cleone! My revenge is lost,
If Pyrrhus knows not that he dies by me!

Cleo. I shall obey your orders——But see
The king approach!—Who could expect him here?

Her. O fly! Cleone, fly! and bid Orestes
Not proceed a step before I see him.
[*Exit* CLEONE.

Enter PYRRHUS.

Pyr. Madam, I ought to shun an injur'd princess:
Your distant looks reproach me: and I come
Not to defend, but to avow my guilt.
Pyrrhus will ne'er approve his own injustice;
Nor form excuses, while his heart condems him.
I might perhaps allege, our warlike sires,
Unknown to us, engag'd us to each other,
And join'd our hearts by contract, not by love:
But I detest such cobweb arts. I own
My father's treaty, and allow its force.
I sent ambassadors to call you hither;
Receiv'd you as my queen; and hop'd my [oaths
So oft renew'd might ripen into love.
The gods can witness, Madam, how I fought
Against Andromache's too fatal charms!
And still I wish I had the power to leave
This Trojan beauty, and be just to you.
Discharge your anger on this perjur'd man!
For I abhor my crime! and should be pleas'd
To hear you speak your wrongs aloud: no terms,
No bitterness of wrath, nor keen reproach,
Will equal half the upbraidings of my heart.

Her. I find, Sir, you can be sincere: you scorn
To act your crimes with fear, like other men.
A hero should be bold; above all laws;
Be bravely false; and laugh at solemn ties.
To be perfidious shows a daring mind!
And you have nobly triumph'd o'er a maid!
To court me; to reject me; to return;
Then to forsake me for a Phrygian slave:
To lay proud Troy in ashes; then to raise
The son of Hector, and renounce the Greeks,
Are actions worthy the great soul of Pyrrhus.

Pyr. Madam, go on: give your resentments birth;
And pour forth all your indignation on me.

Her. 'Twould please your queen, should I upbraid your falsehood;
Call you perfidious, traitor, all the names

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That injur'd virgins lavish on your sex;
I should o'erflow with tears, and die with grief,
And furnish out a tale to soothe her pride.
But, Sir, I would not over-charge her joys:
If you would charm Andromache, recount
Your bloody battles, your exploits, your slaughters,
Your great achievements in her father's palace.
She needs must love the man who fought so bravely,
And in her sight slew half her royal kindred.

Pyr. With horror I look back on my past deeds!
I punish'd Helen's wrongs too far; I shed
Too much of blood: but, Madam, Helen's daughter
Should not object those ills the mother caus'd.
However I am pleas'd to find you hate me:
I was too forward to accuse myself:
The man who ne'er was lov'd, can ne'er be false.
Obedience to a father brought you hither;
And I stood bound by promise to receive you:
But our desires were different ways inclin'd:
And you, I own, were not obliged to love me.

Her. Have I not lov'd you, then! perfidious man!
For you I slighted all the Grecian princes;
Forsook my father's house; conceal'd my wrongs,
When most provok'd: would not return to Sparta,
In hopes that time might fix your wavering heart,
I lov'd you when inconstant: and even now,
Inhuman king, that you pronounce my death,
My heart still doubts if I should love or hate you:
But, oh, since you resolve to wed another,
Defer your cruel purpose till to-morrow!
That I may not be here to grace your triumph!
This is the last request I e'er shall make you—
See if the barbarous prince vouchsafes an answer!
Go, then, to the lov'd Phrygian! Hence! begone!
And bear to her those vows, that once were mine:
Go, in defiance to the avenging gods!
Begone! the priest expects you at the altar—
But, tyrant; have a care I come not thither.
[*Exit.*

Enter PHŒNIX.

Phœn. Sir, did you mind her threats? Your life's in danger!
There is no trifling with a woman's rage.
The Greeks that swarm about the court, all hate you;
Will treat you as their country's enemy,
And join in her revenge: besides, Orestes
Still loves her to distraction: Sir, I beg——

Pyr. How, Phœnix, should I fear a woman's threats?
A nobler passion takes up all my thought:
I must prepare to meet Andromache.
Do thou place all my guards about her son:
If he be safe, Pyrrhus is free from fear.
[*Exit.*

PHŒNIX, *alone.*

Oh, Pyrrhus! oh, what pity 'tis the god,
Who fill'd thy soul with every kingly virtue,
Form'd thee for empire and consummate greatness,
Should leave thee so expos'd to wild desires,
That hurry thee beyond the bounds of reason!
[*A flourish of trumpets.*
Such was Achilles; generous, fierce, and brave;
Open and undesigning; but impatient,
Undisciplin'd, and not to be controll'd:
I fear this whirl of passion, this career,
That overbears reflection and cool thought;
I tremble for the event!—But see, the queen,
Magnificent in royal pride, appears.
I must obey, and guard her son from danger.
[*Exit.*

Enter ANDROMACHE *and* CEPHISA.

Ceph. Madam, once more you look and move a queen!
Your sorrows are dispers'd your charms revive,
And every faded beauty blooms anew.

Andr. Yet all is not as I could wish, Cephisa.

Ceph. You see the king is watchful o'er your son;
Decks him with princely robes, with guards surrounds him.
Astyanax begins to reign already.

Andr. Pyrrhus is nobly-minded: and I fain
Would live to thank him for Astyanax:
'Tis a vain thought——However, since my child
Has such a friend, I ought not to repine.

Ceph. These dark unfoldings of your soul perplex me.
What meant those floods of tears those warm embraces,
As if you bid your son adieu for ever?
For Heaven's sake Madam, let me know your griefs:
If you mistrust my faith——

Andr. That were to wrong thee.
Oh, my Cephisa! this gay, borrow'd air,
This blaze of jewels, and this bridal dress,
Are but mock trappings to conceal my wo:
My heart still mourns; I still am Hector's widow.

Ceph. Will you then break the promise given to Pyrrhus;
Blow up his rage afresh, and blast your hopes!

Andr. I thought, Cephisa, thou hadst known thy mistress.
Couldst thou believe I would be false to Hector?
Fall off from such a husband! break his rest,
And call him to this hated light again,
To see Andromache in Pyrrhus' arms?
Would Hector, were he living and I dead,
Forget Andromache, and wed her foe?

Ceph. I cannot guess what drift your thoughts pursue;
But, oh, I fear there's something dreadful in it!
Must then Astyanax be doom'd to die;
And you to linger out a life in bondage?

Andr. Nor this, nor that, Cephisa, will I bear;
My word is past to Pyrrhus, his to me!
And I rely upon his promis'd faith.
Unequal as he is, I know him well:
Pyrrhus is violent, but he's sincere,
And will perform beyond what he has sworn.
The Greeks will but incense him more; their rage
Will make him cherish Hector's son.

Ceph. Ah, Madam,
Explain those riddles to my boding heart!

Andr. Thou may'st remember, for thou oft hast heard me

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Relate the dreadful vision, which I saw,
When first I landed captive in Epirus.
That very night, as in a dream I lay,
A ghastly figure, full of gaping wounds,
His eyes aglare, his hair all stiff with blood,
Full in my sight thrice shook his head, and groan'd;
I soon discern'd my slaughter'd Hector's shade; [like
But, oh, how chang'd! ye gods, how much un-
The living Hector!——Loud, he bid me fly,
Fly from Achilles' son; then sternly frown'd,
And disappear'd. Struck with the dreadful sound
I started, and awak'd.

Ceph. But did he bid you
Destroy Astyanax?

Andr. Cephisa, I'll preserve him;
With my own life, Cephisa, I'll preserve him.

Ceph. What may these words, so full of horror, mean?

Andr. Know then the secret purpose of my soul:
Andromache will not be false to Pyrrhus,
Nor violate her sacred love to Hector.
This hour I'll meet the king; the holy priest
Shall join us, and confirm our mutual vows:
This will secure a father to my child:
That done, I have no further use for life:
This pointed dagger, this determin'd hand,
Shall save my virtue, and conclude my woes.

Ceph. Ah, Madam! recollect your scatter'd reason;
This fell despair ill suits your present fortunes.

Andr. No other stratagem can serve my purpose:
This is the sole expedient to be just
To Hector, to Astyanax, to Pyrrhus.
I shall soon visit Hector, and the shades
Of my great ancestors:—Cephisa, thou
Wilt lend a hand to close thy mistress' eyes.

Ceph. Oh, never think that I will stay behind you!

Andr. No, my Cephisa; I must have thee live.
Remember thou didst promise to obey,
And to be secret: wilt thou now betray me?
After thy long, thy faithful service, wilt thou
Refuse my last commands, my dying wish?
Once more I do conjure thee, live for me.

Ceph. Life is not worth my care when you are gone.

Andr. I must commit into thy faithful hands
All that is dear and precious to my soul:
Live, and supply my absence to my child;
All that remains of Troy, a future progeny
Of heroes, and a distant line of kings,
In him, is all intrusted to thy care.

Ceph. But, Madam, what will be the rage of Pyrrhus,
Defrauded of his promis'd happiness?

Andr. That will require thy utmost skill:—Observe
The first impetuous onsets of his grief;
Use every artifice to keep him steadfast.
Sometimes with tears thou may'st discourse of me; [him:
Speak of our marriage; let him think I lov'd
Tell him my soul repos'd itself on him,
When I resign'd my son to his protection.

Ceph. Oh, for a spirit to support my grief!
Is there ought more before you go for ever?

Andr. Oh, my Cephisa! my swoln heart is full:
I have a thousand farewells to my son:
But tears break in—Griefs interrupt my speech—
My soul o'erflows in fondness——Let him know
I died to save him:—And would die again.
Season his mind with early hints of glory;
Make him acquainted with his ancestors;
Trace out their shining story in his thoughts;
Dwell on th' exploits of his immortal father,
And sometimes let him hear his mother's name.
Let him reflect upon his royal birth
With modest pride; Pyrrhus will prove a friend:
But let him know he has a conqueror's right.
He must be taught to stifle his resentments,
And sacrifice his vengeance to his safety.
Should he prove headstrong, rash, or unadvis'd,
He then will frustrate all his mother's virtue,
Provoke his fate, and I shall die in vain.

Ceph. Alas! I fear I never shall outlive you.

Andr. No more: thy tears, Cephisa, will betray me;
Assume a cheerful look: but still remember—
[*Flourish within.*
Hark, how the trumpet, with its sprightly notes, [hence.
Proclaims the appointed hour, and calls us
Hector, I come, once more a queen to join thee. [crown'd,
Thus the gay victim, with fresh garlands
Pleas'd with the sacred fife's enlivening sound,
Through gazing crowds in solemn state proceeds,
And, dress'd in fatal pomp, magnificently bleeds. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.

HERMIONE *alone.*

Her. What have I done? Where am I? Where is Pyrrhus?
Ye gods! what mean these horrors?—I'm undone!
My soul is on the rack!—I cannot bear it:——
Why do I wander like some guilty ghost?
What brought me to this place? What keeps me here?
The court of Pyrrhus has no room for me!
Do I still doubt if I should love or hate him?
Hard-hearted man! how unconcern'd he left me!
Did he once sigh? Bestow one pitying look?
Once shed a tear? or speak one soft, kind word? [row,
Did he so much as feign one moment's sor-
To calm my griefs, and mitigate his falsehood?
Why am I still thus anxious for his life?
Why do I start at his impending fate?
Shall he then live? Shall the base traitor live
To laugh at my distress? No, let him perish!
Be quick, Orestes!——Execute my orders!
Alas! my orders! Oh, preposterous guilt!
Can I decree the death of him I love?
Was it for this my soul delighted in him?
Was it for this I left my father's court?
Have I then cross'd so many realms and seas
To murder Pyrrhus?

Enter CLEONE.

Oh, Cleone, help me!
What have I done? Is Pyrrhus yet alive?
What say'st thou?—Answer me: Where is the king?

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Cleo. Madam! I saw the cruel prince set forward,
Triumphant in his looks, and full of joy.
Still as he walk'd his ravish'd eyes were fix'd
On the fair captive; while through shouting crowds
She pass'd along with a dejected air,
And seem'd to mourn her Hector to the last.
Her. Insulting tyrant! I shall burst with rage!
But say, Cleone, didst thou mark him well?
Was his brow smooth? Say, did there not appear [row?
Some shade of grief; some little cloud of sor-
Did he not stop? Did he not once look back?
Didst thou approach him? Was he not confounded?
Did he not—Oh, be quick and tell me all!
Cleo. Madam, the tumult of his joy admits
No thought but love. Unguarded he march'd on, [foes.
'Midst a promiscuous throng of friends and
His cares all turn upon Astyanax,
Whom he has lodg'd within the citadel,
Defended by the strength of all his guards.
Her. Enough! he dies! the traitor!—Where's Orestes?
Cleo. He's in the temple with his whole retinue.
Her. Is he still resolute? Is he still determin'd?
Cleo. Madam, I fear——
Her. How! Is Orestes false?
Does he betray me too?
Cleo. A thousand doubts [morse:
Perplex his soul, and wound him with re-
His virtue and his love prevail by turns.
He told me Pyrrhus should not fall ignobly:
Pyrrhus, the warlike son of great Achilles.
He dreads the censure of the Grecian states;
Of all mankind; and fears to stain his honour.
Her. Poor timorous wretch! 'tis false! he basely fears
To cope with dangers, and encounter death;
'Tis that he fears:—Am I bright Helen's daughter?
To vindicate her wrongs all Greece conspir'd;
For her, confederate nations fought, and kings were slain;
Troy was o'erthrown, and a whole empire fell.
My eyes want force to raise a lover's arm
Against a tyrant that has dar'd to wrong me.
Cleo. Madam, like Helen, trust your cause to Greece.
Her. No! I'll avenge myself; I'll to the temple;
I'll overturn the altar, stab the priest; [me!
I'll hurl destruction like a whirlwind round
They must not wed; they must not live! they shall not
Let me be gone! I have no time to lose!
Stand off! hold me not! I am all distraction!
Oh, Pyrrhus! tyrant! traitor! thou shalt bleed.

Enter ORESTES.

Orest. Madam, 'tis done; your orders are obey'd:
The tyrant lies expiring at the altar.
Her. Is Pyrrhus slain?
Orest. Even now he gasps in death:
Our Greeks all undistinguish'd in the crowd,
Flock'd to the temple, and dispers'd themselves
On every side the altar. I was there;
Pyrrhus observ'd me with a haughty eye.
And, proud to triumph over Greece in me,
From his own brows he took the diadem,
And bound it on the temples of his captive:
Receive, said he, my crown; receive my faith;
Mine and my people's sovereign reign for ever.
From this bless'd hour, a father to your son;
I'll scourge his foes: henceforward he be styl'd
The Trojan king; I swear it at the altar,
And call the gods to ratify my vows.
His subjects with loud acclamations shook
The spacious dome. Our Greeks, enrag'd, cried out,
Revenge! revenge! broke through the throng-ing press, [king:
And rush'd tumultuous on the unguarded
Their eager fury left no work for me.
Pyrrhus awhile oppos'd their clashing swords,
And dealt his fatal blows on every side
With manly fierceness; till oppress'd by numbers,
Streaming with blood, all over gash'd with wounds,
He reel'd, he groan'd, and at the altar fell.—
Haste, Madam; let us fly! Haste to our ships!
They lie unmoor'd: our friends attend us there.
Her. What have they done?
Orest. Madam, forgive their rage.
I own your vengeance had been more complete,
Had Pyrrhus fallen by me, and had he known
Hermione chastis'd him by my arm.
Her. Peace, monster, peace! Go tell thy horrid tale
To savages, and howl it in the deserts.
Wouldst thou impute to me thy barbarous guilt?
Me wouldst thou make the accomplice of thy crimes? [ploits!
Hence to thy Greeks, and boast thy foul ex-
My soul abhors them! I disclaim the deed!
Begone! I know thee not! thou fell barbarian!
What had he done? What could provoke thy madness
To assassinate so great, so brave a man?
Who set thee on?
Orest. Oh, grant me patience, Heaven!
With your own lips did you not curse the tyrant, [him?
Pronounce his death, and urge me to destroy
Her. What if, transported by my boundless passion,
I could not bear to see him wed another,
Were you to obey a jealous woman's frenzy?
You should have div'd into my inmost thoughts:
My heart, though full of rage, was free from malice;
And all my anger was excess of love.
Why did you take me at my word? You saw
The struggles of my soul; you heard me rave:
You should have question'd me a thousand times,
Yet still have doubted, and still question'd on,
Before you ventur'd on a life so precious.
Orest. Hear me but speak: Heaven knows, against my will——
Her. Why did you not return? Why not consult me
A second time? And, undetermin'd still,
Again return, and still find new delays?
What had your rash officious Greeks, dire blood-hounds!
To do with my revenge? What drew you hither? [you?
To bring on me the vengeful woes that haunt
Are these the fruits of your detested love?

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Your fatal embassy, your hateful presence,
Drove Pyrrhus to my rival; and destroys
Both him and me. He might have lov'd me still,
Had you ne'er interpos'd—Avaunt! Begone!
And leave me in Epirus. I renounce
My friends, my country, Greece, and all mankind:
But chiefly I renounce thee! monster, thee!
[*Exit.*

Orest. Am I awake? Where am I? Soft, my soul;
Be not too rash.——Was that Hermione?
Why should her anger thunder against me?
Was not this blood shed all by her command?
I am indeed, a most outrageous monster!
A ruffian, murderer, a base assassin!
And all to please a false ungrateful woman.
Henceforward let the laws of nations cease;
And let the pale that severs right and wrong,
Things sacred and profane, be broken down;
Gods in their temples, kings upon their thrones,
Are not in safety, while Orestes lives.
Oh, never more shall my torn mind be heal'd,
Nor taste the gentle comforts of repose!
A dreadful band of gloomy cares surround me,
And lay strong siege to my distracted soul.

Enter PYLADES, *attended by Greeks.*

Pyl. Haste, prince; let us be gone: 'tis death to stay.
Andromache reigns queen: she gives the alarm,
And vows revenge upon the foes of Pyrrhus.
The people arm and muster in the streets:
Our Greeks will not be able long to guard
The palace gates, and to secure our flight.
We must be speedy, Sir.

Orest. You may depart,
My friends——Hermione and I remain——
Her cruelty has quite undone me!——Go,
And leave me to myself——I'll find her out.

Pyl. Alas, unhappy princess! she's no more;
Forget her, Sir, and save yourself with us.

Orest. Hermione no more! Oh, all ye powers!

Pyl. Full of disorder, wildness in her looks,
With hands expanded, and dishevell'd hair,
Breathless and pale, with shrieks she sought the temple;
In the mid-way she met the corpse of Pyrrhus;
She startled at the sight; then stiff with horror,
Gaz'd frightful: waken'd from the dire amaze,
She rais'd her eyes to Heaven with such a look
As spoke her sorrows and reproach'd the gods:
Then plung'd a poignard deep within her breast,
And fell on Pyrrhus, grasping him in death.

Orest. I thank you, gods—I never could expect
To be so wretched—You have been industrious
To finish your decrees; to make Orestes
A dreadful instance of your power to punish.
I'm singled out to bear the wrath of Heaven.

Pyl. You hazard your retreat by these delays.
The guards will soon beset us. Your complaints
Are vain, and may be fatal.

Orest. True, my friend:
And therefore 'twas I thank'd the bounteous gods.
My fate's accomplish'd—I shall die content.
Oh, bear me hence—blow, winds!—

Pyl. Let us be gone.

Orest. The murder'd lovers wait me—Hark, they call!
Nay, if your blood still reeks, I'll mingle mine:
One tomb will hold us all.

Pyl. Alas! I fear
His ravings will return with his misfortunes.

Orest. I am dizzy!—Clouds!—Quite lost in utter darkness.
Guide me, some friendly pilot, through the storm.
I shiver! Oh, I freeze!——So;——light returns;
'Tis the gray dawn!——See, Pylades!——Behold!—
I am encompass'd with a sea of blood!——
The crimson billows!——Oh! my brain's on fire!

Pyl. How is it, Sir?—Repose yourself on me.

Orest. Pyrrhus, stand off!—What wouldst thou?—How he glares!
What envious hand has clos'd thy wounds?—Have at thee.
It is Hermione that strikes——Confusion!
She catches Pyrrhus in her arms.——Oh, save me!
How terrible she looks! She knits her brow!
She frowns me dead! She frights me into madness!
Where am I? Who are you?

Pyl. Alas, poor prince!
Help to support him.—How he pants for breath!

Orest. This is most kind, my Pylades.—Oh, why,
Why was I born to give thee endless trouble?

Pyl. All will go well; he settles into reason.

Orest. Who talks of reason? Better to have none
Than not enough.—Run, some one, tell my Greeks,
I will not have them touch the king.—Now—
I blaze again!—See there!—Look where they come;
A shoal of furies—How they swarm about me!
My terror!—Hide me!—Oh, their snaky locks!
Hark, how they hiss!—See, see their flaming brands!
Now they let drive full at me!—How they grin, yelling!
And shake their iron whips!—My ears! what
And see, Hermione!——She sets them on——
Thrust not your scorpions thus into my bosom!
Oh!—I am stung to death!—Despatch me soon!
There—Take my heart, Hermione!—Tear it out!
Disjoint me! kill me! Oh, my tortur'd soul!—

Pyl. Kind Heaven restore him to his wonted calm!
Oft have I seen him rave: but never thus:
Quite spent! Assist me, friends, to bear him off.
Our time is short: should his strong rage return,
'Twould be beyond our power to force him hence,
Away, my friends! I hear the portal open.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter PHŒNIX, *attended by Guards.*

Phœn. All, all are fled!——Orestes is not here.
Triumphant villains!——The base, giddy rabble,
Whose hands should all have been employed with fire,

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To waste the fleet, flock'd round the dying princess: [bark.
And, while they stand agaze, the Greeks em-
Oh, 'tis too plain!—this sacrilegious murder
Was authoriz'd.——Th ambassador's escape
Declares his guilt.——Most bloody embassy!
Most unexampled deed!—Where, where, ye gods,
Is majesty secure, if in your temples
You give it no protection?—See, the queen.
[*A Flourish of Trumpets.*

Enter ANDROMACHE *and* CEPHISA.

Andr. Yes, ye inhuman Greeks! the time will come,
When you shall dearly pay your bloody deeds!
How should the Trojans hope for mercy from you, [Pyrrhus?
When thus you turn your impious rage on
Pyrrhus, the bravest man in all your league;
The man whose single valour made you triumph. [*A dead March behind.*
Is my child there?——
Ceph. It is the corpse of Pyrrhus.
The weeping soldiers bear him on their shields.
Andr. Ill-fated prince! too negligent of life;
And too unwary of the faithless Greeks!
Cut off in the fresh ripening prime of manhood,
Even in the pride of life: thy triumphs new,
And all thy glories in full blossom round thee!
The very Trojans would bewail thy fate.
Ceph. Alas, then, will your sorrows never end?
Andr. Oh, never, never!——While I live, my tears
Will never cease; for I was born to grieve.—
Give present orders for the funeral pomp:
[*To* PHŒN.
Let him be robed in all his regal state;
Place round him every shining mark of honour:
And let the pile, that consecrates his ashes,
Rise like his fame, and blaze above the clouds.
[*A Flourish of Trumpets.*
Ceph. That sound proclaims th' arrival of the prince;
The guards conduct him from the citadel.
Andr. With open arms I'll meet him!—Oh, Cephisa!
A springing joy, mix'd with a soft concern,
A pleasure which no language can express,
An ecstacy that mother's only feel,
Plays round my heart, and brightens up my sorrow,
Like gleams of sunshine in a lowering sky.
Though plung'd in ills, and exercis'd in care,
Yet never let the noble mind despair:
When press'd by dangers, and beset with foes,
The gods their timely succour interpose;
And when our virtue sinks, o'erwhelm'd with grief,
By unforeseen expedients, bring relief.
[*Exeunt omnes.*

EPILOGUE.

WRITTEN BY MR. BUDGELL.

SPOKEN BY ANDROMACHE.

I hope you'll own, that with becoming art,
I've play'd my game, and topp'd the widow's part. [play,
My spouse, poor man, could not live out the
But died commodiously on his wedding-day;
While I, his relict, made at one bold fling,
Myself a princess, and young Sty a king.
You, ladies, who protract a lover's pain,
And hear your servants sigh whole years in vain; [ture,
Which of you all would not on marriage ven-
Might she so soon upon her jointure enter?
'Twas a strange 'scape! Had Pyrrhus liv'd till now,
I had been finely hamper'd in my vow.
To die by one's own hand, and fly the charms
Of love and life in a young monarch's arms!
'Twere a hard fate——ere I had undergone it,
I might have took one night——to think upon it.
But why, you'll say, was all this grief express'd
For a first husband, laid long since at rest?
Why so much coldness to my kind protector?
—Ah, ladies! had you known the good man Hector!
Homer, will tell you, (or I'm misinform'd,)
That, when enrag'd, the Grecian camp he storm'd;
To break the ten-fold barriers of the gate,
He threw a stone of such prodigious weight
As no two men could lift, not even of those
Who in that age of thundering mortals rose:
—It would have sprain'd a dozen modern beaus.
At length, howe'er, I laid my weeds aside,
And sunk the widow in the well-dress'd bride.
In you it still remains to grace the play,
And bless with joy my coronation-day;
Take, then, ye circles of the brave and fair,
The fatherless and widow to your care.

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THE TENDER HUSBAND:

OR,

THE ACCOMPLISHED FOOLS.

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY SIR RICHARD STEELE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SIR HARRY GUBBIN.
HUMPHRY GUBBIN.
MR. TIPKIN.
CLERIMONT, Sen.
CAPTAIN CLERIMONT.
MR. POUNCE.

MRS. CLERIMONT.
AUNT.
NIECE.
FAINLOVE.
JENNY, Maid to MRS. CLERIMONT.

PROLOGUE.

WRITTEN BY MR. ADDISON.

In the first rise and infancy of farce,
When fools were many, and when plays were scarce,
The raw, unpractis'd authors could with ease
A young and unexperienc'd audience please:
No single character had e'er been shown,
But the whole herd of fops was all their own;
Rich in originals, they set to view,
In every piece, a coxcomb that was new.
But now our British Theatres can boast
Drolls of all kinds, a vast unthinking host!
Fruitful of folly and of vice, it shows
Cuckolds, and cits, and bawds, and pimps, and beaus;
Rough country knights are found of every shire,
Of every fashion gentle fops appear;
And punks of different characters we meet,
As frequent on the stage as in the pit:
Our modern wits are forc'd to pick and cull,
And here and there by chance glean up a fool:
Long ere they find the necessary spark,
They search the town, and beat about the Park:
To all his most frequented haunts resort,
Oft dog him to the ring, and oft to court;
As love of pleasure, or of place, invites:
And sometimes catch him taking snuff at White's.
Howe'er, to do you right, the present age
Breeds very hopeful monsters for the stage,
That scorn the paths their dull forefathers trod,
And wont be blockheads in the common road.
Do but survey this crowded house to-night:
—Here's still encouragement for those that write.
Our author, to divert his friends to-day,
Stocks with variety of fools his play;
And that there may be something gay and new,
Two ladies errant has expos'd to view:
The first a damsel, travell'd in romance;
The t'other more refin'd; she comes from France:
Rescue, like courteous knights, the nymph from danger.
And kindly treat, like well-bred men, the stranger.

A SONG.

Designed for the Fourth Act, but not set.

SEE, Britons, see with awful eyes,
Britannia from her seas arise!
Ten thousand billows round me roar
While winds and waves engage,
That break in froth upon my shore,
And impotently rage.
Such were the terrors, which of late
Surrounded my afflicted state;
United fury thus was bent
On my devoted seats,
Till all the mighty force was spent
In feeble swells and empty threats.

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But now, with rising glory crown'd,
My joys run high, they know no bound;
Tides of unruly pleasure flow
Through every swelling vein,
New raptures in my bosom glow,
And warm me up to youth again.
Passing pomps my streets adorn;
Captive spoils in triumph borne.
Standards of Gauls in fight subdued,
Colours in hostile blood embrued,
Ensigns of tyrannic might,
Foes to equity and right,
In courts of British justice wave on high,
Sacred to law and liberty.
My crowded theatres repeat,
In songs of triumph the defeat.
Did ever joyful mother see
So bright, so brave a progeny!
Daughters with so much beauty crown'd,
Or sons for valour so renown'd.

But, oh, I gaze and seek in vain
To find, amidst this warlike train,
My absent sons, that used to grace
With decent pride this joyous place:
Unhappy youths! How do my sorrows rise,
Swell my breast, and melt my eyes,
While I your mighty loss deplore,
Wild and raging with distress,
I mourn, I mourn my own success,
And boast my victories no more.
Unhappy youths! far from their native sky,
On Danube's banks interr'd they lie.
Germania! give me back my slain,
Give me my slaughter'd sons again.
Was it for this they rang'd so far,
To free thee from oppressive war!
Germania, &c.
Tears of sorrow while I shed,
O'er the manes of my dead,
Lasting altars let me raise
To my living heroes' praise;
Heaven give them a longer stay,
As glorious actions to display,
Or perish on as great a day.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—The Park.

Enter CLERIMONT *Sen. and* FAINLOVE.

Cler. Sen. Well, Mr. Fainlove, how do you go on in your amour with my wife?

Fain. I am very civil and very distant; if she smiles or speaks, I bow and gaze at her—then throw down my eyes as if oppressed by fear of offence, then steal a look again till she again sees me—This is my general method.

Cler. Sen. And 'tis right—For such a fine lady has no guard to her virtue, but her pride; therefore you must constantly apply yourself to that: But dear Lucy, as you have been a very faithful, but a very costly wench to me, so my spouse also has been constant to my bed, but careless of my fortune.

Fain. Ah! my dear, how could you leave your poor Lucy, and run into France to see sights, and show your gallantry with a wife? Was not that unnatural?

Cler. Sen. She brought me a noble fortune, and I thought she had a right to share it: therefore carried her to see the world, forsooth, and make the tour of France and Italy, where she learned to lose her money gracefully, to admire every vanity in our sex, and contemn every virtue in her own; which, with ten thousand other perfections, are the ordinary improvements of a travelled lady. Now I can neither mortify her vanity that I may live at ease with her, or quite discard her, till I have catch'd her a little enlarging her innocent freedoms, as she calls 'em: for this end I am content to be a French husband, though now and then with the secret pangs of an Italian one; and therefore, Sir, or Madam, you are thus equipped to attend and accoost her ladyship; it concerns you to be diligent: if we wholly part—I need say no more: if we do not—I'll see thee well provided for.

Fain. I'll do all I can, I warrant you; but you are not to expect I'll go much among the men.

Cler. Sen. No, no, you must not go near men; you are only, when my wife goes to a play, to sit in a side-box with pretty fellows—I don't design you to personate a real man, you are only to be a pretty gentleman—Not to be of any use or consequence in the world, as to yourself, but merely as a property to others: such as you see now and then have a life in the entail of a great estate, that seem to have come into the world only to be tags in the pedigree of a wealthy house.—You must have seen many of that species.

Fain. I apprehend you; such as stand in assemblies, with an indolent softness and contempt of all around 'em; who make a figure in public, and are scorned in private; I have seen such a one with a pocket-glass to see his own face, and an affected perspective to know others. [*Imitates each.*

Cler. Sen. Aye, aye, that's my man—Thou dear rogue!

Fain. Let me alone—I'll lay my life I'll horn you, that is, I'll make it appear I might if I could.

Cler. Sen. Aye, that will please me quite as well.

Fain. To show you the progress I have made, I last night won of her five hundred pounds, which I have brought you safe. [*Giving him bills.*

Cler. Sen. Oh the damned vice! That women can imagine all household care, regard to posterity, and fear of poverty, must be sacrificed to a game at cards—Suppose she had not had it to pay, and you had been capable of finding your account another way—

Fain. That's but a suppose——

Cler. Sen. I say, she must have complied with every thing you asked——

Fain. But she knows you never limit her expenses—I'll gain him from her for ever if I can. [*Aside.*

Cler. Sen. With this you have repaid me two thousand pounds, and if you did not refund this honestly, I could not have supplied her——We must have parted.

Fain. Then you shall part—if t'other way fails. [*Aside.*] However, I can't blame your fondness of her, she has so many entertaining qualities with her vanity—Then she has such a pretty unthinking air, while she saunters round a room, and prattles sentences—

Cler. Sen. That was her turn from her infancy; she always had a great genius for knowing every thing but what it was necessary she should—The wits of the age, the great beauties, and short-lived people of vogue, were always her discourse and imitation—Thus the case stood when she went to France; but her fine follies improved so daily, that

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though I was then proud of her being called Mr. Clerimont's wife, I am now as much out of countenance to hear myself called Mrs. Clerimont's husband; so much is the superiority of her side.

Fain. I am sure if ever I gave myself a little liberty, I never found you so indulgent.

Cler. Sen. I should have the whole sex on my back, should I pretend to retrench a lady so well visited as mine is—Therefore I must bring it about that it shall appear her own act, if she reforms; or else I shall be pronounced jealous, and have my eyes pulled out for being open—But I hear my brother Jack coming, who I hope, has brought yours with him——Hist, not a word.

Enter CAPTAIN CLERIMONT *and* POUNCE.

Capt. I have found him out at last, brother, and brought you the obsequious Mr. Pounce; I saw him at a distance in a crowd, whispering in their turns with all about him—He is a gentleman so received, so courted, and so trusted——

Pounce. I am very glad if you saw any thing like that, if the approbation of others can recommend me (where I much more desired it) to this company—

Capt. Oh, the civil person——But dear Pounce, you know I am your professed admirer; I always celebrated you for your excellent skill and address, for that happy knowledge of the world, which makes you seem born for living with the persons you are with, wherever you come——Now, my brother and I want your help in a business that requires a little more dexterity than we ourselves are masters of.

Pounce. You know, Sir, my character is helping the distressed, which I do freely, and without reserve; while others are for distinguishing rigidly on the justice of the occasion, and so lose the grace of the benefit——Now, 'tis my profession to assist a free-hearted young fellow against an unnatural long-lived father—to disencumber men of pleasure of the vexation of unweildy estates, to support a feeble title to an inheritance, to——

Cler. Sen. I have been well acquainted with your merits ever since I saw you, with so much compassion, prompt a stammering witness in Westminster-hall—that wanted instruction——I love a man that can venture his ears with so much bravery for his friend.

Pounce. Dear Sir, spare my modesty, and let me know to what all this panegyric tends.

Cler. Sen. Why, Sir, what I would say, is in behalf of my brother the captain here, whose misfortune it is that I was born before him.

Pounce. I am confident he had rather you should have been so, than any other man in England.

Capt. You do me justice, Mr. Pounce——But though 'tis to that gentleman, I am still a younger brother, and you know we that are so, are generally condemned to shops, colleges, or inns of court.

Pounce. But you, Sir, have escaped 'em; you have been trading in the noble mart of glory——

Capt. That's true—But the general makes such haste to finish the war, that we red coats may be soon out of fashion—and then I am a fellow of the most easy, indolent disposition in the world; I hate all manner of business.

Pounce. A composed temper, indeed!

Capt. In such a case I should have no way of livelihood, but calling over this gentleman's dogs in the country, drinking his stale beer to the neighbourhood, or marrying a fortune.

Cler. Sen. To be short, Pounce——I am putting Jack upon marriage; and you are so public an envoy, or rather plenipotentiary, from the very different nations of Cheapside, Covent-Garden, and St. James's; you have, too, the mien and language of each place, so naturally, that you are the properest instrument I know in the world, to help an honest young fellow to favour in one of 'em, by credit in the other.

Pounce. By what I understand of your many prefaces, gentlemen, the purpose of all this is—That it would not in the least discompose this gentleman's easy, indolent disposition, to fall into twenty thousand pounds, though it came upon him never so suddenly.

Capt. You are a very discerning man——How could you see so far through me, as to know I love a fine woman, pretty equipage, good company, and a clean habitation?

Pounce. Well, though I am so much a conjuror—What then?

Cler. Sen. You know a certain person, into whose hands you now and then recommend a young heir, to be relieved from the vexation of tenants, taxes, and so forth——

Pounce. What! my worthy friend, and city patron, Hezekiah Tipkin, banker in Lombard street; would the noble captain lay any sums in his hands?

Capt. No—But the noble captain would have treasure out of his hands—You know his niece?

Pounce. To my knowledge, ten thousand pounds in money.

Capt. Such a stature! such a blooming countenance! so easy a shape!

Pounce. In jewels of her grandmother's five thousand—

Capt. Her wit so lively, her mien so alluring!

Pounce. In land a thousand a year.

Capt. Her lips have that certain prominence, that swelling softness, that they invite to a pressure; her eyes that languish, that they give pain, though they look only inclined to rest——Her whole person that one charm——

Pounce. Raptures! raptures!

Capt. How can it, so insensibly to itself, lead us through cares it knows not, through such a wilderness of hopes, fears, joys, sorrows, desires, despairs, ecstacies, and torments, with so sweet, yet so anxious vicissitude!

Pounce. Why I thought you had never seen her——

Capt. No more I ha'n't.

Pounce. Who told you then, of her inviting lips, her soft sleepy eyes?——

Capt. You yourself——

Pounce. Sure you rave; I never spoke of her before to you.

Capt. Why, you wont face me down—Did you not just now say, she had ten thousand pounds in money, five in jewels, and a thousand a year?

Pounce. I confess my own stupidity, and her charms—Why, if you were to meet, you would certainly please her; you have the cant of loving; but pray, may we be free—That young gentleman—

Capt. A very honest, modest gentleman of

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my acquaintance: one that has much more in him than he appears to have; you shall know him better, Sir; this is Mr. Pounce. Mr. Pounce, this is Mr. Fainlove; I must desire you to let him be known to you and your friends.

Pounce. I shall be proud—Well, then, since we may be free, you must understand, the young lady, by being kept from the world, has made a world of her own.—She has spent all her solitude in reading romances; her head is full of shepherds, knights, flowery meads, groves, and streams; so that if you talk like a man of this world to her, you do nothing.

Capt. Oh, let me alone—I have been a great traveller in fairy land myself; I know Oroondates, Cassandra; Astrea and Clelia are my intimate acquaintance.

Go, my heart's envoys, tender sighs make haste,
And with your breath swell the soft Zephyr's [blast:
Then near that fair one, if you chance to fly,
Tell her, in whispers, 'tis for her I die.

Pounce. That would do, that would do—her very language.

Cler. Sen. Why then, dear Pounce, I know thou art the only man living that can serve him.

Pounce. Gentlemen, you must pardon me, I am soliciting the marriage settlement between her and a country booby, her cousin, Humphry Gubbin, Sir Harry's heir, who is come to town to take possession of her.

Cler. Sen. Well, all that I can say to the matter is, that a thousand pounds on the day of Jack's marriage to her, is more than you'll get by the despatch of those deeds.

Pounce. Why a thousand pounds is a pretty thing, especially when 'tis to take a lady fair out of the hands of an obstinate, ill-bred clown, to give her to a gentle swain, a dying enamoured knight.

Cler. Sen. Ay, dear Pounce—consider but that—the justice of the thing.

Pounce. Besides, he is just come from the glorious Blenheim! Look ye, captain, I hope you have learn'd an implicit obedience to your leaders.

Capt. 'Tis all I know.

Pounce. Then, if I am to command—make no one step without me—And since we may be free—I am also to acquaint you, there will be more merit in bringing this matter to bear than you imagine—Yet right measures make all things possible.

Capt. We'll follow yours exactly.

Pounce. But the great matter against us is want of time; for the nymph's uncle, and squire's father, this morning met, and made an end of the matter—But the difficulty of a thing, captain, shall be no reason against attempting it.

Capt. I have so great an opinion of your conduct that I warrant you we conquer all.

Pounce. I am so immediately employed by old Tipkin, and so necessary to him, that I may, perhaps, puzzle things yet.

Cler. Sen. I have seen thee cajole the knave very dextrously.

Pounce. Why, really, Sir, generally speaking, 'tis but knowing what a man thinks of himself, and giving him that, to make him what else you please——Now Tipkin is an absolute Lombard-street wit, a fellow that drolls on the strength of fifty thousand pounds: he is called on 'Change, Sly-boots, and by the force of a very good credit, and a very bad conscience, he is a leading person: but we must be quick, or he'll sneer old Sir Harry out of his senses, and strike up the sale of his niece immediately.

Capt. But my rival, what's he——

Pounce. There's some hopes there, for I hear the booby is as averse, as his father is inclined to it—One is as obstinate, as the other is cruel.

Cler. Sen. He is, they say, a pert blockhead, and very lively out of his father's sight.

Pounce. He that gave me his character, called him a docile dunce, a fellow rather absurd, than a direct fool—When his father's absent, he'll pursue any thing he's put upon—But we must not lose time—Pray be you two brothers at home to wait for any notice from me—While that pretty gentleman and I, whose face I have known, take a walk and look about for 'em—So, so—young lady——
[*Aside to* FAINLOVE. *Exeunt.*

Enter SIR HARRY GUBBIN *and* TIPKIN.

Sir Har. Look ye, brother Tipkin, as I told you before, my business in town is to dispose of a hundred head of cattle and my son.

Tip. Brother Gubbin, as I signified to you in my last, bearing date September 13th, my niece has a thousand pounds per annum, and because I have found you a plain dealing man, (particularly in the easy pad you put into my hands last summer,) I was willing you should have the refusal of my niece, provided that I have a discharge from all retrospects while her guardian, and one thousand pounds for my care.

Sir Har. Ay, but brother, you rate her too high; the war has fetched down the price of women: the whole nation is overrun with petticoats; our daughters lie upon our hands, brother Tipkin; girls are drugs, Sir, mere drugs.

Tip. Look ye, Sir Harry—Let girls be what they will—a thousand pounds a-year is a thousand pounds a-year; and a thousand pounds a-year is neither girl nor boy.

Sir Har. Look ye, Mr. Tipkin, the main article with me is, that foundation of wives' rebellion, and husbands' cuckoldom, that cursed pin-money—Five hundred pounds per annum in pin-money.

Tip. The word pin-money, Sir Harry, is a term.—

Sir Har. It is a term, brother, we never had in our family, nor ever will—Make her jointure in widowhood accordingly large, but four hundred pounds a-year is enough to give no account of.

Tip. Well, Sir Harry, since you can't swallow these pins, I will abate to four hundred pounds.

Sir Har. And to mollify the article——as well as specify the uses, we'll put in the names of several female utensils, as needles, knitting-needles, tape, thread, scissars, bodkins, fans, play-books, with other toys of that nature. And now, since we have as good as concluded the marriage, it will not be improper that the young people see each other.

Tip. I don't think it prudent till the very instant of marriage, lest they should not like one another.

Sir Har. They shall meet—As for the young girl, she cannot dislike Numps; and for Numps, I never suffer'd him to have any thing

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he liked in his life. He'll be here immediately; he has been trained up from his childhood under such a plant as this in my hand—I have taken pains in his education.

Tip. Sir Harry, I approve your method; for since you have left off hunting, you might otherwise want exercise, and this is a subtile expedient to preserve your own health and your son's good manners.

Sir Har. It has been the custom of the Gubbins to preserve severity and discipline in their families—I myself was caned the day before my wedding.

Tip. Ay, Sir Harry, had you not been well cudgelled in youth, you had never been the man you are.

Sir Har. You say right, now I feel the benefit of it——There's a crab-tree, near our house, which flourishes for the good of my posterity, and has brush'd our jackets, from father to son, for several generations——

Tip. I am glad to hear you have all things necessary for the family within yourselves——

Sir Har. Oh! yonder, I see Numps is coming—I have dressed him in the very suit I had on at my own wedding; 'tis a most becoming apparel.

Enter HUMPHRY GUBBIN.

Tip. Truly, the youth makes a good marriageable figure.

Sir Har. Come forward, Numps; this is your uncle Tipkin, your mother's brother, Numps, that is so kind as to bestow his niece upon you. (Don't be so glum, sirrah.) Don't bow to a man, with a face as if you'd knock him down; don't, sirrah.

Tip. I am glad to see you, cousin Humphry—He is not talkative, I observe already.

Sir Har. He is very shrewd, Sir, when he pleases. Do you see this crab-stick, you dog: [*Apart.*] Well, Numps, don't be out of humour. Will you talk? [*Apart.*] Come, we're your friends, Numps; come, lad.

Humph. You are a pure fellow for a father. This is always your trick, to make a great fool of one before company.

[*Apart to his father.*

Sir Har. Don't disgrace me, sirrah: you grim, graceless rogue. [*Apart.*]—Brother, he has been bred up to respect and silence before his parents——Yet did you but hear what a noise he makes sometimes in the kitchen, or the kennel, he's the loudest of 'em all.

Tip. Well, Sir Harry, since you assure me he can speak, I'll take your word for it.

Humph. I can speak when I see occasion, and I can hold my tongue when I see occasion.

Sir Har. Well said, Numps—Sirrah, I see you can do well if you will. [*Apart.*

Tip. Pray walk up to me, cousin Humphry.

Sir Har. Ay, walk to and fro between us, with your hat under your arm.—Clear up your countenance. [*Apart.*

Tip. I see, Sir Harry, you ha'n't set him a capering under a French dancing-master; he does not mince it: he has not learned to walk by a courant, or a boree——His paces are natural——Sir Harry.

Humph. I don't know but 'tis, so we walk in the west of England.

Sir Har. Ay, right, Numps, and so we do—Ha, ha, ha! Pray, brother, observe his make, none of your lath-backed wishy-washy breed—come hither, Numps. Can't you stand still? [*Apart, measuring his shoulders.*

Tip. I presume this is not the first time, Sir Harry, you have measured his shoulders with your cane.

Sir Har. Look ye, brother, two feet and a half in the shoulders.

Tip. Two feet and a half! we must make some settlement on the younger children.

Sir Har. Not like him, quotha'!

Tip. He may see his cousin when he pleases.

Humph. But hark ye, uncle, I have a scruple I had better mention before marriage than after.

Tip. What's that, what's that?

Humph. My cousin, you know, is a-kin to me, and I don't think it lawful for a young man to marry his own relations.

Sir Har. Hark ye, hark ye, Numps, we have got a way to solve all that—Sirrah! consider this cudgel! Your cousin! Suppose I'd have you marry your grandmother; what then? [*Apart.*

Tip. Well, has your father satisfied you in the point, Mr. Humphry?

Humph. Ay, ay, Sir, very well: I have not the least scruple remaining; no, no—not in the least, Sir.

Tip. Then hark ye, brother; we'll go take a whet, and settle the whole affair.

Sir Har. Come, we'll leave Numps here—he knows the way.—Not marry your own relations, sirrah! [*Apart.*

[*Exeunt* SIR HARRY *and* TIPKIN.

Humph. Very fine, very fine; how prettily this park is stocked with soldiers, and deer, and ducks, and ladies——Ha! where are the old fellows gone? where can they be, tro'——I'll ask these people——

Enter POUNCE *and* FAINLOVE.

Humph. Ha, you pretty young gentleman, did you see my father?

Fain. Your father, Sir?

Humph. A weazel-faced cross old gentleman, with spindle shanks.

Fain. No, Sir.

Humph. A crab-tree stick in his hand?

Pounce. We ha'n't met any body with these marks, but sure I have seen you before——Are not you Mr. Humphry Gubbin, son and heir to Sir Henry Gubbin?

Humph. I am his son and heir——But how long I shall be so, I can't tell, for he talks every day of disinheriting me.

Pounce. Dear Sir, let me embrace you——Nay, don't be offended if I take the liberty to kiss you; Mr. Fainlove, pray [FAINLOVE *kisses.*] kiss the gentleman—Nay, dear Sir, don't stare and be surprised, for I have had a desire to be better known to you ever since I saw you one day clinch your fist at your father, when his back was turn'd upon you——For I must own I very much admire a young gentleman of spirit.

Humph. Why, Sir, would it not vex a man to the heart to have an old fool snubbing a body every minute afore company——

Pounce. Oh fy, he uses you like a boy.

Humph. Like a boy! He lays on me now and then, as if I were one of his hounds—You can't think what a rage he was in this morning because I boggled a little at marrying my own cousin.

Pounce. A man can't be too scrupulous, Mr. Humphry: a man can't be too scrupulous.

Humph. Sir, I could as soon love my own flesh and blood, we should squabble like bro-

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ther and sister; do you think we should not Mr. ——? Pray, gentlemen, may I crave the favour of your names?

Pounce. Sir, I am the very person that have been employed to draw up the articles of marriage between you and your cousin.

Humph. Ay, say you so? Then you can inform me in some things concerning myself?—Pray, Sir, what estate am I heir to?

Pounce. To fifteen hundred pounds a-year, an entailed estate——

Humph. I am glad to hear it, with all my heart; and can you satisfy me in another question——Pray, how old am I at present?

Pounce. Three and twenty last March.

Humph. Why, as sure as you are there they have kept me back. I have been told by some of the neighbourhood, that I was born the very year the pigeon-house was built, and every body knows the pigeon-house is three and twenty—Why I find there has been tricks played me; I have obeyed him all along, as if I had been obliged to it.

Pounce. Not at all, Sir; your father can't cut you out of one acre of fifteen hundred pounds a-year.

Humph. What a fool have I been to give him his head so long!

Pounce. A man of your beauty and fortune may find out ladies enough that are not a-kin to you.

Humph. Look ye, Mr. What-d'ye-call—As to my beauty, I don't know but they may take a liking to that—But, Sir, mayn't I crave your name?

Pounce. My name, Sir, is Pounce, at your service.

Humph. Pounce with a P——

Pounce. Yes, Sir, and Samuel with an S——.

Humph. Why, then, Mr. Samuel Pounce, do you know any gentlewoman that you think I could like? For, to tell you truly, I took an antipathy to my cousin ever since my father proposed her to me—And since every body knows I came up to be married, I don't care to go down and look balked.

Pounce. I have a thought just come into my head—Do you see this young gentleman? he has a sister, a prodigious fortune—faith, you two shall be acquainted—

Fain. I can't pretend to expect so accomplished a gentleman as Mr. Humphry for my sister; but being your friend, I'll be at his service in the affair.

Humph. If I had your sister, she and I should live like two turtles.

Pounce. Mr. Humphry, you sha'n't be fooled any longer. I'll carry you into company;—Mr. Fainlove, you shall introduce him to Mrs. Clerimont's toilet.

Fain. She'll be highly taken with him, for she loves a gentleman whose manner is particular.

Pounce. What, Sir, a person of your pretensions, a clear estate, no portions to pay! 'Tis barbarous your treatment—Mr. Humphry, I'm afraid you want money—There's for you—What, a man of your accomplishments!

[*Giving a purse.*

Humph. And yet you see, Sir, how they use me—Dear Sir, you are the best friend I ever met with in all my life—Now I am flush of money bring me to your sister, and I warrant you for my behaviour—A man's quite another thing with money in his pocket—you know.

Pounce. How little the oaf wonders why I should give him money! You shall never want, Mr. Humphry, while I have it—Mr. Humphry; but, dear friend, I must take my leave of you, I have some extraordinary business on my hands; I can't stay; but you must not say a word—

Fain. But you must be in the way half an hour hence, and I'll introduce you at Mrs. Clerimont's:

Pounce. Make 'em believe you are willing to have your cousin Bridget, till opportunity serves. Farewell, dear friend.

[*Exeunt* POUNCE *and* FAINLOVE.

Humph. Farewell, good Mr. Samuel Pounce—But let's see my cash—'Tis very true, the old saying, a man meets with more friendship from strangers than his own relations—Let's see my cash; 1, 2, 3, 4, there on that side—1, 2, 3, 4, on that side; 'tis a foolish thing to put all one's money in one pocket, 'tis like a man's whole estate in one county—These five in my fob—I'll keep these in my hand, lest I should have present occasion—But this town's full of pick-pockets—I'll go home again.

[*Exit whistling.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—Continues.

Enter POUNCE *and* CAPTAIN CLERIMONT, *with his arm in a scarf.*

Pounce. You are now well enough instructed both in the aunt and niece to form your behaviour.

Capt. But to talk with her apart is the great matter.

Pounce. The antiquated virgin has a mighty affectation for youth, and is a great lover of men and money—One of these, at least, I am sure I can gratify her in, by turning her pence in the annuities, or the stocks of one of the companies; some way or other I will find to entertain her, and engage you with the young lady.

Capt. Since that is her ladyship's turn, so busy and fine a gentleman as Mr. Pounce must needs be in her good graces.

Pounce. So shall you too—But you must not be seen with me at first meeting; I'll dog 'em, while you watch at a distance.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter AUNT *and* NIECE.

Niece. Was it not my gallant that whistled so charmingly in the parlour before he went out this morning? He's a most accomplished cavalier.

Aunt. Come, niece, come—You don't do well to make sport with your relations, especially with a young gentleman that has so much kindness for you.

Niece. Kindness for me! what a phrase is there to express the darts and flames, the sighs and languishings of an expecting lover!

Aunt. Pray, niece, forbear this idle trash, and talk like other people. Your cousin Humphry will be true and hearty in what he says, and that's a great deal better than the talk and compliment of romances.

Niece. Good Madam, don't wound my ears with such expressions; do you think I can ever love a man that's true and hearty! What a peasant-like amour do these coarse words import? True and hearty! Pray, aunt en-

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deavour a little at the embellishment of your style.

Aunt. Alack-a-day, cousin Biddy, these idle romances have quite turned your head.

Niece. How often must I desire you, Madam, to lay aside that familiar name, cousin Biddy? I never hear it without blushing—Did you ever meet with an heroine in those idle romances as you call 'em, that was termed Biddy?

Aunt. Ah! cousin, cousin—These are mere vapours, indeed—Nothing but vapours—

Niece. No, the heroine has always something soft and engaging in her name—Something that gives us a notion of the sweetness of her beauty and behaviour. A name that glides through half a dozen tender syllables, as, Elismunda, Clidamira, Deidamia; that runs upon vowels of the tongue, not hissing through one's teeth, or breaking them with consonants.—'Tis strange rudeness those familiar names they give us, when there is Aurelia, Saccharissa, Gloriana, for people of condition; and Celia, Chloris, Corinna, Mopsa, for their maids and those of lower rank.

Aunt. Look ye, Biddy, this is not to be supported—I know not where you learned this nicety; but I can tell you, forsooth, as much as you despise it, your mother was a Bridget afore you, and an excellent housewife.

Niece. Good Madam, don't upbraid me with my mother Bridget, and an excellent housewife.

Aunt. Yes, I say she was, and spent her time in better learning than ever you did—not in reading of fights and battles of dwarfs and giants; but in writing out receipts for broths, possets, caudles, and surfeit waters, as became a good country gentlewoman.

Niece. My mother, and a Bridget!

Aunt. Yes, niece, I say again your mother, my sister, was a Bridget; the daughter of her mother Margery, of her mother Cicely, of her mother Alice.

Niece. Have you no mercy? O the barbarous genealogy!

Aunt. Of her mother Winifred, of her mother Joan.

Niece. Since you will run on, then, I must needs tell you I am not satisfied in the point of my nativity. Many an infant has been placed in a cottage with obscure parents, till by chance some ancient servant of the family has known it by its marks.

Aunt. Ay, you had best be searched—That's like your calling the winds the fanning gales, before I don't know how much company; and the tree that was blown by it, had forsooth, a spirit imprisoned in the trunk of it.

Niece. Ignorance!

Aunt. Then a cloud this morning had a flying dragon in it.

Niece. What eyes had you that you could see nothing? For my part, I look upon it to be a prodigy, and expect something extraordinary will happen to me before night——But you have a gross relish of things. What noble descriptions in romances had been lost, if the writers had been persons of your *goût*?

Aunt. I wish the authors had been hanged, and their books burned, before you had seen 'em.

Niece. Simplicity!

Aunt. A parcel of improbable lies.

Niece. Indeed, Madam, your raillery is coarse—

Aunt. Fit only to corrupt young girls, and fill their heads with a thousand foolish dreams of I don't know what.

Niece. Nay, now, Madam, you grow extravagant.

Aunt. What I say is not to vex, but advise you for your good.

Niece. What, to burn Philocles, Artaxerxes, Oroondates, and the rest of the heroic lovers, and take my country booby, cousin Humphry, for a husband!

Aunt. O dear, O dear, Biddy! Pray, good dear, learn to act and speak like the rest of the world; come, come, you shall marry your cousin, and live comfortably.

Niece. Live comfortably! What kind of life is that? A great heiress live comfortably! Pray, aunt, learn to raise your ideas—What is, I wonder, to live comfortably?

Aunt. To live comfortably, is to live with prudence and frugality, as we do in Lombard street.

Niece. As we do—That's a fine life indeed, with one servant of each sex—Let's see how many things our coachman is good for—He rubs down his horses, lays the cloth, whets the knives, and sometimes makes beds.

Aunt. A good servant should turn his hand to every thing in a family.

Niece. Nay, there's not a creature in our family, that has not two or three different duties; as John is butler, footman, and coachman; so Mary is cook, laundress, and chamber-maid.

Aunt. Well, and do you laugh at that?

Niece. No—not I—nor at the coach-horses, though one has an easy trot for my uncle's riding, and t'other an easy pace for your side-saddle.

Aunt. And so you jeer at the good management of your relations do you?

Niece. No, I am well satisfied that all the house are creatures of business: but, indeed, I was in hopes that my poor lap-dog might have lived with me upon my fortune without an employment; but my uncle threatens every day to make him a turnspit, that he too, in his sphere, may help us to live comfortably——

Aunt. Hark ye, cousin Biddy.

Niece. I vow I'm out of countenance, when our butler, with his careful face, drives us all stowed in a chariot drawn by one horse ambling, and t'other trotting with his provisions behind for the family, from Saturday night till Monday morning, bound for Hackney——Then we make a comfortable figure indeed.

Aunt. So we do, and so will you always, if you marry your cousin Humphry.

Niece. Name not the creature.

Aunt. Creature! what, your own cousin a creature!

Niece. Oh, let's be going, I see yonder another creature that does my uncle's law business, and has I believe, made ready the deeds, those barbarous deeds.

Aunt. What, Mr. Pounce a creature too! Nay, now I'm sure you're ignorant. You shall stay, and you'll learn more wit from him in an hour, than in a thousand of your foolish books in an age—Your servant, Mr. Pounce.

Enter POUNCE.

Pounce. Ladies, I hope I don't interrupt any private discourse.

Aunt. Not in the least, Sir.

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Pounce. I should be loath to be esteemed one of those who think they have a privilege of mixing in all companies, without any business, but to bring forth a loud laugh, or vain jest.

Niece. He talks with the mien and gravity of a Paladin. [*Aside.*

Pounce. Madam, I bought the other day at three and a half, and sold at seven.

Aunt. Then pray, Sir, sell for me in time.—Niece, mind him: he has an infinite deal of wit—

Pounce. This that I speak of was for you——I never neglect such opportunities to serve my friends.

Aunt. Indeed, Mr. Pounce, you are I protest, without flattery, the wittiest man in the world.

Pounce. I assure you, Madam, I said last night before a hundred head of citizens, that Mrs. Barsheba Tipkin was the most ingenious young lady in the liberties.

Aunt. Well, Mr. Pounce, you are so facetious—But you are always among the great ones——'Tis no wonder you have it.

Niece. Idle! idle!

Pounce. But, Madam, you know Alderman Gray-Goose—he's a notable joking man——Well, says he, here's Mrs. Barsheba's health—She's my mistress.

Aunt. That man makes me split my sides with laughing, he's such a wag——Mr. Pounce pretends Gray-Goose said all this, but I know 'tis his own wit, for he's in love with me. [*Apart.*

Pounce. But, Madam, there's a certain affair I should communicate to you. [*Apart.*

Aunt. Ay, 'tis certainly so—He wants to break his mind to me.

CAPTAIN CLERIMONT *passing.*

Pounce. Oh, Captain Clerimont, Captain Clerimont!——Ladies, pray let me introduce this young gentleman, he's my friend, a youth of great virtue and goodness, for all he is in a red coat.

Aunt. If he's your friend, we need not doubt his virtue.

Capt. Ladies, you are taking the cool breath of the morning.

Niece. A pretty phrase. [*Aside.*

Aunt. That's the pleasantest time this warm weather.

Capt. Oh, 'tis the season of the pearly dews, and gentle zephyrs.

Niece. Ay! pray mind that again, aunt. [*Aside.*

Pounce. Sha'n't we repose ourselves on yonder seat; I love improving company, and to communicate.

Aunt. 'Tis certainly so——He's in love with me, and wants an opportunity to tell me so—I don't care if we do——He's a most ingenious man. [*Aside; exeunt* AUNT *and* POUNCE.

Capt. We enjoy here, Madam, all the pretty landscapes of the country, without the pains of going thither.

Niece. Art and nature are in a rivalry, or rather confederacy, to adorn this beauteous park with all the agreeable variety of water, shade, walks, and air.—What can be more charming than these flowery lawns?

Capt. Or these gloomy shades?

Niece. Or these embroidered valleys?—

Capt. Or that transparent stream?

Niece. Or these bowing branches on the banks of it, that seem to admire their own beauty in the crystal mirror?

Capt. I am surprised, Madam, at the delicacy of your phrase——Can such expressions come from Lombard-street?

Niece. Alas! Sir, what can be expected from an innocent virgin, that has been immured almost one and twenty years from the conversation of mankind, under the care of an Urganda of an aunt?

Capt. Bless me Madam, how have you been abused! many a lady before your age has had a hundred lances broken in her service, and as many dragons cut to pieces in honour of her.

Niece. Oh, the charming man! [*Aside.*

Capt. Do you believe Pamela was one and twenty before she knew Musidorus?

Niece. I could hear him ever.—— [*Aside.*

Capt. A lady of your wit and beauty might have given occasion for a whole romance in folio before that age.

Niece. Oh, the powers! Who can he be? Oh, youth unknown!—But let me, in the first place, know whom I talk to; for, Sir, I am wholly unacquainted both with your person and your history—You seem, indeed, by your deportment, and the distinguishing mark of your bravery which you bear, to have been in a conflict—May I not know what cruel beauty obliged you to such adventures, till she pitied you.

Capt. Oh, the pretty coxcomb! [*Aside.*] Oh, Blenheim! Oh, Cordelia, Cordelia!

Niece. You mention the place of battle—I would fain hear an exact description of it—Our public papers are so defective, they don't so much as tell us how the sun rose on that glorious day——Were there not a great many flights of vultures before the battle began?

Capt. Oh, Madam, they have eaten up half my acquaintance.

Niece. Certainly never birds of prey were so feasted—By report, they might have lived half a year on the very legs and arms our troops left behind 'em.

Capt. Had we not fought near a wood, we should ne'er have got legs enough to have come home upon. The Joiner of the Foot Guards has made his fortune by it.

Niece. I shall never forgive your general—He has put all my ancient heroes out of countenance; he has pulled down Cyrus and Alexander, as much as Louis le Grand—But your own part in that action?

Capt. Only that slight hurt, for the astrologer said at my nativity—Nor fire, nor sword, nor pike, nor musket shall destroy this child, let him but avoid fair eyes—But, Madam, mayn't I crave the name of her that has captivated my heart?

Niece. I can't guess whom you mean by that description; but if you ask my name—I must confess you put me upon revealing what I always keep as the greatest secret I have—for, would you believe it—they have called me—I don't know how to own it, but have called me—Bridget.

Capt. Bridget?

Niece. Bridget.

Capt. Bridget?

Niece. Spare my confusion, I beseech you, Sir, and if you have occasion to mention me, let it be by Parthenissa, for that's the name I have assumed ever since I came to years of discretion.

Capt. The insupportable tyranny of parents,

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to fix names on helpless infants which they must blush at all their lives after! I don't think there's a surname in the world to match it.

Niece. No! what do you think of Tipkin?

Capt. Tipkin! Why, I think if I was a young lady that had it, I'd part with it immediately.

Niece. Pray how would you get rid of it?

Capt. I'd change it for another—I could recommend to you three very pretty syllables ——What do you think of Clerimont?

Niece. Clerimont! Clerimont! Very well ——But what right have I to it!

Capt. If you will give me leave, I'll put you in possession of it. By a very few words I can make it over to you, and your children after you.

Niece. Oh, fy! Whither are you running! You know a lover should sigh in private, and languish whole years before he reveals his passion; he should retire into some solitary grove, and make the woods and wild beasts his confidants—You should have told it to the echo half a year before you had discovered it even to my hand-maid. And yet besides—to talk to me of children—Did you ever hear of a heroine with a big belly?

Capt. What can a lover do, Madam; now the race of giants is extinct? Had I lived in those days, there had not been a mortal six feet high, but should have owned Parthenissa for the paragon of beauty, or measured his length on the ground——Parthenissa should have been heard by the brooks and deserts at midnight—the echo's burden, and the river's murmur.

Niece. That had been a golden age, indeed! But see, my aunt has left her grave companion, and is coming towards us—I command you to leave me.

Capt. Thus Oroondates, when Statira dismissed him her presence, threw himself at her feet and implored permission but to live.

[*Offering to kneel.*

Niece. And thus Statira raised him from the earth, permitting him to live and love.

[*Exit* CAPT. CLER.

Enter AUNT.

Aunt. Is not Mr. Pounce's conversation very improving, niece?

Niece. Is not Mr. Clerimont a very pretty name, aunt!

Aunt. He has so much prudence.

Niece. He has so much gallantry.

Aunt. So sententious in his expressions.

Niece. So polished in his language.

Aunt. All he says, is, methinks, so like a sermon.

Niece. All he speaks savours of romance.

Aunt. Romance, niece! Mr. Pounce! what, savour of romance?

Niece. No, I mean his friend, the accomplished Mr. Clerimont.

Aunt. Fy, for one of your years to commend a young fellow!

Niece. One of my years is mightily governed by example! You did not dislike Mr. Pounce.

Aunt. What, censorious too? I find there is no trusting you out of the house—A moment's fresh air does but make you still the more in love with strangers, and despise your own relations.

Niece. I am certainly by the power of an enchantment placed among you, but I hope I this morning employed one to seek adventures, and break the charm.

Aunt. Vapours, Biddy, indeed! Nothing but vapours——Cousin Humphry shall break the charm.

Niece. Name him not——Call me still Biddy, rather than name that brute.

[*Exeunt* AUNT *and* NIECE.

Enter CAPTAIN CLERIMONT *and* POUNCE.

Capt. A perfect Quixote in petticoats! I tell thee, Pounce, she governs herself wholly by romance——It has got into her very blood ——She starts by rule, and blushes by example——Could I have produced one instance of a lady's complying at the first sight, I should have gained her promise on the spot—How am I bound to curse the cold constitutions of the Philocleas and Statiras! I am undone for want of precedents.

Pounce. I am sure I laboured hard to favour your conference; and plied the old woman all the while with something that tickled either her vanity or her covetousness; I considered all the stocks, old and new company, her own complexion and youth, partners for sword-blades, chamber of London, banks for charity, and mine adventurers, till she told me I had the repute of the most facetious man, that ever came to Garraway's—For you must know public knaves and stock-jobbers pass for wits at her end of the town, as common cheats and gamesters do at yours.

Capt. I pity the drudgery you have gone through; but what's next to be done towards getting my pretty heroine?

Pounce. What should next be done, in ordinary method of things—You have seen her; the next regular approach is, that you cannot subsist a moment, without sending forth musical complaints of your misfortune, by way of a serenade.

Capt. I can nick you there, Sir, I have a scribbling army friend, that has wrote a triumphant, rare, noisy song, in honour of the late victory, that will hit the nymph's fantasque to a hair; I'll get every thing ready as soon as possible.

Pounce. While you are playing upon the fort, I'll be within, and observe what execution you do, and give you intelligence accordingly.

Capt. You must have an eye upon Mr. Humphry, while I feed the vanity of Parthenissa—For I am so experienced in these matters, that I know none but coxcombs think to win a woman by any desert of their own—No, it must be done rather by complying with some prevailing humour of your mistress, than exerting any good quality in yourself.

'Tis not the lover's merit wins the field,
But to themselves alone the beauteous yield.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT. III.

SCENE I.—A Chamber.

Enter MRS. CLERIMONT, FAINLOVE *(carrying her lap-dog,) and* JENNY.

Jenny. Madam, the footman that's recommended to you is below, if your ladyship will please to take him.

Mrs. Cler. Oh, fy! don't believe I'll think on't—It is impossible he should be good for

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any thing—The English are so saucy with their liberty—I'll have all my lower servants French—There cannot be a good footman born out of an absolute monarchy.—

Jen. I'm beholden to your ladyship, for believing so well of the maid-servants in England.

Mrs. Cler. Indeed, Jenny, I could wish thou wert really French: for thou art plain English in spite of example—Your arms do but hang on, and you move perfectly upon joints. Not with a swim of the whole person—But I am talking to you, and have not adjusted myself to-day: what pretty company a glass is, to have another self! [*Kisses the dog.*] The converse is soliloquy! To have company that never contradicts or displeases us! The pretty visible echo of our actions. [*Kisses the dog.*] How easy, too, it is to be disincumbered with stays, where a woman has any thing like shape, if no shape, a good air—But I look best when I'm talking.

[*Kisses the lap-dog in* FAINLOVE'S *arms.*

Jen. You always look well.

Mrs. Cler. For I'm always talking, you mean so, that disquiets thy sullen English temper, but I don't really look so well when I am silent——If I do but offer to speak—Then I may say that—Oh, bless me, Jenny, I am so pale, I am afraid of myself——I have not laid on half red enough——What a dough-baked thing I was before I improved myself, and travelled for beauty——However, my face is very prettily designed to-day.

Fain. Indeed, Madam, you begin to have so fine a hand, that you are younger every day than other.

Mrs. Cler. The ladies abroad used to call me Mademoiselle Titian, I was so famous for my louring; but, pr'ythee, wench, bring me my black eye-brows out of the next room.

Jen. Madam, I have 'em in my hand.

Fain. It would be happy for all that are to see you to-day, if you could change your eyes too.

Mrs. Cler. Gallant enough—No, hang it, I'll wear these I have on; this mode of visage takes mightily; I had three ladies last week came over to my complexion—I think to be a fair woman this fortnight, till I find I'm aped too much—I believe there are a hundred copies of me already.

Jen. Dear Madam, wont your ladyship please to let me be of the next countenance you leave off?

Mrs. Cler. You may, Jenny—but I assure you—it is a very pretty piece of ill nature, for a woman that has any genius for beauty, to observe the servile imitation of her manner, her motion, her glances, and her smiles.

Fain. Ay, indeed, Madam, nothing can be so ridiculous, as to imitate the inimitable.

Mrs. Cler. Indeed, as you say, Fainlove, the French mien is no more to be learned, than the language, without going thither—Then again to see some poor ladies, who have clownish, penurious, English husbands, turn and torture their old clothes into so many forms, and dye 'em into so many colours, to follow me—What say'st Jenny? What say'st? Not a word?

Jen. Why, Madam, all that I can say——

Mrs. Cler. Nay I believe, Jenny, thou hast nothing to say any more than the rest of thy country-women—The splenetics speak just as the weather lets 'em—They are mere talking barometers—Abroad the people of quality go on so eternally, and still go on, and are gay and entertain—In England, discourse is made up of nothing but question and answer.—I was t'other day at a visit, where there was a profound silence for, I believe, the third part of a minute.

Jen. And your ladyship there?

Mrs. Cler. They infected me with their dulness. Who can keep up their good humour at an English visit?—They sit as at a funeral, silent in the midst of many candles—One, perhaps, alarms the room—'Tis very cold weather—then all the mutes play their fans—till some other question happens, and then the fans go off again.——

Enter BOY.

Boy. Madam, your spinnet master is come.

Mrs. Cler. Bring him in, he's very pretty company.

Fain. His spinnet is; he never speaks himself.

Mrs. Cler. Speak, simpleton! What then, he keeps out silence, does not he? [*Enter.*]—Oh, Sir, you must forgive me, I have been very idle—Well, you pardon me? (*Master bows.*)—Did you think I was perfect in the song? (*Bows.*)—But pray let me hear it once more. Let us see it. [*Reads.*

SONG.

With studied airs and practis'd smiles,
Flavia my ravish'd heart beguiles:
The charms we make, are ours alone.
Nature's works are not our own.

Her skilful hand gives every grace,
And shows her fancy in her face;
She feeds with art an amorous rage,
Nor fears the force of coming age.

You sing it very well: but, I confess, I wish you'd give more into the French manner—Observe me hum it *à la Francoise.*

With studied airs, &c.

The whole person, every limb, every nerve sings——the English way is only being for that time a mere musical instrument, just sending forth a sound without knowing they do so——Now I'll give you a little of it like an English woman——You are to suppose I've denied you twenty times, looked silly, and all that—Then with hands and face insensible—I have a mighty cold.

With studied airs, &c

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Madam, Captain Clerimont and a very strange gentleman are come to wait on you.

Mrs. Cler. Let him and the very strange gentleman come in.

Fain. Oh! Madam, that's the country gentleman I was telling you of.

Enter HUMPHRY *and* CAPTAIN CLERIMONT.

Fain. Madam, may I do myself the honour to recommend Mr. Gubbin, son and heir to Sir Harry Gubbin, to your ladyship's notice.

Mrs. Cler. Mr. Gubbin, I am extremely pleased with your suit; 'tis antique, and originally from France.

Humph. It is always locked up, Madam, when I'm in the country. My father prizes it mightily.

Mrs. Cler. 'Twould make a very pretty

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dancing suit in a mask. Oh! Captain Clerimont, I have a quarrel with you.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Madam, your ladyship's husband desires to know whether you see company today, or not?

Mrs. Cler. Who, you clown?

Serv. Mr. Clerimont, Madam.

Mrs. Cler. He may come in.

Enter CLERIMONT *Sen.*

Mrs. Cler. Your very humble servant.

Cler. Sen. I was going to take the air this morning in my coach, and did myself the honour, before I went, to receive your commands, finding you saw company.

Mrs. Cler. At any time, when you know I do, you may let me see you. Pray how did you sleep last night?—If I had not asked him that question, they might have thought we lay together. [*Aside.*] [*Here* FAINLOVE *looking through a perspective, bows to* CLER. *Sen.*] But, captain, I have a quarrel with you—I have utterly forgot those three coupees, you promised to come again and show me. Your humble servant, Sir.—But, oh! [*As she is going to be led by the captain.*] Have you signed that mortgage to pay off my Lady Faddle's winnings at ombre?

Cler. Sen. Yes, Madam.

Mrs. Cler. Then all's well, my honour's safe. [*Exit* CLERIMONT *Sen.*] Come, captain, lead me this step—for I am apt to make a false one—you shall show me.

Capt. I'll show you, Madam, 'tis no matter for a fiddle; I'll give you 'em the French way, in a teaching tune. Pray, more quick—*O Mademoiselle que faitez vous—A moi*—There again—Now slide, as it were, with and without measure——There you out-did the gipsey——and you have all the smiles of the dance to a tittle.

Mrs. Cler. Why truly I think that the greatest part—I have seen an English woman dance a jig with the severity of a vestal virgin.——

Humph. If this be French dancing and singing, I fancy I could do it—Haw, haw! [*Capers aside.*

Mrs. Cler. I protest, Mr. Gubbin, you have almost the step, without any of our country bashfulness.—Give me your hand—Haw, haw! So, so, a little quicker—that's right haw! Captain, your brother delivered this spark to me, to be diverted here till he calls for him. [*Exit* CAPT. CLER.

Humph. This cutting so high makes one's money jingle confoundedly. I'm resolved I'll never carry above one pocket full hereafter.

Mrs. Cler. You do it very readily—You amaze me.

Humph. Are the gentlemen of France generally so well bred as we are in England?—Are they, Madam, ha! But young gentleman, when shall I see this sister? Haw, haw, haw! Is not the higher one jumps the better?

Fain. She'll be mightily taken with you, I'm sure. One would not think 'twas in you—you're so gay—and dance so very high——

Humph. What should ail me? Did you think I was wind-galled? I can sing too, if I please—but I wont till I see your sister. This is a mighty pretty house.

Mrs. Cler. Well, do you know that I like this gentleman extremely; I should be glad to inform him—But were you never in France, Mr. Gubbin?

Humph. No!—but I'm always thus pleasant, if my father's not by——I protest, I'd advise your sis er to have me—I'm for marrying her at once—why should I stand shilly-shally, like a country bumpkin?

Fain. Mr. Gubbin, I dare say she'll be as forward as you; we'll go in and see her. [*Apart.*

Mrs. Cler. Then he has not yet seen the lady he is in love with. I protest very new and gallant.—Mr. Gubbin, she must needs believe you a frank person.——Fainlove, I must see this sister too, I'm resolved she shall like him.

There needs no time true passion to discover:
The most believing is the most a lover.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—The Park.

Enter NIECE, *sola.*

Niece. Oh Clerimont! Clerimont! To be struck at first sight! I am ashamed of my weakness; I find in myself all the symptoms of a raging amour: I love solitude; I grow pale; I sigh frequently; I call upon the name of Clerimont when I don't think of it—his person is ever in my eyes, and his voice in my ears——methinks I long to lose myself in some pensive grove, or to hang over the head of some warbling fountain, with a lute in my hand, softening the murmurs of the water.

Enter AUNT.

Aunt. Biddy, Biddy! where's Biddy Tipkin?

Niece. Whom do you inquire for?

Aunt. Come, come, he's just a-coming at the park door.

Niece. Who is coming?

Aunt. Your cousin Humphry—who should be coming? Your lover, your husband that is to be——Pray, my dear, look well, and be civil for your credit and mine too.

Niece. If he answers my idea, I shall rally the rustic to death.

Aunt. Hist——here he is.

Enter HUMPHRY.

Humph. Aunt, your humble servant—Is that—ha! Aunt?

Aunt. Yes, cousin Humphry, that's your cousin Bridget. Well, I'll leave you together. [*Exit* AUNT. *They sit.*

Humph. Aunt does as she'd be done by, cousin Bridget, does not she, cousin? ha! What, are you a Londoner, and not speak to a gentleman? Look ye, cousin, the old folks resolving to marry us, I thought it would be proper to see how I liked you, as not caring to buy a pig in a poke——for I love to look before I leap.

Niece. Sir, your person and address bring to my mind the whole history of Valentine and Orson: what! would they marry me to a wild man? Pray, answer me a question or two.

Humph. Ay, ay, as many as you please, cousin Bridget.

Niece. What wood were you taken in? How long have you been caught?

Humph. Caught!

Niece. Where were your haunts?

Humph. My haunts!

Niece. Are not clothes very uneasy to you? Is this strange dress the first you ever wore?

Humph. How!

Niece. Are you not a great admirer of roots,

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and raw flesh?—Let me look upon your nails—Dont you love blackberries, haws, and pignuts, mightily?

Humph. How!

Niece. Canst thou deny that thou wert suckled by a wolf! You ha'n't been so barbarous, I hope, since you came amongst men, as to hunt your nurse—Have you?

Humph. Hunt my nurse! Ay, 'tis so, she's distracted as sure as a gun—Hark ye, cousin, pray will you let me ask you a question or two?

Niece. If thou hast yet learned the use of language, speak, monster.

Humph. How long have you been thus?

Niece. Thus! what wouldst thou say?

Humph. What's the cause of it? Tell me truly now—Did you ever love any body before me?

Niece. Go, go, thou'rt a savage. [*Rises.*

Humph. They never let you go abroad, I suppose.

Niece. Thou'rt a monster, I tell thee.

Humph. Indeed, cousin, though 'tis folly to tell thee so—I am afraid thou art a mad woman.

Niece. I'll have thee into some forest.

Humph. I'll take thee into a dark room.

Niece. I hate thee.

Humph. I wish you did—There's no hate lost, I assure you, cousin Bridget.

Niece, Cousin Bridget, quoth'a—I'd as soon claim kindred with a mountain bear——I detest thee.

Humph. You never do any harm in these fits, I hope—But do you hate me in earnest?

Niece. Dost thou ask it, ungentle forester?

Humph. Yes, for I've a reason, look ye. It happens very well if you hate me, and in your senses; for to tell you truly—I don't much care for you; and there is another fine woman, as I am informed, that is in some hopes of having me.

Niece. This merits my attention. [*Aside.*

Humph. Look ye, d'ye see—as I said, I don't care for you—I would not have you set your heart on me—but if you like any body else let me know it—and I'll find out a way for us to get rid of one another, and deceive the old folks that would couple us.

Niece. This wears the face of an amour—There is something in that thought which makes thy presence less insupportable.

Humph. Nay, nay, now you're growing fond; if you come with these maid's tricks, to say you hate at first and afterwards like me,—you'll spoil the whole design.

Niece. Don't fear it——When I think of consorting with thee, may the wild boar defile the cleanly ermine, may the tiger be wedded to the kid!

Humph. When I of thee, may the pole-cat caterwaul with the civet.

Niece. When I harbour the least thought of thee, may the silver Thames forget its course!

Humph. When I like thee, may I be soused over head and ears in a horse pond!——But do you hate me?

Enter AUNT.

Niece. For ever; and you me?

Humph. Most heartily.

Aunt. Ha! I like this——They are coming to promises—and protestations. [*Aside.*

Humph. I am very glad I have found a way to please you.

Niece. You promise to be constant?

Humph. Till death.

Niece. Thou best of savages!

Humph. Thou best of savages! poor Biddy.

Aunt. Oh, the pretty couple joking on one another. Well, how do you like your cousin Humphry now?

Niece. Much better than I thought I should—He's quite another thing than what I took him for—We have both the same passions for one another.

Humph. We wanted only an occasion to open our hearts, aunt.

Aunt. Oh, how this will rejoice my brother, and Sir Harry! we'll go to 'em.

Humph. No, I must fetch a walk with a new acquaintance, Mr. Samuel Pounce.

Aunt. An excellent acquaintance for your husband! come, Niece, come.

Niece. Farewell, rustic.

Humph. B'ye, Biddy.

Aunt. Rustic! Biddy! Ha, ha! pretty creatures. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—Continues.

Enter CAPTAIN CLERIMONT *and* POUNCE.

Capt. Does she expect me, then, at this very instant?

Pounce. I tell you, she ordered me to bring the painter at this very hour precisely, to draw her niece——for to make her picture peculiarly charming, she has now that downcast pretty shame, that warm cheek, glowing with the fear and hope of to-day's fate, with the inviting, coy affection of a bride, all in her face at once. Now I know you are a pretender that way.

Capt. Enough, I warrant to personate the character, on such an inspiring occasion.

Pounce. You must have the song I spoke of performed at this window—at the end of which I'll give you a signal—Every thing is ready for you, your pencil, your canvass stretched—your—Be sure you play your part in humour: to be a painter for a lady, you're to have the excessive flattery of a lover, the ready invention of a poet, and the easy gesture of a player.

Capt. Come, come, no more instructions; my imagination out-runs all you can say: begone, begone! [*Exit* POUNCE.

SONG.

Why, lovely charmer, tell me why,
So very kind and yet so shy:
Why does the cold forbidding air
Give dumps of sorrow and despair?
Or why that smile my soul subdue,
And kindle up my flames a-new?

In vain you strive with all your art,
By turns to freeze and fire my heart:
When I behold a face so fair,
So sweet a look, so soft an air,
My ravish'd soul is charm'd all o'er,
I cannot love thee less, nor more.

[*After the Song,* POUNCE *appears beckoning the* CAPTAIN.

Pounce. Captain, captain. [*Exit* CAPTAIN.

SCENE II.—NIECE'S *Lodgings.*

Enter AUNT *and* NIECE.

Aunt. Indeed, Niece, I am as much over-

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joyed at your wedding-day as if it were my own.

Niece. But why must it be huddled up so?

Aunt. Oh, my dear, a private wedding is much better; your mother had such a bustle at hers, with feasting and fooling; besides, they did not go to bed till two in the morning.

Niece. Since you understand things so well, I wonder you never married yourself.

Aunt. My dear, I was very cruel thirty years ago, and nobody asked me since.

Niece. Alas-a-day!

Aunt. Yet, I assure you, there were a great many matches proposed to me—There was Sir Gilbert Jolly; but he, forsooth could not please; he drank ale, and smoked tobacco, and was no fine gentleman, forsooth—But then again, there was young Mr. Peregrine Shapely, who had travelled, and spoke French, and smiled at all I said; he was a fine gentleman—but then he was consumptive: and yet again, to see how one may be mistaken; Sir Jolly died in half a year, and my lady Shapely has by that thin slip eight children that should have been mine—But here's the bridegroom. So, cousin Humphry!

Enter HUMPHRY.

Humph. Your servant, ladies—So, my dear—

Niece. So, my savage——

Aunt. O fy, no more of that to your husband, Biddy.

Humph. No matter; I like it as well as duck or love: I know my cousin loves me, as well as I do her.

Aunt. I'll leave you together: I must go and get ready an entertainment for you when you come home. [*Exit.*

Humph. Well, cousin, are you constant?—Do you hate me still?

Niece. As much as ever.

Humph. What a happiness it is, when people's inclinations jump! I wish I knew what to do with you; can you get nobody d'ye think, to marry you?

Niece. Oh, Clerimont, Clerimont! where art thou? [*Aside.*

Enter AUNT, *and* CAPTAIN CLERIMONT *disguised.*

Aunt. This, Sir, is the lady whom you are to draw—You see, Sir, as good flesh and blood as a man would desire to put in colours—I must have her maiden picture.

Humph. Then the painter must make haste—Ha, cousin!

Niece. Hold thy tongue, good savage.

Capt. Madam, I'm generally forced to new-mould every feature, and mend nature's handy-work; but here she has made so finished an original, that I despair of my copy's coming up to it.

Aunt. Do you hear that, niece?

Niece. I don't desire you to make graces where you find none.

Capt. To see the difference of the fair sex—I protest to you, Madam, my fancy is utterly exhausted with inventing faces for those who sit to me. The first entertainment I generally meet with, are complaints for want of sleep; they never looked so pale in their lives, as when they sit for their pictures—Then so many touches and re-touches, when the face is finished—That wrinkle ought not to have been, those eyes are too languid, the colour's too weak, that side-look hides the mole on the left cheek. In short, the whole likeness is struck out: but in you, Madam, the highest I can come up to will be but rigid justice.

Humph. A comical dog this!

Aunt. Truly the gentleman seems to understand his business.

Niece. Sir, if your pencil flatters like your tongue, you are going to draw a picture that wont be at all like me.—Sure I have heard that voice somewhere. [*Aside.*

Capt. Madam, be pleased to place yourself near me—nearer still, Madam; here falls the best light.—You must know, Madam, there are three kinds of airs which the ladies most delight in——There is your haughty—your mild—and your pensive air——The haughty may be expressed with the head a little more erect than ordinary, and the countenance with a certain disdain in it, so as she may appear almost, but not quite inexorable: this kind of air is generally heightened with a little knitting of the brows—I gave my lady Scornwell her choice of a dozen frowns, before she could find one to her liking.

Niece. But what's the mild air?

Capt. The mild air is composed of a languish and a smile.—But if I might advise, I'd rather be a pensive beauty: the pensive usually feels her pulse, leans on one arm, or sits ruminating with a book in her hand—which conversation she is supposed to choose rather than the endless importunities of lovers.

Humph. A comical dog.

Aunt. Upon my word he understands his business well; I'll tell you, niece, how your mother was drawn—She had an orange in her hand, and a nosegay in her bosom, but a look so pure and fresh-coloured, you'd have taken her for one of the seasons.

Capt. You seem, indeed, Madam, most inclined to the pensive——The pensive delights also in the fall of waters, pastoral figures, or any rural view suitable to a fair lady, who, with a delicate spleen, has retired from the world, as sick of its flattery and admiration.

Niece. No:—since there is room for fancy in a picture, I would be drawn like the Amazon Thalestris, with a spear in my hand, and a helmet on a table before me—At a distance behind, let there be a dwarf, holding by the bridle a milk-white palfrey.——

Capt. Madam, the thought is full of spirit; and if you please, there shall be a cupid stealing away your helmet, to show that love should have a part in all gallant actions.

Niece. That circumstance may be very picturesque.

Capt. Here, Madam, shall be your own picture, here the palfrey, and here the dwarf—The dwarf must be very little, or we sha'n't have room for him.

Niece. A dwarf cannot be too little.

Capt. I'll make him a blackamoor, to distinguish him from the other too powerful dwarf—[*Sighs.*] the cupid—I'll place that beauteous boy near you, 'twill look very natural—He'll certainly take you for his mother Venus.

Niece. I'll leave these particulars to your own fancy.

Capt. Please, Madam, to uncover your neck a little—a little lower still—a little, little lower.

Niece. I'll be drawn thus, if you please, Sir.

Capt. Ladies have you heard the news of a late marriage between a young lady of a

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great fortune and a younger brother of a good family?

Aunt. Pray, Sir, how is it?

Capt. This young gentleman, ladies, is a particular acquaintance of mine, and much about my age and stature; (look me full in the face, Madam;) he accidentally met the young lady, who had in her all the perfections of her sex; (hold up your head, Madam, that's right;) she let him know that his person and discourse were not altogether disagreeable to her—the difficulty was, how to gain a second interview (your eyes full upon mine, Madam;) for never was there such a sigher in all the valleys of Arcadia, as that unfortunate youth during the absence of her he loved——

Aunt. Alack-a-day—poor young gentleman!

Niece. It must be he——what a charming amour is this! [*Aside.*

Capt. At length, ladies, he bethought himself of an expedient: he dressed himself just as I am now, and came to draw her picture; (your eyes full upon mine, pray, Madam.)

Humph. A subtle dog, I warrant him.

Capt. And by that means found an opportunity of carrying her off, and marrying her.

Aunt. Indeed, your friend was a very vicious young man.

Niece. Yet perhaps the young lady was not displeased at what he had done.

Capt. But, Madam, what were the transports of the lover, when she made him that confession.

Niece. I dare say she thought herself very happy, when she got out of her guardian's hands.

Aunt. 'Tis very true, niece.—There are abundance of those headstrong young baggages about town.

Capt. The gentleman has often told me, he was strangely struck at first sight: but when she sat to him for her picture, and assumed all those graces that are proper for the occasion, his torment was so exquisite, his occasions so violent, that he could not have lived a day, had he not found means to make the charmer of his heart his own.

Humph. 'Tis certainly the foolishest thing in the world to stand shilly-shally about a woman, when one has a mind to marry her.

Capt. The young painter turned poet on the subject; I believe I have the words by heart.

Niece. A sonnet! pray repeat it.

Capt. *When gentle Parthenissa walks,*
And sweetly smiles, and gayly talks,
A thousand shafts around her fly,
A thousand swains unheeded die:

If then she labours to be seen,
With all her killing air and mien;
From so much beauty, so much art,
What mortal can secure his heart?

Humph. I fancy if 'twas sung, 'twould make a very pretty catch.

Capt. My servant has a voice, you shall hear it. [*Here it is sung.*

Aunt. Why this is pretty. I think a painter should never be without a good singer—It brightens the features strangely—I profess I'm mightily pleased; I'll but just step in, and give some orders, I'll be with you presently. [*Exit.*

Niece. Was not this adventurous painter called Clerimont?

Capt. It was Clerimont, the servant of Parthenissa; but let me beseech that beauteous maid to resolve, and make the incident I feigned to her a real one.—Consider, Madam, you are environed by cruel and treacherous guards, which would force you to a disagreeable marriage; your case is exactly the same with the princess of the Leontines in Clelia.

Niece. How can we commit such a solecism against all rules! what, in the first leaf of our history to have the marriage! You know it cannot be.

Capt. The pleasantest part of the history will be after marriage.

Niece. No! I never yet read of a knight that entered tilt or tournament after wedlock—'Tis not to be expected—When the husband begins, the hero ends; all that noble impulse to glory, all the generous passion for adventures is consumed in the nuptial torch: I don't know how it is, but Mars and Hymen never hit it.

Humph. [*Listening.*] Consumed in the nuptial torch! Mars and Hymen! What can all this mean?—I am very glad I can hardly read—They could never get these foolish fancies into my head—I had always a strong brain. [*Aside.*] Hark ye, cousin, is not this painter a comical dog?

Niece. I think he's very agreeable company——

Humph. Why then, I tell you what—marry him. A painter's a very genteel calling—He's an ingenious fellow, and certainly poor, I fancy he'd be glad on't; I'll keep my aunt out of the room a minute or two, that's all the time you have to consider. [*Exit.*

Capt. Fortune points out to us this only occasion of our happiness: love's of celestial origin, and needs no long acquaintance to be manifest. Lovers, like angels, speak by intuition—Their souls are in their eyes.

Niece. Then I fear he sees mine. [*Aside.*]—But I can't think of abridging our amours, and cutting off all farther decorations of disguise, serenade, and adventure.

Capt. Nor would I willingly lose the merit of long services, midnight sighs, and plaintive solitudes—were there not a necessity.

Niece. Then to be seized by stealth!

Capt. Why, Madam, you are a great fortune, and should not be married the common way. Indeed, Madam, you ought to be stolen; nay, in strictness, I don't know but you ought to be ravished.

Niece. But then our history will be short.

Capt. I grant it; but you don't consider there's a device in other's leading you instead of this person that's to have you; and, Madam, though our amours can't furnish out a romance, they'll make a very pretty novel.—Why smiles my fair?

Niece. I am almost of opinion, that had Oroondates been as pressing as Clerimont, Cassandra had been but a pocket-book: but it looks so ordinary to go out at a door to be married—Indeed, I ought to be taken out of a window, and run away with.

Enter HUMPHRY *and* POUNCE.

Humph. Well, cousin, the coach is at the door. If you please I'll lead you.

Niece. I put myself into your hands, good savage; but you promise to leave me.

Humph. I tell you plainly, you must not think of having me.

Pounce. [*To* CAPT.] You'll have opportunity enough to carry her off; the old fellow will be busy with me—I'll gain all the time I can, but be bold and prosper.

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Niece. Clerimont, you follow us.
Capt. Upon the wings of love.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Chamber.

Enter CLERIMONT *Sen. and* FAINLOVE.

Cler. Sen. Then she gave you this letter, and bid you read it as a paper of verses?

Fain. This is the place, the hour, the lucky minute—Now am I rubbing up my memory, to recollect all you said to me when you first ruined me, that I may attack her right.

Cler. Sen. Your eloquence would be needless—'tis so unmodish to need persuasion: modesty makes a lady embarrassed—But my spouse is above that, as for example, [*Reading the letter.*] *Fainlove, you don't seem to want wit—therefore I need say no more, than that distance to a woman of the world is becoming in no man, but a husband. An hour hence, come up the back stairs to my closet.*

Adieu, mon Mignon.

I am glad you are punctual. I'll conceal myself to observe your interview.—Oh, torture! but this wench must not see it. [*Aside.*

Fain. Be sure you come time enough to save my reputation.

Cler. Sen. Remember your orders; distance becomes no man but a husband.

Fain. I am glad you are in so good humour on the occasion; but you know me to be but a bully in love, that can bluster only till the minute of engagement—But I'll top my part, and form my conduct by my own sentiments—If she grows coy, I'll grow more saucy—'Twas so I was won myself—

Cler. Sen. Well, my dear rival—your assignation draws nigh—you are to put on your transport; your impatient throbbing heart wont let you wait her arrival—Let the dull family-thing and husband, who reckons his moments by his cares, be content to wait, but you are gallant, and measure time by ecstacies.

Fain. I hear her coming—to your post—good husband, know your duty, and don't be in the way when your wife has a mind to be in private—to your post, into the coal-hole.

Enter MRS. CLERIMONT.

Welcome, my dear, my tender charmer—Oh! to my longing arms—feel the heart pat, that falls and rises as you smile or frown—Oh, the ecstatic moment!—I think that is something like what has been said to me. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Cler. Very well—Fainlove—I protest I value myself for my discerning—I knew you had fire through all the respect you showed me—But how came you to make no direct advances, young gentleman?—why was I forced to admonish your gallantry?

Fain. Why, Madam, I knew you a woman of breeding, and above the senseless niceties of an English wife—The French way is, you are to go so far, whether they are agreeable or not: if you are so happy as to please, nobody that is not of a constrained behaviour is at a loss to let you know it—Besides, if the humble servant makes the first approaches, he has the impudence of making a request, but not the honour of obeying a command.

Mrs. Cler. Right—a woman's man should conceal passion in a familiar air of indifference. Now, there's Mr. Clerimont, I can't allow him the least freedom; but the unfashionable fool grows so fond of me, he cannot hide it in public.

Fain. Ay, Madam; I have often wondered at your ladyship's choice of one who seems to have so little of the *beau monde* in his carriage, but just what you force him to—while there were so many pretty gentlemen— [*Dancing.*

Mrs. Cler. O, young gentleman, you are mightily mistaken, if you think such animals as you, and pretty beau Titmouse, and pert Billy Butterfly, though I suffer you to come in, and play about my rooms, are any ways in competition with a man whose name one would wear.

Fain. Oh, Madam, then I find we are——

Mrs. Cler. A woman of sense must have respect for a man of that character; but, alas! respect—is respect! Respect is not the thing——respect has something too solemn for soft moments—You things are more proper for hours of dalliance.

Cler. Sen. [*Peeping.*] How have I wronged this fine lady!——I find I am to be a cuckold out of her pure esteem for me.

Mrs. Cler. Besides, those fellows for whom we have respect, have none for us; I warrant on such an occasion Clerimont would have ruffled a woman out of all form, while you——

Cler. Sen. A good hint——now my cause comes on. [*Aside.*

Fain. Since, then, you allow us fitter for soft moments, why do we misemploy 'em. Let me kiss that beauteous hand, and clasp that graceful frame.

Mrs. Cler. How, Fainlove! What, you don't design to be impertinent—but my lips have a certain roughness on 'em to-day, ha'n't they?

Fain. [*Kissing.*] No——they are all softness——their delicious sweetness is inexpressible——here language fails——let me applaud thy lips not by the utterance, but by the touch of mine.

Enter CLERIMONT *Sen. drawing his sword.*

Cler. Sen. Ha! villain! ravisher! invader of my bed and honour! draw.

Mrs. Cler. What means this insolence, this intrusion into my privacy? What, do you come into my very closet without knocking? Who put this into your head?

Cler. Sen. My injuries have alarmed me, and I'll bear no longer, but sacrifice your bravado, the author of 'em.

Mrs. Cler. O poor Mr. Fainlove——Must he die for his complaisance, and innocent freedoms with me? How could you, if you might? Oh! the sweet youth! What, fight Mr. Fainlove? What will the ladies say?

Fain. Let me come at the intruder on ladies' private hours—the unfashionable monster—I'll prevent all future interruptions from him——let me come—— [*Drawing his sword.*

Mrs. Cler. O the brave pretty creature! Look at his youth and innocence—He is not made for such rough encounters—Stand behind me—Poor Fainlove!——There is not a visit in town, Sir, where you shall not be displayed at full length for this intrusion—I banish you for ever from my sight and bed.

Cler. Sen. I obey you, Madam; for distance is becoming in no man but a husband—[*Giving her the letter, which she reads, and falls into a swoon.*] I've gone too far—[*Kissing her.*] The impertinent was guilty of nothing but what my indiscretion led her to—This is the first kiss I've had these six weeks—but she

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awakes.—Well, Jenny, you topp'd your part, indeed—Come to my arms, thou ready, willing fair one——Thou hast no vanities, no niceties; but art thankful for every instance of love that I bestow on thee.

[*Embracing her.*

Mrs. Cler. What, am I then abused? Is it a wench then of his? Oh me! was ever poor abused wife, poor innocent lady, thus injured! [*Runs and seizes* FAINLOVE'S *sword.*

Cler. Sen. Oh, the brave pretty creature! ——Hurt Mr. Fainlove! Look at his youth, his innocence——Ha, ha! [*Interposing.*

Fain. Have a care, have a care, dear Sir, ——I know myself she'll have no mercy.

Mrs. Cler. I'll be the death of her——let me come on——Stand from between us, Mr. Clerimont——I would not hurt you.

[*Pushing and crying.*

Cler. Sen. Run, run, Jenny. [*Exit* JENNY.

[*Looks at her upbraidingly before he speaks.* Well, Madam, are these the innocent freedoms you claim'd of me? Have I deserved this? How has there been a moment of yours ever interrupted with the real pangs I suffer? The daily importunities of creditors, who become so by serving your profuse vanities; did I ever murmur at supplying any of your diversions, while I believed 'em (as you called 'em) harmless? must, then, those eyes that used to glad my heart with their familiar brightness, hang down with guilt? Guilt has transform'd thy whole person; nay, the very memory of it——Fly from my growing passion.

Mrs. Cler. I cannot fly, nor bear it——Oh! look not——

Cler. Sen. What can you say? speak quickly.

[*Offering to draw.*

Mrs. Cler. I never saw you moved before—Don't murder me, impenitent; I'm wholly in your power as a criminal, but remember I have been so in a tender regard.

Cler. Sen. But how have you considered that regard?

Mrs. Cler. Is't possible you can forgive what you ensnared me into?——Oh! look at me kindly—You know I have only erred in my intention, nor saw my danger, till, by this honest art, you had shown me what 'tis to venture to the utmost limit of what is lawful. You laid that train, I'm sure, to alarm, not to betray my innocence——Mr. Clerimont scorns such baseness! therefore I kneel——I weep——I am convinced. [*Kneels.*

[CLER. *Sen. takes her up embracing her.*

Cler. Sen. Then kneel and weep no more ——my fairest—my reconciled——Be so in a moment, for know I cannot (without wringing my own heart) give you the least compunction ——Be in humour—It shall be your own fault, if ever there's a serious word more on this subject.

Mrs. Cler. I must correct every idea that rises in my mind, and learn every gesture of my body a-new——I detest the thing I was.

Cler. Sen. No, no—You must not do so—Our joy and grief, honour and reproach are the same; you must slide out of your foppery by degrees, so that it may appear your own act.

Mrs. Cler. But this wench!

Cler. Sen. She is already out of your way ——You shall see the catastrophe of her fate yourself——But still keep up the fine lady till we go out of town——You may return to it with as decent airs as you please——And now I have shown you your error, I'm in so good humour as to repeat you a couplet on the occasion——

They only who gain minds, true laurels wear,
'Tis less to conquer, than convince the fair.

[Exeunt.

SCENE II.—*A Room.*

Enter POUNCE *with papers.*

[*A table, chairs, pen, ink, and paper.*]

Pounce. 'Tis a delight to gall these old rascals, and set 'em at variance about stakes, which I know neither of 'em will ever have possession of.

Enter TIPKIN *and* SIR HARRY.

Tip. Do you design, Sir Harry, that they shall have an estate in their own hands, and keep house themselves, poor things?

Sir Har. No, no, Sir, I know better; they shall go down into the country, and live with me, nor touch a farthing of money, but having all things necessary provided, they shall go tame about the house, and breed.

Tip. Well, Sir Harry, then considering that all human things are subject to change, it behoves every man that has a just sense of mortality, to take care of his money.

Sir Har. I don't know what you mean, brother—What do you drive at, brother?

Tip. This instrument is executed by you, your son, and my niece, which discharges me of all retrospects.

Sir Har. It is confessed, brother; but what then?—

Tip. All that remains is, that you pay me for the young lady's twelve years board, as also all other charges, as wearing apparel, &c.

Sir Har. What is this you say? Did I give you my discharge from all retrospects, as you call it, and after all, do you come with this and t'other, and all that? I find you are, I tell you, Sir, to your face, I find you are——

Tip. I find too what you are, Sir Harry.

Sir Har. What am I, Sir? What am I?

Tip. Why, Sir, you are angry.

Sir Har. Sir, I scorn your words, I am not angry—Mr. Pounce is my witness, I am gentle as a lamb—Would it not make any flesh alive angry, to see a close hunks come after all with a demand of——

Tip. Mr. Pounce, pray inform Sir Harry in this point.

Pounce. Indeed, Sir Harry, I must tell you plainly, that Mr. Tipkin, in this, demands nothing but what he may recover—For though this case may be considered *multifariam;* that is to say, as 'tis usually, commonly, *vicatim,* or vulgarly, expressed——Yet, I say, when we only observe, that the power is settled as the law requires, *assensu patris,* by the consent of the father—That circumstance imports you are well acquainted with the advantages which accrue to your family by this alliance, which corroborates Mr. Tipkin's demand, and avoids all objections that can be made.

Sir Har. Why then, I find you are his adviser in all this—

Pounce. Look ye, Sir Harry, to show you I love to promote among my clients a good understanding; though Mr. Tipkin may claim four thousand pounds, I'll engage for him, and I know him so well, that he shall take three thousand nine hundred and ninety eight

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pounds, four shillings, and eight-pence farthing.

Tip. Indeed, Mr. Pounce, you are too hard upon me.

Pounce. You must consider a little, Sir Harry is your brother.

Sir Har. Three thousand nine hundred and ninety-eight pounds, four shillings, and eight-pence farthing! for what, I say? for what, Sir?

Pounce. For what, Sir! for what she wanted, Sir; a fine lady is always in want, Sir—Her very clothes would come to that money in half the time.

Sir Har. Three thousand nine hundred and ninety-eight pounds, four shillings and eight-pence farthing for clothes! pray how many suits does she wear out in a year.

Pounce. Oh, dear Sir, a fine lady's clothes are not old by being worn, but by being seen.

Sir Har. Well, I'll save her clothes for the future, after I have got her into the country—I'll warrant her she shall not appear more in this wicked town, where clothes are worn out by sight——And as to what you demand, I tell you, Sir, 'tis extortion.

Tip. Sir Harry, do you accuse me of extortion?

Sir Har. Yes, I say extortion.

Tip. Mr. Pounce, write down that——There are very good laws provided against scandal and calumny——Loss of reputation may tend to loss of money——

Pounce. *Item*, for having accused Mr. Tipkin of extortion.

Sir Har. Nay, if you come to your *Items*—Look ye, Mr. Tipkin, this is an inventory of such goods as were left to my niece Bridget by her deceased father, and which I expect shall be forthcoming at her marriage to my son——

Imprimis, A golden locket of her mother's, with something very ingenious in Latin on the inside of it.

Item, A couple of musquets, with two shoulder-belts and bandeliers.

Item, A large silver caudle-cup, with a true story engraven on it.

Pounce. But, Sir Harry——

Sir Har. *Item*, A bass viol, with almost all the strings to it, and only a small hole on the back.

Pounce. But nevertheless, Sir——

Sir Har. This is the furniture of my brother's bed-chamber that follows—A suit of tapestry hangings, with the story of Judith and Holofernes, torn only where the head should have been off—an old bedstead curiously wrought about the posts, consisting of two load of timber—a hone, a bason, three razors, and a comb-case——Look ye, Sir, you see I can *item* it.

Pounce. Alas! Sir Harry, if you had ten quire of *items*, 'tis all answered in the word retrospect.

Sir Har. Why then, Mr. Pounce and Mr. Tipkin, you are both rascals.

Tip. Do you call me rascal, Sir Harry?

Sir Har. Yes, Sir.

Tip. Write it down, Mr. Pounce—at the end of the leaf.

Sir Har. If you have room, Mr. Pounce, put down villain, son of a whore, curmudgeon, hunks, and scoundrel.

Tip. Not so fast, Sir Harry, he cannot write so fast, you are at the word villain—Son of a whore, I take it, was next——You may make the account as large as you please, Sir Harry.

Sir Har. Come, come, I wont be used thus——Hark ye, sirrah, draw—What do you do at this end of the town without a sword?—Draw, I say——

Tip. Sir Harry, you are a military man, a colonel of the militia.

Sir Har. I am so, sirrah, and will run such an extorting dog as you through the guts, to show the militia is useful.

Pounce. Oh dear, oh dear!—How am I concerned to see persons of your figure thus moved—The wedding is coming in—We'll settle these things afterwards.

Tip. I am calm.

Sir Har. Tipkin, live these two hours—but expect—

Enter HUMPHRY *leading* NIECE, MRS. CLERIMONT *led by* FAINLOVE, CAPT. CLERIMONT, *and* CLERIMONT *Sen.*

Pounce. Who are these? Hey-day, who are these, Sir Harry? Ha!

Sir Har. Some frolic, 'tis wedding-day—no matter.

Humph. Haw, haw; father—master uncle—Come, you must stir your stumps, you must dance—Come, old lads, kiss the ladies—

Mrs. Cler. Mr. Tipkin, Sir Harry—I beg pardon for an introduction so *mal-à-propos*—I know sudden familiarity is not the English way—Alas, Mr. Gubbin, this father and uncle of yours must be new modelled—How they stare both of them!

Sir Har. Hark ye, Numps, who is this you have brought hither? is it not the famous fine lady Mrs. Clerimont—What a pox did you let her come near your wife—

Humph. Look ye, don't expose yourself, and play some mad country prank to disgrace me before her—I shall be laughed at, because she knows I understand better.

Mrs. Cler. I congratulate, Madam, your coming out of the bondage of a virgin state—A woman can't do what she will properly till she's married.

Sir Har. Did you hear what she said to your wife?

Enter AUNT *before a Service of Dishes.*

Aunt. So, Mr. Bridegroom, pray take that napkin and serve your spouse to-day, according to custom.

Humph. Mrs. Clerimont, pray know my aunt.

Mrs. Cler. Madam, I must beg your pardon; I can't possibly like all that vast load of meat that you are sending in to table—besides, 'tis so offensively sweet, it wants that *haut-goût* we are so delighted with in France.

Aunt. You'll pardon it, since we did not expect you.—Who is this? [*Aside.*

Mrs. Cler. O Madam, I only speak for the future, little saucers are so much more polite—Look ye, I'm perfectly for the French way, whene'er I'm admitted, I take the whole upon me.

Sir Har. The French, Madam——I'd have you to know—

Mrs. Cler. You'll not like it at first, out of a natural English sullenness, but that will come upon you by degrees——When I first went into France, I was mortally afraid of a frog, but in a little time I could eat nothing else, except sallads.

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Aunt. Eat frogs! have I kissed one that has eat frogs?—paw! paw!

Mrs. Cler. Oh, Madam—a frog and a sallad are delicious fare—'tis not long come up in France itself, but their glorious monarch has introduced the diet which makes 'em so spiritual—He eradicated all gross food by taxes, and for the glory of the monarch sent the subject a-grazing; but I fear I defer the entertainment and diversion of the day.

Humph. Now, father, uncle—before we go any farther, I think 'tis necessary we know who and who's together—then I give either of you two hours to guess which is my wife—And 'tis not my cousin—so far I'll tell you.

Sir Har. How! what do you say?—But oh! you mean she's not your cousin now—she's nearer a-kin, that's well enough—Well said, Numps—ha, ha, ha.

Humph. No, I don't mean so, I tell you I don't mean so.—My wife hides her face under her hat. [*All looking at* FAINLOVE.

Tip. What does the puppy mean? his wife under a hat!

Humph. Ay, ay, that's she, that's she——a good jest, faith.——

Sir Har. Hark ye, Numps,—what dost mean, child?—Is that a woman, and are you really married to her?

Humph. I am sure of both.

Sir Har. Are you so, sirrah? then, sirrah, this is your wedding dinner, sirrah——Do you see, sirrah, here's roast-meat.

[*Shakes his cane at* HUMPHRY.

Humph. Oh, ho! what, beat a married man! hold him, Mr. Clerimont, brother Pounce, Mr. Wife; nobody stand by a young married man? [*Runs behind* FAINLOVE.

Sir Har. Did not the dog say brother Pounce? What, is this Mrs. Ragout—This Madam Clerimont! Who the devil are you all, but especially who the devil are you too?

[*Beats* HUMPHRY *and* FAINLOVE *off the stage, following.*

Tip. [*Aside.*] Master Pounce, all my niece's fortune will be demanded now—for I suppose that red-coat has her—Don't you think that you and I had better break.

Pounce. You may as soon as you please; but 'tis my interest to be honest a little longer.

Tip. Well, Biddy, since you would not accept of your cousin, I hope you ha'n't disposed of yourself elsewhere.

Niece. If you'll for a little while suspend your curiosity, you shall have the whole history of my amour to this my nuptial day, under the title of the loves of Clerimont and Parthenissa.

Tip. Then, Madam, your portion is in safe hands.

Capt. Come, come, old gentleman, 'tis in vain to contend; here's honest Mr. Pounce shall be my engineer, and I warrant you we beat you out of all your holds.

Aunt. What, then, is Mr. Pounce a rogue? he must have some trick, brother; it cannot be; he must have cheated t'other side, for I'm sure he's honest. [*Apart to* TIPKIN.

Cler. Sen. Mr. Pounce, all your sister has won of this lady, she has honestly put into my hands, and I'll return it her, at this lady's particular request. [*To* POUNCE.

Pounce. And the thousand pounds you promised in your brother's behalf, I'm willing should be her's also.

Capt. Then go in, and bring 'em all back to make the best of an ill game; we'll eat the dinner and have a dance together, or we shall transgress all form.

Re-enter FAINLOVE, HUMPHRY, *and* SIR HARRY.

Sir Har. Well, since you say you are worth something, and the boy has set his heart upon you, I'll have patience till I see farther.

Pounce. Come, come, Sir Harry, you shall find my alliance more considerable than you imagine; the Pounces are a family that will always have money, if there's any in the world—Come, fiddlers.

DANCE *here.*

Capt. You've seen th' extremes of the domestic life.
A son too much confin'd—too free a wife;
By generous bonds you either should restrain,
And only on their inclinations gain;
Wives to obey must love, children revere,
While only slaves are governed by their fear. [*Exeunt omnes.*

EPILOGUE.

BRITONS, who constant war, with factious rage,
For liberty against each other wage,
From foreign insult save this English stage.
No more th' Italians squalling tribe admit,
In tongues unknown; 'tis popery in wit.
The songs (their selves confess) from Rome they bring,
And 'tis high mass, for aught you know, they sing. [nigher,
Husbands, take care, the danger may come
The women say their eunuch is a friar.
But is it not a serious ill to see
Europe's great arbiters so mean can be;
Passive, with an affected joy to sit,
Suspend their native taste of manly wit;
Neglect their comic humour, tragic rage,
For known defects of nature, and of age?
Arise, from shame, ye conquering Britons, rise;
Such unadorned effeminacy despise;
Admire (if you will doat on foreign wit)
Not what Italians sing, but Romans writ,
So shall less work, such as to-night's slight play,
At your command with justice die away;
Till then forgive your writers that can't bear
You should such very Tramontanes appear,
The nation which contemns you, to revere.
Let Anna's soil be known for all its charms;
As fam'd for liberal sciences as arms:
Let those derision meet, who would advance
Manners, or speech, from Italy or France.
Let them learn you, who would your favour find,
And English be the language of mankind.

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WHO'S THE DUPE?

A FARCE,

IN TWO ACTS.

BY MRS. COWLEY.

REMARKS.

THIS lively Farce was produced, in 1779, by Mrs. Cowley; a lady whose naturally superior gifts, refined by cultivation, were particularly devoted to the service of the dramatic muse.

The judgment and contrivance evinced in this after-piece, and the truly laughable mode in which it is conducted, are creditable to the varied talent of the authoress.—In spite of Granger's unpolite definition of woman, to be "only one of nature's agreeable blunders," the ladies will probably agree with Miss Doiley in her choice, and rejection of so non-descript a lover as Gradus: scholastic acquirement must be interspersed and seasoned with the ordinary but indispensable trifles of life, or society will despise and ridicule it.* In old Doiley, the positive mandates of ignorance are fairly exposed, and the lovers entitled to happiness, who have so ingeniously defeated their influence.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	DRURY LANE.		DRURY LANE.
DOILEY,	*Mr. Dowton.*	SERVANT,	*Mr. Evans.*
SANDFORD,	*Mr. Holland.*	ELIZABETH,	*Mrs. Dormer.*
GRADUS,	*Mr. Bannister.*	CHARLOTTE,	*Miss Mellon.*
GRANGER,	*Mr. Decamp.*		

ACT I.

SCENE I.—The Park.

Flower GIRLS, *and several persons passing.*

1 *Girl.* I vow I han't had a customer to-day. Summer is coming, and we shall be ruined. When flowers are plenty, nobody will buy 'em.

2 *Girl.* Ay, very true; people talks of summer, but, for my part, give me Christmas. In a hard frost, or a deep snow, who's dressed without flowers and furs? Here's one of the captains.

Enter SANDFORD.

Flowers, Sir?

Sand. I have no silver.

2 *Girl.* Bless your honour! I'll take gold.

Sand. Indeed!

2 *Girl.* Here's hyacinths, and a sprig of myrtle.

Sand. I'd rather have roses. What will you take for these? [*Pinching her cheek.*

2 *Girl.* I can't sell them alone——the tree and the roses must go together.

Enter GRANGER.

Sand. Ah! Granger, by all that's fortunate. I wrote to you last night, in Devonshire, to hasten your return.

Grang. Then your letter and I jostled each other at two o'clock on this side Hounslow. My damned postilion—nodding, I suppose, over the charms of some Greasalinda—ran against the letter-cart, tore off my hind wheel, and I was forced to mount his one-eyed hack; and, in that curious equipage, arrived at three this morning.

Sand. But how has the negotiation with your brother ended? Will he put you into a situation to——

Grang. Yes, to take a sweating with the Gentoos. He'll speak to Sir Jacob Jaghire to get me a commission in the East Indies: and, you know, every body grows rich there—and

* "When follies are pointed out, and vanity ridiculed, it may be very improving; and perhaps the stage is the only place where ridicule is useful."—*Wollstonecraft.*

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then, you know, you're a soldier, you can fight. [*In a tone of mimickry.*

Sand. Well, what answer did you give him?

Grang. Yes, Sir Bobby, I can fight, [*Mimicking.*] but I can't grow rich on the smell of gunpowder. Your true East India soldier is of a different genus from those who strewed Minden with Frenchmen, and must have as great a fecundity of character as a Dutch Burgomaster. Whilst his sword is in his hand, his pen must be in his cockade: he must be as expert at fractions as at assaults: to-day mowing down ranks of soft beings, just risen from their embroidery: to-morrow selling pepper and beetle nut: this hour, a son of Mars, striding over heaps of slain; the next, an auctioneer, knocking down chintz and calico to the best bidder.

Sand. And thus your negotiation ended?

Grang. Except that I was obliged to listen to some very wise dissertation about "running out," as he calls it. Five thousand——enough for any younger son, but the prodigal. [*Mimicking.*] Really, Sandford, I can't see how I can help it. Jack Spiller, to be sure, had nine hundred—the poor fellow was honest; but he married a fine lady, so died insolvent, I had a few more accidents of the same kind; my captaincy cost a thousand; and the necessary expenses in America, with the distresses of my fellow-soldiers, have swallowed the rest.

Sand. Poor Granger! So, with a spirit to do honour to five thousand a year, thou art not worth five shillings.

Grang. *C'est vrai.* Should my affairs with Elizabeth be crossed, I am the most undone dog on earth.

Sand. Now, tell me honestly, is it Elizabeth or the fortune, which is your object?

Grang. Why, look'e, Sandford; I am not one of those sighing milksops, who could live in a cottage on love, or sit contentedly under a hedge and help my wife to knit stockings; but on the word of a soldier, I had rather marry Elizabeth Doiley with ten thousand pounds, than any other woman on earth with a hundred.

Sand. And the woman must be very unreasonable, who would not be satisfied with such a distinction. But do you know that Elizabeth's father has taken the liberty to choose a son in law, without your permission?

Grang. Ha! a lover! That then is the secret she hinted, and which brought me so hastily to town. Who——what is he?

Sand. Every thing that you are not.

Grang. There is such a mixture of jest and earnest—

Sand. Upon my soul, 'tis confoundedly serious. Since they became my neighbours in Suffolk, I am in the secrets of the whole family; and, for your sake, have cultivated an intimacy with Abraham Doiley, citizen and slop-seller. In a word, the father consults me, the daughter complains to me, and the cousin, *fille-de-chambre*, romps with me. Can my importance be increased?

Grang. My dear Sandford. [*Impatiently.*

Sand. My dear Granger! The sum total is this:—Old Doiley, bred, you know, in a charity-school, swears he'll have a man of "larning" for his son. His caprice makes him regardless of fortune; but Elizabeth's husband must have Latin at his fingers' ends, and be able to teach his grandsons to sputter in Greek.

Grang. Oh! I'll study Hebrew, and write odes in Chaldee, if that will content him: but, may I perish, if all the pedants in England, with the universities to back 'em, shall rob me of my Elizabeth!—See here——[*Producing a letter.*] an invitation from her own dear hand. This morning—this very hour—in a moment I shall be at her feet. [*Going.*]—Go with me through the Park.—Oh, no——I cry you mercy——You walk, but I fly. [*Exit.*

Sand. Propitious be your flight!—Egad! there are two fine girls——I'll try 'em——half afraid——the women dress so equivocally, that one is in danger of attacking a countess, when one only means to address a nymph of King's Place. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—An Apartment at MR. DOILEY'S.

MR. *and* MISS DOILEY *at breakfast.*

Doil. Here, take away—take away. Remember, we are not at home to nobody, but to Mr. Gradus.

Serv. The formal gentleman that was here last night, Sir?

Doil. Yes, [*Snappishly.*] the gentleman that was here last night. [*Exit* SERVANT.] What! I see you are resolved for to have poor Gradus's heart, Elizabeth!—I never saw you so tricked out in a morning before. But he isn't none of your chaps that's to be catched with a mountain head, nor knots, nor gew-gaws.—No, no; you must mind your P's and Q's with him, I can tell you. And don't laugh now, when he's with you. You've a confounded knack at laughing; and there's nothing so odious in the eyes of a wise man, as a great laugher.

Miss D. Oh! his idea is as reviving as burnt feathers in hysterics. I wish I had seen him last night, with all the rust of Oxford about him; he must have been the greatest provocative to mirth.

Doil. How! What! a provokive to mirth! Why, why, hussy, he was recommended to me by an antikary doctor of the Royal Society——he has finished his larning some time; and they want him to come and drink and hunt in Shropshire. Not he—he sticks to Al Mater; and the College heads have been laid together many a time to know whether he shall be a great judge, a larned physician, or a civility doctor.

Miss D. Nay then, Sir, if he's all this——laughing will be irresistible.

Doil. Don't put me in a passion, Betty; don't go for to put me in a passion. What would you have a man with an etarnal grin upon his face, like the head of a knocker? And hopping and skipping about like a Dutch doll with quicksilver in its heels? If you must have a husband of that sort, so be it—so be it—you know the rest.

Miss D. Surely, Sir, 'tis possible for a man who does not move as if cut in wood, or speak as though he delivered his words by tale, to have breeding, and to—

Doil. May be—may be; but your man of breeding is not fit for old Doiley's son. What! shall I go for to give the labour of thirty-years to a young jackanapes, who'll come into the room with a dancing-school step, and prate of his grandfather Sir Thomas, his great grandfather the general, and his great-great-great-grandfather, merely because I can't tell whether I ever had one or no?

Miss D. I hope, Sir, that such a man could never engage my——

Doil. Pshaw! pshaw! you can't pertend for

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to judge of a man——all hypocrites and deceivers.

Miss D. Except Mr. Gradus.

Doil. Oh, he! He's very different from your men of breeding, I assure you: the most extraordinary youth that was ever turned out of college. None of your randans, up all night—not drinking and wenching. No, in his room—poring, and reading, and reading, and studying. Oh, the joy that I shall have in hearing him talk! I do love larning. I was grieved—grieved to the soul, Betty, when thou wert born. I had set my heart upon a boy; and if thou hadst been a boy, thou shouldst have had Greek, and algebra, and jometry, enough for an archbishop.

Miss D. I am sorry——

Doil. No, no; don't be sorry; be obedient, and all will be as it should be. You know I dote on you, you young slut. I left East-cheap for Westminster, on purpose to please you—Haven't I carried you to Bath, Brimmigem, and Warley Common, and all the genteel places? I never grudge you no expense, nor no pleasure whatsomever.

Miss D. Indeed, Sir, you are most indulgent.

Doil. Well then, don't thwart me, Betty; don't go for to thwart me, that's all. Since you came into the world, and disappointed your father of a son, 'tis your duty to give him a wise son-in-law, to make up his loss.

Enter CHARLOTTE.

Char. Mrs. Taffety, the mantua-maker, is in your dressing-room, Ma'am.

Doil. Then send her away: she hasn't no time now for Mrs. Taffety.

Miss D. Ay, send her away, Charlotte. What does she want? I didn't send for her.

Char. Bless me——'tis the captain. [*Apart.*

Miss D. Oh, heavens! [*Aside.*] Yes, I do remember——Ay, I did——I did send for her about the painted lutestring.

Doil. Bid her come again to-morrow, I say.

Char. Lord bless me, Sir; I dare say she can't come again to-morrow. Such mantua-makers as Mrs. Taffety wont wait half a dozen times on people.—Why, Sir, she comes to her customers in a chair of her own; and her footman beats a tattoo at the door as if she was a countess.

Doil. A mantua-maker with her footman and chair! O lud! O lud! I should as soon have expected a duchess in a wheel-barrow.

Miss D. Pray, Sir, allow me just to step and speak to her. It is the sweetest gown——and I'd give the world were you as much charmed with it as I am.

Doil. Coaxing slut! [*Exeunt* MISS D. *and* CHARLOTTE.] —Where the devil can Gradus be now?——Well, good fortune never comes in a hurry. If I'd pitched upon your man of breeding, he'd have been here an hour ago—sipped his jocklate, kissed Elizabeth's fingers, hopped into his carriage, and away to his wenoh, to divert her with charatures of the old fellow and his daughter. Oh! before I'd give my gains to one of these puppies, I'd spend 'em all in building hospitals for lazy lacquies and decayed pimps. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—A Dressing Room.

MISS DOILEY *and* GRANGER.

Miss D. A truce to your transports! Perhaps I am too much inclined to believe all you can swear; but this must be a moment of business. To secure me to yourself, are you willing to enter into measures that—

Grang. Any thing! every thing! I'll have a chaise at the Park-gate in five minutes; and we'll be in Scotland, my Elizabeth, before your new lover has settled his address.

Miss D. Pho! pho! you're a mere bungler at contrivance; if you'll be guided by me, my father shall give me to you at St. James's church, in the face of the world.

Grang. Indeed!

Miss D. Indeed.

Grang. I fear to trust to it, my angel! Beauty can work miracles with all mankind; but an obstinate father——

Miss D. It is you who must work the miracle. I have settled the whole affair with my cousin, who has understanding and wit——and you have only to be obedient.

Grang. I am perfectly obedient. Pray give me my lesson.

Miss D. Why, luckily, you know my father has never seen you: he left Bath before you had the sauciness——

Enter CHARLOTTE *with a bundle.*

Char. There! you're finely caught! Here's your father and Mr. Gradus actually upon the stairs, coming here.

Grang. Zounds! where's the closet?

Miss D. Oh, Lord! here's no closet——I shall faint with terror.

Grang. No back stairs? No clothes press?

Char. Neither, neither! But here——I'm your guardian angel—[*Untying the bundle.*] I told 'em Mrs. Taffety was here; so, without more ceremony, clap on these——speak broken English, and, my life for it, you'll pass muster with my uncle.

Grang. What! make a woman of me? By Jupiter——

Char. Lay your commands on him. If he doesn't submit, we are ruined.

Miss D. Oh, you shall, I protest. Here, I'll put his cap on.

Doil. [*Without.*] This way, Sir; come this way——We'll take her by surprise——least preparation is best—[*Pulling at the door.*] Open the door.

Miss D. Presently, Sir.

Doil. [*Knocking.*] What the dickens are you doing, I say? Open the door.

Char. In a moment——I'm only pinning my cousin's gown. Lord bless me! you hurry one so, you have made me prick my finger.—There, now you may enter.

Enter DOILEY *and* GRADUS.

Doil. Oh! only my daughter's mantua-maker.—[GRANGER *makes courteseys, and goes out,, followed by* CHARLOTTE.] Here, Elizabeth, this is that Mr. Gradus I talked to you about. Bless me! I hope you a'n't ill——you look as white as a candle.

Miss D. No, Sir, not ill; but this woman has fretted me to death——she has spoiled my gown.

Doil. Why then, make her pay for it, d'ye hear? It's my belief, if she was to pay for all she spoils, she'd soon drop her chair, and trudge a-foot. Mr. Gradus——beg pardon——this is my daughter——don't think the worse of her because she is a little dashed or so.

Grad. Bashfulness, Mr. Doiley, is the robe of modesty; and modesty, as hath been well

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observed, is a sunbeam to a diamond—giving force to its beauty, and exalting its lustre.

Doil. He was a deep one, I warrant him, that said that. I remember something like it in the Wisdom of Solomon. Come, speak to Elizabeth there——I see she wont till you've broke the ice.

Grad. Madam! [*Bows.*] hem—permit me——this honour—hem—believe me, Lady, I have more satisfaction in beholding you, than I should have in conversing with Grævius and Gronovius: I had rather possess your approbation than that of the elder Scaliger; and this apartment is more precious to me than was the Lyceum Portico to the most zealous of the Peripatetics.

Doil. There! Show me a man of breeding who could talk so! [*Aside.*

Miss D. I believe all you have said to be very fine, Sir; but, unfortunately, I don't know the gentlemen you mentioned. The education given to women shuts us entirely from such refined acquaintance.

Grad. Perfectly right, Madam; perfectly right. The more simple your education, the nearer you approach the pure manners of the purest ages. The charms of women were never more powerful—never inspired such achievements, as in those immortal periods, when they could neither read nor write.

Doil. Not read nor write! Zounds what a time was that to bring up a daughter! Why, a peeress in those days did not cost so much as a barber's daughter in ours. Miss Friz must have her dancing, her French, her tambour, her harpischoll, her jography, her 'stronomy——whilst her father, to support all this, lives upon sprats; or, once in two years, calls his creditors to a composition.

Grad. *Oh, tempora mutantur!* but these exuberances, Mr. Doiley, indigitate unbounded liberty.

Doil. Digitate or not——ifackens, if the ladies would take my advice, they'd return to their distaffs, and grow notable——to distinguish themselves from their shopkeepers' wives.

Grad. Ah! it was at the loom, and the spinning wheel, that the Lucretias and Portias of the world imbibed their virtue; that the mothers of the Gracchi, the Horatii, the Antonini, caught that sacred flame with which they inspired their sons, and with the milk of their own pure bosoms gave them that fortitude, that magnanimity, which made them conquerors and kings.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Sir, here's a lord! Lord Pharo!

Doil. Lord Pharo! hum, then the four aces run against him last night. Well, the ill-luck of some, and the fine taste of others, makes my money breed like rabbits. [*Aside.*

Serv. Sir——

Doil. Well, well, I'm coming. When a lord wants money, he'll wait as patiently as any body. Well, Mr. Gradus, I'm your humble sarvant. Elizabeth! you understand me. [*Exit.*

Grad. How unlucky the old gentleman should be called away! Hem! [*Addressing himself to speak to her.*] There is something in her eye so sarcastic. I'd rather pronounce the *terræ-filius*, than address her. Madam!—What can I say? Oh now——that's fortunate [*Pulling out some papers.*] Hem! I will venture to request your ideas, Madam, on a little autographon, which I design for the world.

Miss D. Sir!

Grad. In which I have found a new chronometer, to prove that Confucius and Zoroaster were the same person; and that the pyramids are not so ancient, by two hundred years, as the world believes.

Miss D. To what purpose, Sir?

Grad. Purpose!—Purpose, Madam! Why, really, Miss, our booksellers' shelves are loaded with volumes in the unfruitful road of plain sense and nature; and unless an author can elance himself from the common track, he stands as little chance to be known, as a comet in its aphelion. Pray, Ma'am, amuse yourself.

Miss D. O Lord, Sir! you may as well offer me a sheet of hieroglyphics——besides, I hate reading.

Grad. Hate reading!

Miss D. Ay, to be sure; what's reading good for, but to give a stiff, embarrassed air? It makes a man move as if made by a carpenter, who had forgot to give him joints——[*Observing him.*] he twirls his hat, and bites his thumb, whilst his hearers, his beholders, I mean, are gaping for his wit.

Grad. The malicious creature! 'Tis my picture she has been drawing, and now 'tis more impossible for me to speak than ever.

Miss D. For my part——for my part, if I was a man, I'd study only dancing and bon-mots. With no other learning than these, he may be light and frolicsome as Lady Airy's ponies: but, loaded with Greek, philosophy, and mathematics, he's as heavy and dull as a cart-horse.

Grad. *Fœmina cum voce diaboli.*

Miss D. Bless me, Sir! why are you so silent? My father told me you was a lover——I never saw such a lover in my life. By this time you should have said fifty brilliant things—found a hundred similes for my eyes, complexion, and wit. Can your memory furnish you with nothing pat? No poetry—no heroics? What subject did Portia's lovers entertain her with, while she sat spinning—aye?

Grad. The lovers of that age, Madam, were ignorant of frothy compliments. Instead of being gallant, they were brave; instead of flattery, they studied virtue and wisdom. It was these, Madam, that nerved the Roman arm; that empowered her to drag the nations of the world at her chariot wheels; and that raised her to such an exalted height——

Miss D. That down she tumbled in the dust——and there I beg you'll leave her. Was ever any thing so monstrous! I ask for a compliment, and you begin an oration——an oration on a parcel of stiff warriors, and formal pedants. Why, Sir, there is not one of these brave, wise, godlike men, but will appear as ridiculous in a modern assembly, as a judge in his long wig and a maccaroni jacket.

Grad. Now I am dumb again. Oh, that I had you at Brazen-nose, Madam!—I could manage you there. [*Aside.*

Miss D. What! now you're in the pouts, Sir? 'Tis mighty well. Bless us! what a life a wife must lead with such a being! for ever talking sentences, or else in profound silence. No delightful nonsense, no sweet trifling. All must be solemn, wise, and grave. Hang me, if I would not sooner marry the bust of

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Seneca, in bronze: then I should have all the gravity and coldness of wisdom, without its impertinence.

Grad. The impertinence of wisdom!—Surely, Madam, or I am much deceived, you possess a mind capable of——

Miss D. Now I see, by the twist of your chin, Sir, you are beginning another oration;—but, I protest, I will never hear you speak again, till you have forsworn those tones, and that manner. Go, Sir; throw your books into the fire, turn your study into a dressing-room, hire a dancing-master, and grow agreeable. [*Exit.*

Grad. Plato! Aristotle! Zeno! I abjure ye. A girl bred in a nursery, in whose soul the sacred lamp of knowledge hath scarcely shed its faintest rays, hath vanquished, and struck dumb, the most faithful of your disciples. [*Enter* CHARLOTTE.] Here's another she-devil, I'd as soon encounter a she-wolf. [*Going.*

Char. Stay, Sir, pray, an instant! Lord bless me! am I such a scare-crow? I was never run from by a young man before in my life. [*Pulls him back.*

Grad. I resolve henceforward to run from your whole sex.—Youth and beauty are only other names for coquetry and affectation. Let me go, Madam, you have beauty, and doubtless all that belongs to it.

Char. Lud! you've a mighty pretty, whimsical, way of complimenting.——Miss Doiley might have discerned something in you worth cherishing, in spite of that husk of scholarship.—To pass one's life with such a being, seems to me to be the very apex of human felicity. I found that word for him in a book of geometry, this morning. [*Aside.*

Grad. Indeed!

Char. Positively. I have listened to your conversation, and I can't help being concerned that talents, which ought to do you honour, should, by your mismanagement, be converted into downright ridicule.

Grad. This creature is of a genus quite different from the other. She has understanding! [*Aside.*]—I begin to suspect, Madam! that, though I have some knowledge, I have still much to learn.

Char. You have indeed——knowledge, as you manage it, is a downright *bore*.

Grad. *Boar!* What relation can there be between knowledge and a hog!

Char. Lord bless me! how ridiculous. You have spent your life in learning the dead languages, and are ignorant of the living.—Why, Sir, *bore* is all the *ton*.

Grad. *Ton! ton!* What may that be? It cannot be orthology: I do not recollect its root in the parent languages.

Char. Ha, ha, ha! better and better. Why, Sir, *ton* means——*ton* is——Pho! what signifies where the root is? These kinds of words are the short hand of conversation, and convey whole sentences at once. All one likes is *ton*, and all one hates is *bore*.

Grad. And is that divine medium, which pourtrays our minds, and makes us first in the animal climax! is speech become so arbitrary, that——

Char. Divine medium! animal climax! [*Contemptuously.*]—You know very well, the use of language is to express one's likes and dislikes; and a pig will do this as effectually by its squeak, or a hen with her cackle, as you with your Latin and Greek.

Grad. What can I say to you?

Char. Nothing;——but yield yourself to my guidance, and you shall conquer Miss Doiley.

Grad. Conquer her! she's so incased with ridicule, there is not a single vulnerable spot about her.

Char. Pshaw, pshaw! What becomes of her ridicule, when you have banished your absurdities? One can no more exist without the other, than the mundane system without air. There's a touch of my science for you. [*Aside.*

Grad. Madam, I'll take you for my Minerva——Cover me with your shield, and lead me to battle.

Char. Enough. In the first place, [*Leading him to a glass.*]—in the first place, don't you think you are habited *à la mode d'amour?* Did you ever see a cupid in a grizzle wig, curled as stiffly as Sir Cloudsley Shovel's in the Abbey?—A dingy brown coat, with vellum button holes, to be sure, speaks an excellent taste: but then I would advise you to lay it by in lavender, for your grandson's christening; and here's cambric enough in your ruffles to make his shirt.

Grad. I perceive my error. The votaries of love commence a new childhood; and dignity would be as unbecoming in them, as a hornpipe to a Socrates.—But habit is so strong, that, to gain an empress, I could not assume that careless air, that promptness of expression——

Char. Then you may give up the pursuit of Miss Doiley; for such a wise piece of uprightness would stand as good a chance to be secretary to the *coterie*, as her husband.

Grad. It is Mr. Doiley, who will——

Char. Mr. Doiley! ridiculous——Depend on't, he'll let her marry just whom she will. This Mr. Gradus, says he——why, I don't care a groat whether you marry him or no, says he——there are fifty young fellows at Oxford, who can talk Greek as well as he——

Grad. Indeed!

Char. I have heard a good account of the young man, says he. But all I ask of you is, to receive two visits from him—no more than two visits. If you don't like him—so; if you do, I'll give you half my fortune on the day of marriage, and the rest at my death.

Grad. What a singularity! to limit me to two visits.—One is already past, and she hates me—What can I expect from the other?

Char. Every thing. It is a moment that decides the fate of a lover. Now fancy me, Miss Doiley——swear I'm a divinity——then take my hand, and press it——thus.

Grad. Heavens! her touch has thrilled me.

Char. And if I should pout, and resent the liberty, make your apology on my lips. [GRADUS *catches her in his arms and kisses her.*] So, so, you have fire, I perceive.

Grad. Can you give me any more lessons?

Char. Yes; but this is not the place. I have a friend—Mr. Sandford, whom you saw here last night——you shall dine with him: he will initiate you at once in the fashionable rage, and teach you to trifle agreeably. You shall be equipped from his wardrobe, to appear here in the evening a man of the world. Adieu to grizzles, and——

Grad. But what will the father think of such a metamorphosis?

Char. Study your mistress only: your visit will be to her—and that visit decides your fate. Resolve then to take up your new

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character boldly——in all its strongest lines, or give up one of the richest heiresses in the kingdom.

Grad. My obligations, Madam,——

Char. Don't stay, now, to run the risk of meeting Mr. Doiley; for if he should discover that you have disgusted his daughter, Sandford, the dinner, and the plot, will be worth no more than your gravity. Away, I'll meet you at Story's Gate to introduce you.

[*Exit* GRADUS.

Enter MISS DOILEY.

Miss D. Excellent Charlotte! you've outgone my expectation——did ever a woodcock run so blindly into a snare?

Char. Oh, that's the way of all your great scholars——take them but an inch out of their road, and you may turn 'em inside out, as easily as your glove.

Miss D. Well, but have you seen Sandford?—Is every thing in train?—Will Gradus be hoodwinked?

Char. Hoodwinked! Why, don't you see he's already stark blind? or, if he has any eyes, I assure ye they are all for me.

Miss D. My heart palpitates with apprehension: we shall never succeed.

Char. Oh, I'll answer for the scholar, if you'll undertake the soldier. Mr. Sandford has engaged half a dozen of the *savoir vivre*; all in high spirits at the idea of tricking old Leather-purse——and they have sworn to exhaust wit and invention, to turn our Solon out of their hands a finished coxcomb.

Miss D. Blessing on their labours! My Granger is gone to study his rival; and will make, I hope, a tolerable copy. Now follow Gradus, my dear Charlotte, and take care they give him just champaign enough to raise him to the point, without turning over it.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—An Apartment.

DOILEY *asleep; a Table before him, with bottles, &c.*

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Sir! Sir! [*Jogging him.*] Sir! What a pise! sure my master has drained the bottles, he sleeps so sound——Oh, no—[*Pours out a glass.*]—Here's t'ye, old gentleman! can't think why they send me to wake thee—am sure the house is always quietest when you're a snoring. [*Drinks, then awakens him.*

Doil. Hey!—how! what! Is Mr. Gradus come?

Serv. No, Sir——but Mr. Sandford's above stairs, and a mortal fine gentleman.

Doil. Fine gentleman!—ay—some rake, I suppose, that wants to sell an annuity.—I wonder where Gradus is——past seven.

[*Looking at his watch.*

Serv. His friends keep the gentleman over a bottle, mayhap, Sir, longer than he thought for.

Doil. He over a bottle!—more liker he's over some crabbed book; or watching what the moon's about, through a microscope. Come, move the things; and empty them two bottoms into one bottle, and cork it up close——d'ye hear. I wish Gradus was come.—Well, if I succeed in this one point, the devil may run away with the rest. Let the world go to loggerheads; grass grow upon 'Change; land-tax mount up; little Doiley is snug. Doiley, with a hundred thousand in annuities, and a son-in-law as wise as a chancellor, may bid defiance to wind and weather.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.—A Drawing Room.

Enter GRADUS, *led by* CHARLOTTE, *and followed by* MR. SANDFORD.

Char. Well, I protest this is an improvement!—Why, what with satins and tassels, and spangles and foils, you look as fine as a chemist's shop by candle light.

Grad. Madam, do you approve——

Char. Oh, amazingly——I'll run and send Miss Doiley to admire you.

Grad. [*Looking in a glass.*] Oh, if our proctor could now behold me! he would never believe that figure to be Jeremy Gradus.

Sand. Very true, and I give ye joy. No one would conceive you'd ever been within gun-shot of a college.

Grad. What must I do with this?

Sand. Your *chapeau bras*—wear it thus. These hats are for the arm only.

Grad. A hat for the arm! what a subversion of ideas! Oh, Mr. Sandford—if the sumptuary laws of Lycurgus——

Sand. Damn it! will you never leave off your college cant? I tell you once more—and, by Jupiter, if you don't attend to me, I'll give you up; I say, you must forget that such fellows ever existed—that there ever was a language but English—a classic but Ovid, or a volume but his Art of Love.

Grad. I will endeavour to form myself from your instructions; but tarry with me, I entreat you—if you should leave me——

Sand. I wont leave you. Here's your mistress.—Now, Gradus, stand to your arms.

Grad. I'll do my best; but I could wish the purse-keeper was Miss Charlottle.

Enter MISS DOILEY.

Sand. Hush! Your devoted: allow me, Madam, to introduce a gentleman to you, in whose affairs I am particularly interested——Mr. Gradus.

Miss D. Mr. Gradus! Is it possible?

Grad. Be not astonished, oh lovely maiden, at my sudden change! Beauty is a talisman which works true miracles, and, without a fable, transforms mankind.

Miss D. Your transformation, I fear, is too sudden to be lasting——

Grad. Transformation! Resplendent Virgo! brightest constellation of the starry zone! I am but now created. Your charms, like the Promethean fire, have warmed the clod to life and rapt me to a new existence.

Miss D. But may I be sure you'll never take up your old rust again?

Grad. Never. Sooner shall Taurus with the Pisces join, Copernicus to Ptolemy resign the spheres, than I be what I was.

Miss D. I shall burst. [*Aside.*

Sand. Well, you've hit it off tolerably, for a *coup d'essai*.—But pr'ythee, Gradus, can't you talk in a style a little less fustian? You remember how those fine fellows conversed you saw at dinner; no sentences, no cramp words——all was ease and impudence.

Grad. Yes, I remember. Now the shell is burst, I shall soon be fledged.

DOILEY *entering, starts back.*

Doil. Why, who the dickens have we here?

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Sand. So, there's the old genius!

Miss D. But I am convinced now——I am convinced now this is all put on—in your heart you are still Mr. Gradus.

Grad. Yes, Madam, still Gradus: but not that stiff scholastic fool you saw this morning. No, no, I've learned that the acquisitions of which your father is so ridiculously fond, are useless lumber; that a man who knows more than his neighbours, is in danger of being shut out of society; or, at best, of being invited at dinner once in a twelvemonth, to be exhibited like an antique bronze, or a porridge-pot from Herculaneum.

Doil. Zounds! 'tis he! I'm all over in a cold sweat. [*Behind.*

Miss D. And don't you think learning the greatest blessing in the world?

Grad. Not I, truly, Madam——Learning! a vile *bore!*

Doil. Do I stand upon my head or my heels?

Grad. I shall leave all those fopperies to the gray-beards at college. Let 'em chop logic, or make English hashes out of stale Hebrew, till they starve, for me.

Sand. This is your resolution?

Grad. Fixed as Ixion on his wheel. I have no study now but the *ton.*

Doil. Indeed!

Grad. You shall confess, my friend, in spite of prejudice, that 'tis possible for a man of letters to become a man of the world. You shall see that he can dress, grow an adept in the science of taste, ogle at the opera, be vociferous at the playhouse, suffer himself to be pigeoned with an easy air at Boodle's, and lose his health for the benefit of his reputation in King's Place.

Miss D. Bless me! one would suppose you had been familiar in the *bon ton* all your life; —you have all the requisites to make a figure in it, by heart.

Grad. The mere force of beauty, Madam—I wished to become worthy of you, and that wish has worked a miracle.

Doil. A miracle with a vengeance! Jacquet Droz'-wood and wire-work was nothing to it.

Miss D. How different from what you was this morning!

Grad. Oh, mention it not.—This morning—may it be blotted from time's ledger, and never thought on more! I abhor my former self, Madam, more than you can: witness now the recantation of my errors.—Learning, with all its tribe of solemn fopperies, I abjure—abjure for ever.

Doil. You do?

Grad. The study of what is vulgarly called philosophy, may suit a monk: but it is as unbecoming a gentleman, as loaded dice or a brass-hilted sword.

Doil. Larning unbecoming a gentleman!—Very well!

Grad. Hebrew I leave to the Jew rabbies, Greek to the bench of bishops, Latin to the apothecaries, and astronomy to almanac makers.

Doil. Better and better.

Grad. The mathematics—mixed, pure, speculative, and practical, with their whole circle of sciences, I consign in a lump to old men who want blood, and to young ones who want bread. And now you've heard my whole abjuration. [DOILEY, *rushing forward.*

Doil. Yes; and I have heard too—I have heard. Oh, that I should ever have been such a dolt, as to take thee for a man of larning!

Grad. Mr. Doiley! [*Confounded.*

Doil. What! don't be dashed, man; go on with your abjurations, do. Yes, you'll make a shine in the tone?—Oh, that ever I should have been such a nincompoop!

Sand. My dear Mr. Doiley, do not be in a heat. How can a man of your discernment——Now look at Gradus—I'm sure he's a much prettier fellow than he was——his figure and his manner quite different things.

Doil. Yes, yes, I can see that—I can see that——Why, he has turned little Æsop upside down; he's the lion in the skin of an ass. [*Walking about.*

Grad. I must retrieve myself in his opinion. The skin, Mr. Doiley, may be put off; and be assured that the mind which has once felt the sacred energies of wisdom, though it may assume, for a moment——

Miss D. So, so! [*Angrily.*

Sand. [*Apart.*] Hark ye, Sir! that wont do. By Heaven, if you play retrograde, I'll forsake you on the spot. You are ruined with your mistress in a moment.

Grad. Dear Madam! believe me, that as for——What can I say?—How assimilate myself to two such opposite tastes? I stand reeling here between two characters, like a substantive between two adjectives.

Doil. You! you for to turn fop and maccaroni! Why, 'twould be as natural for a Jew rabbin to turn parson. An elephant in pinners——a bishop with a rattle and bells, couldn't be more posterous.

Sand. Nay, now, my dear Mr. Doiley——

Doil. Dear me, no dears. Why, if I wanted a maccaroni, I might have had choice; every alley from Hyde Park to Shadwell Dock swarms with 'em—genuine; and d'ye think I'll have an amphiberous thing——half and half, like the sea-calf at Sir Ashton's?

Sand. Oh, if that's all, a hundred to ten Gradus will soon be as complete a character as if he had never learned his alpha beta: or known more of the classics than their names.

Doil. Oh, I warrant him. Now, what do ye think of the Scratchi, the Horsi, and the rest of 'em? ay?

Grad. Oh, a mere *bore!* a parcel of brawny, untaught fellows, who knew no more of life than they did of Chinese. If they'd stood candidates for rank in a college of taste, they'd have been returned *ignorantur*——Would they not, Madam?

Miss D. Oh, certainly.—I could kiss the fellow, he has entered into my plot with such spirit. [*Exit.*

Doil. Why, you've been in wonderful haste to get rid of the igranter part—but as it happened, that was the only part I cared for; so now you may carry your hogs to another market; they wont do for me.

Grad. My hogs!

Doil. Ay, your boars—your improvements—your fashionable airs—your——in short, you are not the man I took you for, so you may trot back to college again; go, mister, and teach 'em the tone, do. Lord, how they'll stare! Jeremy Gradus, or the monkey returned from travel!

Sand. Upon my honour, you are too severe. Leave us, man——leave us——I'll settle your affair, I warrant. [*To* GRADUS.

Grad. Not so easily, I fear, he sticks to his

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point, like a rusty weather-cock—all my dependance is on the lady.

Sand. You'll allow Gradus to speak to Miss Doiley?

Doil. Oh, ay, to be sure—the more he speaks the less she'll like him. Here, show Mr. Gradus the dressing-room. [*Exit* GRADUS.] Give her another dose; surfeit her by all means.——Why, sure, Mr Sandford, you had no hand in transmogrifying the——

Sand. Yes, faith, I had. I couldn't endure the idea of seeing your charming daughter tied to a collection of Greek apothegms and Latin quotations; so I endeavoured to English him.

Doil. English him! I take it shocking ill of you Mr. Sandford—that I must tell you.——Here are all my hopes gone, like a whiff of tobacco!

Sand. Pho! my dear Mr. Doiley, this attachment of yours to scholarship is a mere whim—

Doil. Whim! well, suppose it is, I will have my whim. Worked hard forty years, and saved about twice as many thousand pounds; and if so much labour and so much money wont entitle a man to whim, I don't know what the devil should.

Sand. Nor I either, I'm sure.

Doil. To tell you a bit of a secret—lack of larning has been my great detriment. If I'd been a scholar, there's no knowing what I mought have got——my plumb might have been two——my——

Sand. Why, doubtless, a little classical knowledge might have been useful in driving your bargains for Russia tallow and whale blubber.

Doil. Ay, to be sure! And I do verily believe it hindered me from being Lord Mayor—only think of that——Lord Mayor of London!

Sand. How so?

Doil. Why, I tended the common council and all the parish meetings for fifteen years, without daring for to make one arangue; at last a westry was called about chusing of a turncock. So now, thinks I, I'll show 'em what I'm good for.—Our alderman was in the purples—so, thinks I, if he tips off, why not I as well as another;—So I'll make a speech about patrots, and then ax for their votes.

Sand. Very judicious!

Doil. If you'll believe me, I got up three times—Silence! says Mr. Crier; and my tongue grew so dry with fright, that I couldn't wag it; so I was forced to squat down again, 'midst horse-laughs; and they nick-named me Dummy, through the whole ward.

Sand. Wicked rogues! Well, I ask your pardon—I had no idea of these important reasons. Yet, how men differ! Now the family of Sir Wilford Granger are quite distressed by the obstinate attachment to the sciences, of that fine young fellow I told you of this morning.

Doil. Ay! What's he Sir William Granger's son? Knew his father very well:—kept a fine study of horses, and lost many thousands by it; lent him money many a time—good man—always punctual.

Sand. Ay, Sir, but this youth disappointed all his hopes. Mighty pleasant, to see a young fellow, formed to possess life in all its points and bewitching varieties, shrink from the world, and bury himself amidst obsolete books, systems, and schisms, whilst pleasure woos him to her soft embrace, and joys solicit him in vain! Oh, it gave his father great trouble.

Doil. Great trouble! Dear me, dear me! I always thought Sir Wilford had been a wiser man.—Why, I would have given the world for such a son.

Sand. He swallows it rarely! [*Aside.*] Oh, he piques himself on such trifles as reading the Greek and Latin authors in their own tongues, and mastering all the quibbles of our English philosophers——

Doil. English philosophers! I wouldn't give a farthing for them.

Sand. Why, sure you have heard of a Bacon, a Locke, a Newton—

Doil. Newton! oh, ay—I have heard of Sir Isaac—every body has heard of Sir Isaac—great man—master of the Mint.

Sand. Oh, Sir! this youth has found a dozen mistakes in his theories, and proved him wrong in one or two of his calculations. In short, he is advised to give the world a system of his own, in which, for aught I know, he'll prove the earth to be concave instead of spherical, and the moon to be no bigger than a punch-bowl.

Doil. [*Aside.*] He's the man—he's the man! Look'e, Mr Sandford, you've given a description of this young fellow, that's set my blood in a ferment. Do you—now, my dear friend, do you think that you could prevail upon him to marry my daughter?

Sand. Why, I don't know—neither beauty nor gold has charms for him. Knowledge—knowledge is his mistress.

Doil. Ay! I'm sorry for that—and yet I'm glad of it too. Now, see what ye can do with him—see what ye can do with him!

Sand. Well, well, I'll try. He promised to call on me here this evening, in his way to the Museum. I don't know whether he isn't below now.

Doil. Below now! Ifackins, that's lucky—hang me if it isn't! Do, go and—and speak to him a bit—and bring him up—bring him up. Tell him, if he'll marry Elizabeth, I'll give him, that is, I'll leave him every farthing I have in the world.

Sand. Well, since you are so very earnest, I'll see what I can do. [*Exit.*

Doil. Thank'e, thank'e! I'cod! I'll buy him twice as many books as a college library, but what I'll bribe him—that I will. What the dickens can Elizabeth be about with that thing there, that Gradus! He a man of larning! Hang me, if I don't believe his head's as hollow as my cane. Shure, she can't have taken a fancy to the smattering monkey! Ho, there they are—here he comes! Why, there's Greek and algebra in his face.

Enter SANDFORD *and* GRANGER, *dressed in black.*

Mr. Granger, your very humble servant, Sir,—I'm very glad to see you, Sir.

Grang. I thank you, Sir. [*Very solemnly.*

Doil. I knew your father, Sir, as well as a beggar knows his dish. Mayhap, Mr. Sandford told you that I wanted for to bring you and my daughter acquainted—I'll go and call her in.

Grang. 'Tis unnecessary.

Doil. He seems a mighty silent man. [*Apart.*

Sand. Studying—studying. Ten to one he's forming a discourse in Arabic, or revolving one of Euclid's problems.

Doil. Couldn't you set him a talking a bit! I long for to hear him talk.

Sand. Come, man! forget the old sages a moment. Can't the idea of Miss Doiley give a fillip to your imagination?

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Grang. Miss Doiley, I'm informed, is as lovely as a woman can be. But what is woman?—Only one of Nature's agreeable blunders.

Doil. Hum! That smacks of something! [*Aside.*]—Why, as to that, Mr. Granger, a woman with no portion but her whims, might be but a kind of a Jew's bargain; but when fifty thousand is popped into the scale, she must be bad indeed, if her husband does not find her a pen'worth.

Grang. With men of the world, Mr. Doiley, fifty thousand pounds might have their weight; but in the balance of philosophy, gold is light as dephlogisticated air.

Doil. That's deep——I can make nothing of it: that must be deep. [*Aside.*] Mr. Granger! the great account I have had of your larning, and what not, has made me willing for to be akin to you.

Grang. Mr. Sandford suggested to me your design, Sir; and as you have so nobly proposed your daughter as the prize of learning, I have an ambition to be related to you.

Doil. [*Aside.*] But I'll see a bit farther into him, though, first. Now pray, Mr. Granger! pray now—a—I say [*To* SAND.] Ax him some deep question, that he may show himself a bit.

Sand. What the devil shall I say? A deep question you would have it? Let me see!—Oh, Granger, is it your opinion that the ancient antipodes walked erect, or crawled on all fours?

Grang. A thinking man always doubts——but the best informations concur, that they were quadrupedes during two revolutions of the sun, and bipedes ever after.

Doil. Quadpedes! Bipedes! What a fine man he is. [*Aside.*

Sand. A surprising transformation!

Grang. Not more surprising than the transformation of an eruca to a chrysalis, a chrysalis to a nymph, and a nymph to a butterfly.

Doil. There again! I see it will do—I see it will do: ay, that I will——hang me if I dont. [*Aside.* *Exit, chuckling and laughing.*

Grang. What's he gone off for, so abruptly?

Sand. For his daughter I hope. Give ye joy, my dear fellow! the nymph, the eruca, and the chrysalis, have won the day.

Grang. How shall I bound my happiness! My dear Sandford, that was the luckiest question, about the antipodes.

Sand. Yes, pretty successful. Have you been at your studies?

Grang. Oh, I've been in the dictionary this half hour; and have picked up cramp words enough to puzzle and delight the old gentleman the remainder of his life.

Sand. Here he is, faith——

Grang. And Elizabeth with him—I hear her dear footsteps! O how shall I!——

Doil. [*Without.*] Come along, I say—what a plague are you so modest for? Come in here, [*Pulls in* GRADUS *by the arm.*] Here, I've brought him—one of your own kidney—ha! ha! ha! Now I'll lay you a gallon you can't guess what I've brought him for, I've brought him—ha! ha! ha! for to pit him against you [*To* GRANGER.] to see which of you two is the most larned—ha! ha!

Grang. Ten thousand devils, plagues, and furies!

Sand. Here's a blow up!

Doil. Why, for all he looks so like a nincompoop in this pye-picked jacket, he's got his noddle full of Greek and algebra, and them things. Why, Gradus, don't stand aloof, man—this is a brother scholar, I tell ye.

Grad. A scholar! all who have earned that distinction are my brethren. *Carissime frater, gaudeo te videre.*

Grang. Sir—you—I———most obedient. I wish thou wert in the bottom of the Red sea, and the largest folio in thy library about thy neck. [*Aside.*

Sand. For Heaven's sake, Mr. Doiley, what do you mean?

Doil. Mean! why I mean for to pit 'em, to be sure, and to give Elizabeth to the winner.—Touch him up, touch him up! [*To* GRANGER.] Show him what a fool he is.

Sand. Why, sure you wont set them together by the ears!

Doil. No, no; but I'm resolved for to set them together by the tongues. To cut the business short—Mr. Gradus! you are to be sure a great dab at larning, and what not; but I'll bet my daughter, and fifty thousand to boot, that Granger beats ye——and he that wins shall have her.

Grang. Heavens, what a stake! 'Tis sufficient to inspire a dolt with the tongues of Babel.

Sand. My dear friend, think of the indelicacy——

Doil. Fiddle-de-dee!—I tell you, I will have my whim—and so, Gradus, set off. By Jenkin! you'll find it a tough business to beat Granger—he's one of your great genus men—going to write a book about Sir Isaac, and the moon, and the devil knows what. [MISS DOIL. *and* CHAR. *enter at the back of the stage.*

Grad. If so, the more glorious will be my victory. Come, Sir! let us enter the lists, since it must be so, for this charming prize; [*Pointing to* MISS DOILEY.] choose your weapons,—Hebrew—Greek—Latin, or English. Name your subject; we will pursue it syllogistically, or socratically, as you please.

Grang. [*Aside.*] Curse your syllogisms and socratisms.

Doil. No, no, I'll not have no English—what a plague! every shoe-black jabbers English, so give us a touch of Greek to set off with—come, Gradus, you begin.

Miss Doil. Undone! undone!

Grad. If it is merely a recitation of Greek that you want, you shall be gratified. An epigram that occurs to me, will give you an idea of that sublime language!

Char. [*Aside.*] Oh, confound your sublime language!

Grad. *Panta gelos, kai pantu konis kai panta to meden*
Panta gar exalagon, esti ta ginomena.

Doil. *Panta tri pantry!* Why, that's all about the pantry. What, the old Grecians loved tit-bits, mayhap—but that's low! aye, Sandford?

Sand. Oh, cursed low! he might as well have talked about a pig-stye.

Doil. Come, Granger, now for it! Elizabeth and fifty thousand pounds!

Grang. Yes, Sir. I—I—am not much prepared: I could wish—I could wish—Sandford! [*Apart.*

Sand. Zounds! say something—any thing!

Char. [*Aside.*] Ah! it's all over. He could as easily furnish the ways and means, as a word in Greek.

Doil. Hoity, toity! What, at a stand! Why sure you can talk Greek as well as Gradus.

Grang. 'Tis a point I cannot decide, you

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must determine it. Now, impudence, embrace me with thy seven-fold shield! Zanthus, I remember, in describing such a night as this——

Grad. Zanthus! you surely err. Homer mentions but one being of that name, except a river, and he was a horse.

Grang. Sir, he was an orator—and such a one that, Homer records, the gods themselves inspired him.

Grad. True, Sir—but you wont deny——

Doil. Come, come! I sha'n't have no brow-beating—nobody offered for to contradict you—so begin [*To* GRANGER.] What said orator Zanthus?

Grang. Yon lucid orb, in æther pensile, irradiates th' expanse. Refulgent scintillations, in th' ambient void opake, emit humid splendor. Chrysalic spheroids th' horizon vivify—astifarious constellations, nocturnal sporades, in refrangerated radii, illume our orb terrene.

Miss. D. I breathe again. [*Aside.*

Doil. There! there; well spoke, Granger!—Now, Gradus, beat that!

Grad. I am enwrapt in astonishment! You are imposed on, Sir,—instead of classical language, you have heard a rant in English——

Doil. English! Zounds! d'ye take me for a fool? D'ye think I don't know my own mother-tongue!—'Twas no more like English, than I am like Whittington's cat.

Grad. It was every syllable English.

Doil. There's impudence!—There wasn't no word of it English—if you take that for English, devil take me if I believe there was a word of Greek in all your *try-pantrys*.

Grad. Oh! the torture of ignorance!

Doil. Ignorant!—Come, come, none of your tricks upon travellers. I know you mean all that as a skit upon my edication——But I'll have you to know, Sir, that I'll read the hardest chapter of Nehemiah with you for your ears.

Grad. I repeat that you are imposed on. Mr. Sandford I appeal to you.

Grang. And I appeal——

Sand. Nay, gentlemen, Mr. Doiley is your judge in all disputes concerning the vulgar tongue.

Doil. Ay, to be sure I am. Who cares for your peals? I peal too; and I tell you, I wont be imposed on. Here, Elizabeth, I have got ye a husband, at last, to my heart's content.

Miss D. Him, Sir! You presented that gentleman to me this morning, and I have found such a fund of merit in him—

Doil. In he! what in that beau-bookworm! that argufies me down, I don't know English? Don't go for to provoke me—bid that Mr. Granger welcome to my house—he'll soon be master on't.

Miss D. Sir, in obedience to the commands of my father—— [*Significantly.*

Doil. Sha'n't say obedience, say something to him of yourself—he's a man after my own heart.

Miss D. Then Sir, without reserve, I acknowledge your choice of Mr. Granger is perfectly agreeable to mine.

Doil. That's my dear Bet! [*Kissing her.*]—We'll have the wedding directly. There! d'ye understand that, Mr. Tri-pantry?——Is that English?

Grad. Yes, so plain, that it has exsuscitated my understanding—I perceive I have been duped.

Doil. Ay, well! I had rather you should be the dupe than me.

Grad. Well, Sir, I have no inclination to contest—if the lovely Charlotte will perform her promise.

Char. Agreed! provided that, in your character of husband, you will be as singular and old fashioned, as the wig you wore this morning.

Doil. What, cousin! have you taken a fancy to the scholar? Egad! you're a cute girl, and mayhap may be able to make something of him; and I don't care if I throw in a few hundreds, that you mayn't repent your bargain. Well, now I've settled this affair exactly to my mind, I am the happiest man in the world. And, d'ye hear, Gradus? I don't love for to bear malice. If you'll trot back to college, and larn the difference between Greek and English, why you may stand a chance to be tutor—when they've made me a grandfather.

Grad. I have had enough of languages. You see I have just engaged a tutor to teach me to read the world; and if I play my part there as well as I did at Brazen-Nose, your indulgence will grant me applause.

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PIZARRO:

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

FROM THE GERMAN OF KOTZEBUE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ATAHIBA, King of Quito.
ROLLA, ALONZO, } Commanders of his Army.
PIZARRO, Leader of the Spaniards.
ALMAGRO, GONZALO, DAVILLA, GOMEZ, } Pizarro's Associates.
VALVERDE, Pizarro's Secretary.
LAS-CASAS, a Spanish Ecclesiastic.
AN OLD BLIND MAN.
OROZEMBO, an old Cacique.
A BOY.

CORA, Alonzo's Wife.
ELVIRA, Pizarro's Mistress.

Soldiers, Priests, Virgins, Peruvians, Attendants, &c.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—Pavilion near Pizarro's Tent—ELVIRA *discovered*—VALVERDE *enters, and attempts to kiss her hand;* ELVIRA *rises.*

Elv. Insolent! Whence is thy privilege to interrupt the few moments of repose my harassed mind can snatch amid the tumults of this noisy camp? Shall I inform thy master, Pizarro, of this presumptuous treachery?

Val. I am his servant, it is true—trusted by him—and I know him well; and therefore 'tis I ask, by what magic could Pizarro gain thy heart, by what fatality still holds he thy affection?

Elv. Hold! thou trusty Secretary!

Val. Ignobly born! in mind and manners rude, ferocious, and unpolished, though cool and crafty if occasion need—in youth audacious—ill his first manhood—a licensed pirate—treating men as brutes, the world as booty; yet now the Spanish hero is he styled—the first of Spanish conquerors! and for a warrior so accomplished, 'tis fit Elvira should leave her noble family, her fame, her home, to share the dangers, humours, and the crimes of such a lover as Pizarro!

Elv. What! Valverde moralizing! But grant I am in error, what is thy incentive? Passion, infatuation, call it what thou wilt; but what attaches thee to this despised unworthy leader? Base lucre is thy object, mean fraud thy means. Could you gain me, thou only hopest to win a higher interest in Pizarro—I know you.

Val. On my soul thou wrong'st me; what else my faults, I have none towards thee: but indulge the scorn and levity of thy nature; do it while yet the time permits; the gloomy hour, I fear, too soon approaches.

Elv. Valverde, a prophet too!

Val. Hear me, Elvira—Shame from his late defeat, and burning wishes for revenge, again have brought Pizarro to Peru; but trust me, he over-rates his strength, nor measures well the foe. Encamped in a strange country, where terror cannot force, nor corruption buy a single friend, what have we to hope? The army murmuring at increasing hardships, while Pizarro decorates with gaudy spoil the gay pavilion of his luxury, each day diminishes our force.

Elv. But are you not the heirs of those that fall?

Val. Are gain and plunder, then, our only purpose? Is this Elvira's heroism?

Elv. No, so save me Heaven! I abhor the motive, means, and end of your pursuits; but I will trust none of you:—in your whole army there is not one of you that has a heart, or speaks ingenuously—aged Las-Casas, and he alone, excepted.

Val. He! an enthusiast in the opposite and worse extreme!

Elv. Oh! had I earlier known that virtuous man, how different might my lot have been!

Val. I will grant Pizarro could not then so easily have duped you; forgive me, but at that event I still must wonder.

Elv. Hear me, Valverde. When first my virgin fancy waked to love, Pizarro was my country's idol. 'Tis known that when he left Panama in a slight vessel, his force was not a hundred men. Arrived in the island of Gallo, with his sword he drew a line upon the sands, and said,—Pass those who fear to die

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or conquer with their leader. Thirteen alone remained, and at the head of these the warrior stood his ground. Even at the moment when my ears first caught this tale, my heart exclaimed, Pizarro is its lord! What since I have perceived, or thought, or felt! you must have more worth to win the knowledge of.

Val. I press no further; still assured, that while Alonzo de Molina our general's former friend and pupil, leads the enemy, Pizarro never more will be a conqueror.

[*Trumpets without.*

Elv. Silence! I hear him coming; look not perplexed.——How mystery and fraud confound the countenance! Quick, put on an honest face, if thou canst.

Piz. [*Speaking without.*] Chain and secure him; I will examine him myself.

[PIZARRO *enters.*

Why dost thou smile Elvira?

Elv. To laugh or weep without a reason, is one of the few privileges poor women have.

Piz. Elvira, I will know the cause, I am resolved!

Elv. I am glad of that, because I love resolution, and am resolved not to tell thee. Now my resolution, I take it, is the better of the two, because it depends upon myself, and thine does not.

Piz. Psha! trifler!

Val. Elvira was laughing at my apprehensions that——

Piz. Apprehensions!

Val. Yes——that Alonzo's skill and genius should so have disciplined and informed the enemy, as to——

Piz. Alonzo! the traitor! How I once loved that man! His noble mother entrusted him, a boy, to my protection. At my table did he feast—in my tent did he repose. I had marked his early genius, and the valorous spirit that grew with it. Often I had talked to him of our first adventures—what storms we struggled with—what perils we surmounted! When landed with a slender host upon an unknown land—then, when I told how famine and fatigue, discord and toil, day by day, did thin our ranks; amid close-pressing enemies, how still undaunted I endured and dared—maintained my purpose and my power, in despite of growling mutiny or bold revolt, till with my faithful few remaining, I became at last victorious!—When, I say, of these things I spoke, the youth Alonzo, with tears of wonder and delight, would throw him on my neck and swear, his soul's ambition owned no other leader.

Val. What could subdue attachment so begun?

Piz. Las-Casas—He it was, with fascinating craft and canting precepts of humanity, raised in Alonzo's mind a new enthusiasm, which forced him, as the stripling termed it, to forego his country's claims for those of human nature.

Val. Yes, the traitor left thee, joined the Peruvians, and became thy enemy, and Spain's.

Piz. But first with weariless remonstrance he sued to win me from my purpose, and untwine the sword from my determined grasp. Much he spoke of right, of justice, and humanity, calling the Peruvians our innocent and unoffending brethren.

Val. They! obdurate heathens!—They our brethren!

Piz. But when he found, that the soft folly of the pleading tears he dropped upon my bosom, fell on marble, he flew and joined the foe: then, profiting by the lessons he had gained in wronged Pizarro's school, the youth so disciplined and led his new allies, that soon he forced me——Ha! I burn with shame and fury while I own it!——in base retreat and foul discomfiture to quit the shore.

Val. But the hour of revenge is come.

Piz. It is; I have returned—my force is strengthened, and the audacious Boy shall soon know that Pizarro lives, and has——a grateful recollection of the thanks he owes him.

Val. 'Tis doubted whether still Alonzo lives.

Piz. 'Tis certain that he does; one of his armour-bearers is just made prisoner: twelve thousand is their force, as he reports, led by Alonzo and Peruvian Rolla. This day they make a solemn sacrifice on their ungodly altars. We must profit by their security and attack them unprepared——the sacrificers shall become the victims.

Elv. Wretched innocents! and their own blood shall bedew their altars!

Piz. Right! [*Trumpets without.*] Elvira, retire!

Elv. Why should I retire?

Piz. Because men are to meet here, and on manly business.

Elv. O men! men! ungrateful and perverse. O woman! still affectionate though wronged! The beings to whose eyes you turn for animation, hope, and rapture, through the days of mirth and revelry; and on whose bosoms in the hour of sore calamity, you seek for rest and consolation, them, when the pompous follies of your mean ambition are the question, you treat as playthings or as slaves!——I shall not retire.

Piz. Remain, then——and if thou canst, be silent.

Elv. They only babble who practise not reflection. I shall think—and thought is silence.

Piz. Ha!—there's somewhat in her manner lately——

Enter LAS-CASAS, ALMAGRO, GONZALO, DAVILLA, OFFICERS, *and* SOLDIERS.

Las-C. Pizarro, we attend thy summons.

Piz. Welcome, venerable father—my friends, most welcome. Friends and fellow-soldiers, at length the hour has arrived, which to Pizarro's hopes presents the full reward of our undaunted enterprize, and long-enduring toils. Confident in security, this day the foe devotes to solemn sacrifice: if with bold surprise we strike on their solemnity—trust to your leader's word—we shall not fail.

Alm. Too long inactive have we been mouldering on the coast—our stores exhausted, and our soldiers murmuring—Battle! Battle! then death to the armed, and chains for the defenceless.

Dav. Death to the whole Peruvian race!

Las-C. Merciful Heaven!

Alm. Yes, General, the attack and instantly! Then shall Alonzo, basking at his ease, soon cease to scoff our suffering, and scorn our force.

Las-C. Alonzo!—scorn and presumption are not in his nature.

Alm. 'Tis fit Las-Casas should defend his pupil.

Piz. Speak not of the traitor—or hear his

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name but as the bloody summons to assault and vengeance. It appears we are agreed.

Alm. and Dav. We are.

Gon. All!—Battle! Battle!

Las-C. Is then the dreadful measure of your cruelty not yet complete?—Battle!—gracious Heaven! Against whom?—Against a king, in whose mild bosom your atrocious injuries even yet have not excited hate! but who, insulted or victorious still sues for peace. Against a people, who never wronged the living being their Creator formed: a people, who, children of innocence! received you as cherished guests, with eager hospitality and confiding kindness. Generously and freely did they share with you their comforts, their treasures, and their homes: you repaid them by fraud, oppression, and dishonour. These eyes have witnessed all I speak—as gods you were received; as fiends have you acted.

Piz. Las-Casas!

Las-C. Pizarro, hear me!—Hear me chieftains!—And thou, All-powerful! whose thunders can shiver into sand the adamantine rock—whose lightnings can pierce to the core of the rived and quaking earth—Oh! let thy power give effect to thy servant's words, as thy spirit gives courage to his will! Do not, I implore you, chieftains—countrymen—Do not, I implore you, renew the foul barbarities which your insatiate avarice has inflicted on this wretched, unoffending race!—But hush, my sighs—fall not, drops of useless sorrow!—heart-breaking anguish, choke not my utterance—All I entreat is, send me once more to those you call your enemies—Oh! let me be the messenger of penitence from you, I shall return with blessings and with peace from them.—Elvira, you weep!—Alas! and does this dreadful crisis move no heart but thine.

Alm. Because there are no women here but she and thou.

Piz. Close this idle war of words: time flies, and our opportunity will be lost. Chieftains, are ye for instant battle?

Alm. We are.

Las-C. Oh, men of blood!—[*Kneels.*] God! thou hast anointed me thy servant—not to curse, but to bless my countrymen: yet now my blessing on their force were blasphemy against thy goodness.—[*Rises.*] No! I curse your purpose, homicides! I curse the bond of blood by which you are united. May fell division, infamy and rout, defeat your projects, and rebuke your hopes! On you and on your children be the peril of the innocent blood which shall be shed this day! I leave you, and for ever! No longer shall these aged eyes be seared by the horrors they have witnessed. In caves, in forests, will I hide myself; with tigers and with savage beasts will I commune: and when at length we meet again before the blessed tribunal of that Deity, whose mild doctrines and whose mercies ye have this day renounced, then shall you feel the agony and grief of soul which tear the bosom of your accuser now! [*Going.*

Elv. Oh! take me with thee.

Las-C. Stay! lost, abused lady! I alone am useless here. Perhaps thy loveliness may persuade to pity, where reason and religion plead in vain. Oh! save thy innocent fellow-creatures if thou canst: then shall thy frailty be redeemed, and thou wilt share the mercy thou bestowest. [*Exit*

Piz. How, Elvira! wouldst thou leave me?

Elv. I am bewildered, grown terrified!—Your inhumanity—and that good Las-Casas! oh! he appeared to me just now something more than heavenly! and you! ye all looked worse than earthly.

Piz. Compassion sometimes becomes a beauty.

Elv. Humanity always becomes a conqueror.

Alm. Well! Heaven be praised we are rid of the old moralist.

Gon. I hope he'll join his preaching pupil, Alonzo.

Piz. Now to prepare our muster and our march. At mid-day is the hour of the sacrifice. Consulting with our guides, the route of your divisions shall be given to each commander. If we surprise, we conquer; and if we conquer, the gates of Quito will be open to us.

Alm. And Pizarro then be monarch of Peru.

Piz. Not so fast—ambition for a time must take counsel from discretion. Ataliba still must hold the shadow of a sceptre in his hand—Pizarro still appear dependant upon Spain: while the pledge of future peace, his daughter's hand, secures the proud succession to the crown I seek.

Alm. This is best. In Pizarro's plans observe the statesman's wisdom guides the warrior's valour.

Val. [*To* ELVIRA.] You mark, Elvira?

Elv. O yes—this is best—this is excellent.

Piz. You seem offended. Elvira still retains my heart. Think—a sceptre waves me on.

Elv. Offended?—No!—Thou know'st thy glory is my idol; and this will be most glorious, most just and honourable.

Piz. What mean you?

Elv. Oh! nothing—mere woman's prattle—a jealous whim, perhaps: but let it not impede the royal hero's course.—[*Trumpets without.*] The call of arms invites you.—Away! away! you, his brave, his worthy fellow-warriors.

Piz. And go you not with me?

Elv. Undoubtedly! I needs must be the first to hail the future monarch of Peru.

Enter GOMEZ.

Alm. How, Gomez! what bring'st thou?

Gom. On yonder hill among the palm-trees we have surprised an old cacique; escape by flight he could not, and we seized him and his attendant unresisting: yet his lips breathed nought but bitterness and scorn.

Piz. Drag him before us.

[GOMEZ *leaves the tent, and returns conducting* OROZEMBO *and Attendant, in chains.*

What art thou stranger?

Oro. First tell me which among you is the captain of this band of robbers.

Piz. Ha!

Alm. Madman!—Tear out his tongue, or else——

Oro. Thou'lt hear some truth.

DAV. [*Showing his poniard.*] Shall I not plunge this into his heart?

ORO. [*To* PIZ.] Does your army boast many such heroes as this?

Piz. Audacious!—This insolence has sealed thy doom. Die thou shalt, gray-headed ruffian. But first confess what thou know-est.

Oro. I know that which thou hast just assured me of—that I shall die.

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Piz. Less audacity, perhaps, might have preserved thy life.

Oro. My life is as a withered tree—it is not worth preserving.

Piz. Hear me, old man. Even now we march against the Peruvian army. We know there is a secret path that leads to your strong-hold among the rocks: guide us to that, and name thy reward. If wealth be thy wish——

Oro. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Piz. Dost thou despise my offer?

Oro. Thee and thy offer!—Wealth!—I have the wealth of two dear, gallant sons—I have stored in heaven the riches which repay good actions here—and still my chiefest treasure do I bear about me.

Piz. What is that? Inform me.

Oro. I will; for it never can be thine—the treasure of a pure unsullied conscience.

Piz. I believe there is no other Peruvian who dares speak as thou dost.

Oro. Would I could believe there is no other Spaniard who dares act as thou dost!

Gon. Obdurate Pagan!—How numerous is your army?

Oro. Count the leaves of yonder forest.

Alm. Which is the weakest part of your camp!

Oro. It has no weak part—on every side 'tis fortified by justice.

Piz. Where have you concealed your wives and your children?

Oro. In the hearts of their husbands and their fathers.

Piz. Know'st thou Alonzo?

Oro. Know him!—Alonzo!—Know him!—Our nation's benefactor!—The guardian angel of Peru!

Piz. By what has he merited that title?

Oro. By not resembling thee.

Alm. Who is this Rolla, joined with Alonzo in command?

Oro. I will answer that; for I love to hear and to repeat the hero's name. Rolla, the kinsman of the king, is the idol of our army; in war a tiger, chased by the hunter's spear; in peace more gentle than the unweaned lamb. Cora was once betrothed to him; but finding she preferred Alonzo, he resigned his claim, and, I fear, his peace, to friendship and to Cora's happiness; yet still he loves her with a pure and holy fire.

Piz. Romantic savage—I shall meet this Rolla soon.

Oro. Thou hadst better not! The terrors of his noble eye would strike thee dead.

Dav. Silence, or tremble!

Oro. Beardless robber! I never yet have trembled before God—why should I tremble before man?—Why before thee, thou less than man?

Dav. Another word, audacious heathen, and I strike!

Oro. Strike, Christian! Then boast among thy fellows—I too have murdered a Peruvian!

Dav. Hell and vengeance seize thee!

[*Stabs him.*

Piz. Hold!

Dav. Couldst thou longer have endured his insults?

Piz. And therefore should he die untortured?

Oro. True! Observe, young man—thy unthinking rashness has saved me from the rack; and thou thyself hast lost the opportunity of a useful lesson; thou mightest thyself have seen with what cruelty vengeance would have inflicted torments—and with what patience virtue would have borne them.

Elv. [*Supporting* OROZEMBO's *head upon her bosom.*] Oh! ye are monsters all. Look up, thou martyred innocent!—look up once more, and bless me, ere thou diest! God! how I pity thee!

Oro. Pity me!—Me! so near my happiness! Bless thee, lady! Spaniards—Heaven turn your hearts, and pardon you as I do.

[OROZEMBO *is borne off dying.*

Piz. Away!—Davilla! if thus rash a second time—

Dav. Forgive the hasty indignation which—

Piz. No more—unbind that trembling wretch let him depart; 'tis well he should report the mercy which we show to insolent defiance.—Hark!—our troops are moving.

Att. [*On passing* ELVIRA.] If through thy gentle means my master's poor remains might be preserved from insult——

Elv. I understand thee.

Att. His sons may yet thank thy charity, if not avenge their father's fate. [*Exit.*

Piz. What says the slave?

Elv. A parting word to thank you for your mercy.

Piz. Our guard and guides approach. [*Soldiers march through the tents.*] Follow me, friends—each shall have his post assigned, and ere Peruvia's god shall sink beneath the main, the Spanish banner, bathed in blood, shall float above the walls of vanquished Quito.

[*Exeunt.*

Manent ELVIRA *and* VALVERDE.

Val. Is it now presumption that my hopes gain strength with the increasing horrors which I see appal Elvira's soul?

Elv. I am mad with terror and remorse! Would I could fly these dreadful scenes!

Val. Might not Valverde's true attachment be thy refuge?

Elv. What wouldst thou do to save or to avenge me?

Val. I dare do all thy injuries may demand—a word—and he lies bleeding at your feet.

Elv. Perhaps we will speak again of this. Now leave me. [*Exit* VALVERDE.

Elv. [*Alone.*] No! not this revenge—no! not this instrument. Fie, Elvira! even for a moment to counsel with this unworthy traitor!—Can a wretch, false to a confiding master, be true to any pledge of love or honour?—Pizarro will abandon me—yes; me—who, for his sake, have sacrificed—Oh, God!—What have I not sacrificed for him; yet, curbing the avenging pride that swells this bosom, I still will further try him. Oh, men! ye who, wearied by the fond fidelity of virtuous love, seek in the wanton's flattery a new delight, oh, ye may insult and leave the hearts to which your faith was pledged, and, stifling self-reproach, may fear no other peril; because such hearts, howe'er you injure and desert them, have yet the proud retreat of an unspotted fame—of unreproaching conscience. But beware the desperate libertine, who forsakes the creature whom his arts have first deprived of all natural protection—of all self-consolation!—What has he left her?—Despair and vengeance!

[*Exit.*

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ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Bank.

CORA *playing with her* CHILD, *and* ALONZO *hanging over them with delight.*

Cora. Now confess, does he resemble thee, or not?

Al. Indeed he is liker thee—thy rosy softness, thy smiling gentleness.

Cora. But his auburn hair, the colour of his eyes, Alonzo.—O! my lord's image, and my heart's adored!

[*Pressing the* CHILD *to her bosom.*

Al. The little daring urchin robs me, I doubt, of some portion of thy love, my Cora. At least he shares caresses, which till his birth were only mine.

Cora. Oh no, Alonzo! a mother's love for her sweet babe is not a stealth from the dear father's store; it is a new delight that turns with quickened gratitude to him, the author of her augmented bliss.

Al. Could Cora think me serious?

Cora. I am sure he will speak soon: then will be the last of the three holidays allowed by Nature's sanction to the fond anxious mother's heart.

Al. What are those three?

Cora. The ecstacy of his birth I pass; that in part is selfish: but when first the white blossoms of his teeth appear, breaking the crimson buds that did incase them; that is a day of joy; next, when from his father's arms he runs without support, and clings, laughing and delighted, to his mother's knees; that is the mother's heart's next holiday: and sweeter still the third, whene'er his little stammering tongue shall utter the grateful sound of Father, Mother!—O! that is the dearest joy of all!

Al. Beloved Cora!

Cora. Oh! my Alonzo! daily, hourly, do I pour thanks to Heaven for the dear blessing I possess in him and thee.

Al. To Heaven and Rolla.

Cora. Yes, to Heaven and Rolla: and art thou not grateful to them too, Alonzo? art thou not happy?

Al. Can Cora ask that question?

Cora. Why then of late so restless on thy couch? Why to my waking, watching ear, so often does the stillness of the night betray thy struggling sighs?

Al. Must not I fight against my country, against my brethren?

Cora. Do they not seek our destruction? and are not all men brethren?

Al. Should they prove victorious?

Cora. I will fly, and meet thee in the mountains.

Al. Fly with thy infant, Cora?

Cora. What! think you a mother, when she runs from danger, can feel the weight of her child?

Al. Cora, my beloved, do you wish to set my heart at rest?

Cora. Oh, yes, yes, yes!

Al. Hasten then to the concealment in the mountains; where all our matrons and virgins, and our warriors' offspring, are allotted to await the issue of the war. Cora will not alone resist her husband's, her sisters', and her monarch's wish.

Cora. Alonzo, I cannot leave thee: Oh! how in every moment's absence would my fancy paint you, wounded, alone, abandoned! No, no, I cannot leave thee!

Al. Rolla will be with me.

Cora. Yes, while the battle rages, and where it rages most, brave Rolla will be found. He may revenge, but cannot save thee. To follow danger, he will leave even thee. But I have sworn never to forsake thee but with life. Dear, dear, Alonzo! canst thou wish that I should break my vow?

Al. Then be it so. Oh! excellence in all that's great and lovely, in courage, gentleness and truth; my pride, my content, my all! Can there on this earth be fools who seek for happiness, and pass by love in the pursuit?

Cora. Alonzo, I cannot thank thee—silence is the gratitude of true affection: who seeks to follow it by sound, will miss the track. [*Shouts without.*] Does the king approach?

Al. No, 'tis the general placing the guard that will surround the temple, during the sacrifice. 'Tis Rolla comes, the first and best of heroes.

Rol. [*Within.*] Then place them on the hill fronting the Spanish camp.

Enter ROLLA.

Cora. Rolla! my friend, my brother!

Al. Rolla! my friend, my benefactor! how can our lives repay the obligations which we owe thee?

Rol. Pass them in peace and bliss.—Let Rolla witness it, he is overpaid.

Cora. Look on this child—he is the life-blood of my heart; but if ever he love or revere thee less than his own father, his mother's hate fall on him!

Rol. Oh, no more!—What sacrifice have I made to merit gratitude? The object of my love was Cora's happiness.—I see her happy.—Is not my object gained; and am I not rewarded? Now, Cora, listen to a friend's advice. Thou must away; thou must seek the sacred caverns, the unprofaned recess, whither, after this day's sacrifice, our matrons, and e'en the Virgins of the Sun, retire.

Cora. Not secure with Alonzo and with thee, Rolla?

Rol. We have heard Pizarro's plan is to surprize us.—Thy presence, Cora, cannot aid, but may impede our efforts.

Cora. Impede!

Rol. Yes, yes. Thou know'st how tenderly we love thee; we, thy husband and thy friend. Art thou near us? our thoughts, our valour—vengeance will not be our own. No advantage will be pursued, that leads us from the spot where thou art placed; no succour will be given, but for thy protection. The faithful lover dares not be all himself amid the war, until he knows that the beloved of his soul is absent from the peril of the fight.

Al. Thanks to my friend! 'tis this I would have urged.

Cora. This timid excess of love, producing fear instead of valour, flatters, but does not convince me; the wife is incredulous.

Rol. And is the mother unbelieving too?

Cora. No more—Do with me as thou pleasest. My friend, my husband! place me where thou wilt.

Al. My adored! we thank you both. [*March without.*] Hark! the King approaches to the sacrifice. Thou, Rolla, spokest of rumours of surprise.—A servant of mine, I hear, is missing; whether surprised or treacherous, I know not.

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Rol. It matters not; we are every where prepared. Come, Cora, upon the altar 'mid the rocks thou'lt implore a blessing on our cause. The pious supplication of the trembling wife, and mother's heart, rises to the throne of mercy, the most resistless prayer of human homage. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—The Temple of the Sun.

A solemn March.—The Warriors and King enter on one side of the Temple.—ROLLA ALONZO, *and* CORA, *on the other.*

Ata. Welcome, Alonzo!—[*To* ROLLA.] Kinsman, thy hand.—[*To* CORA.] Blessed be the object of the happy mother's love.

Cora. May the sun bless the father of his people!

Ata. In the welfare of his children lives the happiness of their king. Friends, what is the temper of our soldiers?

Rol. Such as becomes the cause which they support; their cry is Victory or Death! our king! our country! and our God!

Ata. Thou, Rolla, in the hour of peril, hast been wont to animate the spirit of their leaders, ere we proceed to consecrate the banners which thy valour knows so well to guard.

Rol. Yet never was the hour of peril near, when to inspire them words were so little needed. My brave associates! partners of my toil, my feelings, and my fame!—can Rolla's words add vigour to the virtuous energies which inspire your hearts?—No! you have judged as I have, the foulness of the crafty plea by which these bold invaders would delude you.—Your generous spirit has compared as mine has, the motives, which, in a war like this, can animate their minds, and ours.—They, by a strange frenzy driven, fight for power, for plunder, and extended rule—We, for our country, our altars, and our homes.—They follow an adventurer whom they fear, and obey a power which they hate—We serve a monarch whom we love—a God whom we adore.—Whene'er they move in anger, desolation tracks their progress!—Where'er they pause in amity, affliction mourns their friendship.—They boast, they come but to improve our state, enlarge our thoughts, and free us from the yoke of error!—Yes—they will give enlightened freedom to our minds, who are themselves the slaves of passion, avarice, and pride.—They offer us their protection—yes, such protection as vultures give to lambs—covering and devouring them!—They call on us to barter all of good we have inherited and proved, for the desperate chance of something better which they promise.—Be our own plain answer this:—The throne we honour is the people's choice—the laws we reverence are our brave fathers' legacy—the faith we follow teaches us to live in bonds of charity with all mankind, and die with hope of bliss beyond the grave. Tell your invaders this, and tell them too, we seek no change; and, least of all, such change as they would bring us.

[*Loud shouts of the Soldiery.*

Ata. [*Embracing* ROLLA.] Now, holy friends, ever mindful of these sacred truths, begin the sacrifice.

CHORUS.—*Priests and Virgins.*

Oh Power supreme! in mercy smile
With favour on thy servants' toil!
Our hearts from guileful passions free,
Which here we render unto thee!
Thou Parent Light but deign to hear
The voices of our feeble choir;
And this our sacrifice of fear,
Consume with thine own hallow'd fire!
[*Fire from above lights upon the Altar.*
Give praise, give praise, the God has heard
Our God most awfully revered!
The altar his own flames enwreathed,
Then be the conquering sword unsheathed,
And victory set on Rolla's brow,
His foes to crush—to overthrow!

Ata. Our offering is accepted.—Now to arms, my friends, prepare for battle!

Enter ORANO.

Ora. The enemy!

Ata. How near?

Ora. From the hill's brow, even now as I o'erlooked their force, suddenly I perceived the whole in motion: with eager haste they march towards our deserted camp, as if apprised of this most solemn sacrifice.

Rol. They must be met before they reach it.

Ata. And you, my daughters, with your dear children, away to the appointed place of safety.

Cora. Oh, Alonzo! [*Embracing him.*

Al. We shall meet again.

Cora. Bless us once more, ere thou leave us.

Al. Heaven protect and bless thee, my beloved; and thee, my innocent!

Ata. Haste! haste!—each moment is precious!

Cora. Farewell, Alonzo! Remember thy life is mine.

Rol. Not one farewell to Rolla?

Cora. [*Giving him her hand.*] Farewell! the God of war be with thee: but bring me back Alonzo. [*Exit with the Child.*

Ata. [*Draws his sword.*] Now, my brethren, my sons, my friends, I know your valour.—Should ill success assail us, be despair the last feeling of your hearts.—If successful, let mercy be the first. Alonzo, to thee I give to defend the narrow passage of the mountains. On the right of the wood be Rolla's station. For me, straight forwards will I march to meet them, and fight until I see my people saved, or they behold their monarch fall. Be the word of battle—God! and our native land!

[*A March. Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—A Wood.

Enter ROLLA *and* ALONZO.

Rol. Here, my friend, we separate—soon, I trust, to meet again in triumph.

Al. Or perhaps we part to meet no more. Rolla, a moment's pause; we are yet before our army's strength; one earnest word at parting.

Rol. There is in language now no word but battle.

Al. Yes, one word more—Cora!

Rol. Cora! speak!

Al. The next hour brings us—

Rol. Death or victory!

Al. It may be victory to one—death to the other.

Rol. Or both may fall.

Al. If so, my wife and child I bequeath to the protection of heaven and my king. But should I only fall, Rolla, be thou my heir.

Rol. How?

Al. Be Cora thy wife—be thou a father to my child!

Rol. Rouse thee, Alonzo? Banish these timid fancies.

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Al. Rolla! I have tried in vain, and cannot fly from the foreboding which oppresses me: thou know'st it will not shake me in the fight: but give me the promise I exact.

Rol. If it be Cora's will—Yes—I promise—
[*Gives his hand.*

Al. Tell her it was my last wish! and bear to her and to my son, my last blessing.

Rol. I will.—Now then to our posts, and let our swords speak for us.
[*They draw their swords.*

Al. For the king and Cora!

Rol. For Cora and the king!
[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE IV.—A View of the Peruvian Camp.

Enter an OLD BLIND MAN *and a* BOY.

O. Man. Have none returned to the camp?

Boy. One messenger alone. From the temple they all marched to meet the foe.

O. Man. Hark! I hear the din of battle. O! had I still retained my sight, I might now have grasped a sword, and died a soldier's death! Are we quite alone?

Boy. Yes! I hope my father will be safe!

O. Man. He will do his duty. I am more anxious for thee, my child.

Boy. I can stay with thee, dear grandfather.

O. Man. But should the enemy come, they will drag thee from me, my boy.

Boy. Impossible, grandfather! for they will see at once that thou art old and blind, and cannot do without me.

O. Man. Poor child! thou little knowest the hearts of these inhuman men.—[*Discharge of cannon heard.*] Hark! the noise is near—I hear the dreadful roaring of the fiery engines of these cruel strangers.—[*Shouts at a distance.*] At every shout, with involuntary haste I clench my hand, and fancy still it grasps a sword! Alas! I can only serve my country by my prayers. Heaven preserve the Inca, and his gallant soldiers!

Boy. O father! there are soldiers running—

O. Man. Spaniards, boy?

Boy. No, Peruvians!

O. Man. How! and flying from the field!—it cannot be.

Enter two PERUVIAN SOLDIERS.

O speak to them boy!—Whence come you?—How goes the battle?

Sol. We may not stop; we are sent for the reserve behind the hill. The day's against us.
[*Exeunt Soldiers.*

O. Man. Quick, then, quick!

Boy. I see the points of lances glittering in the light.

O. Man. Those are Peruvians. Do they bend this way?

Enter a PERUVIAN SOLDIER.

Boy. Soldier, speak to my blind father.

Sol. I'm sent to tell the helpless father to retreat among the rocks: all will be lost, I fear.—The king is wounded.

O. Man. Quick, boy! Lead me to the hill, where thou mayest view the plain. [*Alarms.*

Enter ATALIBA, *wounded, with* ORANO, OFFICERS, *and* SOLDIERS.

Ata. My wound is bound; believe me the hurt is nothing; I may return to the fight.

Ora. Pardon your servant, but the allotted priest who attends the sacred banner has pronounced, that the Inca's blood once shed, no blessing can await the day, until he leave the field.

Ata. Hard restraint! O! my poor, brave soldiers!—Hard that I may no longer be a witness of their valour. But haste you; return to your comrades: I will not keep one soldier from his post. Go, and avenge your fallen brethren. [*Exeunt* ORANO, &c.] I will not repine: my own fate is the last anxiety of my heart. It is for you, my people, that I feel and fear.

OLD MAN *and* BOY *advance.*

O. Man. Did I not hear the voice of an unfortunate?—Who is it complains thus?

Ata. One almost by hope forsaken.

O. Man. Is the king alive?

Ata. The king still lives.

O. Man. Then thou art not forsaken! Ataliba protects the meanest of his subjects.

Ata. And who shall protect Ataliba?

O. Man. The Immortal Powers that protect the just. The virtues of our monarch alike secure to him the affection of his people, and the benign regard of heaven.

Ata. How impious had I murmured! How wonderous, thou Supreme Disposer, are thy acts! Even in this moment, which I had thought the bitterest trial of mortal suffering, thou hast infused the sweetest sensation of my life—it is the assurance of my people's love.

Boy. [*Turning forward.*] O father!—Stranger!—see those hideous men that rush upon us yonder!

Ata. Ha! Spaniards!—And I, Ataliba—ill-fated fugitive! without a sword even to try the ransom of a monarch's life.

Enter DAVILLA, ALMAGRO, *and* SPANISH SOLDIERS.

Dav. 'Tis he—our hopes are answered—I know him well—it is the king!

Alm. Away! Follow with your prize. Avoid those Peruvians, though in flight. This way we may regain our line. [*Exeunt* DAV., ALM., &c. *with* ATA. *prisoner.*

O. Man. The king! Wretched old man, that could not see his gracious form!—Boy, would thou hadst led me to the reach of those ruffians' swords!

Boy. Father! all our countrymen are flying here for refuge.

O. Man. No—to the rescue of their king—they never will desert him. [*Alarms without.*

Enter PERUVIAN OFFICERS *and* SOLDIERS.—ORANO *following.*

Ora. Hold, I charge you! Rolla calls you.

Offi. We cannot combat with their dreadful engines.

Enter ROLLA.

Rol. Hold, recreants! cowards!—What, fear ye death, and fear not shame? By my soul's fury, I cleave to the earth the first of you that stirs, or plunge your dastard swords into your leader's heart, that he may no more witness your disgrace. Where is the king?

Ora. From this old man and boy I learn, that the detachment of the enemy which you observed so suddenly to quit the field, have succeeded in surprising him; they are yet in sight.

Rol. And bear the Inca off a prisoner?—Hear this, ye base, disloyal rout! Look there! the dust you see hangs on the bloody Spaniards' track, dragging, with ruffian taunts

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your king, your father—Ataliba is bondage! Now fly and seek your own vile safety, if you can!

O. Man. Bless the voice of Rolla!—and bless the stroke I once lamented, but which now spares these extinguished eyes the shame of seeing the pale, trembling wretches who dare not follow Rolla, though to save their king!

Rol. Shrink ye from the thunder of the foe, and fall ye not at this rebuke?—Oh! had ye each but one drop of the loyal blood which gushes to waste through the brave heart of this sightless veteran! Eternal shame pursue you, if you desert me now!—But do—alone I go—alone—to die with glory by my monarch's side!

Soldiers. Rolla! we'll follow thee!

[ROLLA *rushes out, followed by* ORANO, &c.

O. Man. O godlike Rolla! And thou sun, send from thy clouds avenging lightning to his aid!—Haste, my boy; ascend some height, and tell to my impatient terror, what thou seest!

Boy. I can climb this rock, and the tree above. [*Ascends a rock, and from thence the tree.*] O, now I see them—now—yes—and the Spaniards turning by the steep.

O. Man. Rolla follows them?

Boy. He does—he does—he moves like an arrow!—now he waves his arm to our soldiers. [*Report of cannon heard.*] Now there is fire and smoke.

O. Man. Yes, fire is the weapon of those fiends.

Boy. The wind blows off the smoke; they are all mixed together.

O. Man. Seest thou the king?

Boy. Yes! Rolla is near him!—His sword sheds fire as he strikes.

O. Man. Bless thee, Rolla! Spare not the monsters.

Boy. Father! father! the Spaniards fly!—O, now I see the king embracing Rolla.

[*Shouts of victory, flourish of trumpets, &c.*

O. Man. [*Falls on his knees.*] Fountain of life! how can my exhausted breath bear to thee thanks for this one moment of my life! My boy, come down and let me kiss thee!—My strength is gone——

Boy. Let me help thee, father—Thou tremblest so—

O. Man. 'Tis with transport, boy!

[*Boy leads him off.*

Shouts, Flourish, &c.—Enter ATALIBA, ROLLA, *and* PERUVIANS.

Ata. In the name of my people, the saviour of whose sovereign thou hast this day been, accept this emblem of his gratitude. [*Giving* ROLLA *his sun of diamonds.*] The tear that falls upon it may for a moment dim its lustre, yet does it not impair the value of the gift.

Rol. It was the hand of heaven, not mine, that saved my king.

Enter PERUVIAN OFFICER *and* SOLDIERS.

Rol. Now, soldier, from Alonzo?

Offi. Alonzo's genius soon repaired the panic which early broke our ranks; but I fear we have to mourn Alonzo's loss; his eager spirit urged him too far in the pursuit.

Ata. How! Alonzo slain!

1st Sol. I saw him fall.

2d Sol. Trust me, I beheld him up again and fighting—he was then surrounded and disarmed.

Ata. O! victory, dearly purchased!

Rol. O Cora! who shall tell thee this?

Ata. Rolla, our friend is lost—our native country saved! Our private sorrows must yield to the public claim for triumph. Now go we to fulfil the first, the most sacred duty which belongs to victory—to dry the widowed and the orphaned tear of those whose brave protectors have perished in their country's cause. [*Triumphant March, and Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A wild Retreat.

CORA, *her* CHILD, *and* WIVES *and* CHILDREN *discovered.*

GLEE.—*Women.*

Fly away, Time, nor be the anxious hour delay'd,
Fly away, Time, that soothes the heart by grief dismay'd;
Should ghastly death appear in view
We can dare it;
With friends we love, so brave, so true,
We will share it.
Fly away time, &c.

Enter a PERUVIAN SOLDIER, *panting for breath.*

Wom. Well! joy or death?

Sol. The battle is against us. The king is wounded, and a prisoner.

Wom. Despair and misery!

Cora. [*In a faint voice.*] And Alonzo?

Sol. I have not seen him.

1st Wom. O! whither must we fly?

2d Wom. Deeper into the forest.

Cora. I shall not move.

Another Peruvian. [*Within.*] Victory! victory! [*Entering.*] Rejoice! rejoice! We are victorious!

Wom. [*Springing up.*] Welcome! welcome! thou messenger of joy: but the king!

Sol. He leads the brave warriors, who approach. [*A triumphant March of the army is heard at a distance.*

Wom. Hush! hush! don't you hear?
A distant march assails the ear;—
Hark! louder still from yonder hill,
Encreasing sounds with terror fill.—

Enter WARRIORS, *singing.*

Victory now has made us free;
We haste, we haste, our friends to see!

Ata. Thanks, thanks my children! I am well: believe it: the blood once stopped, my wound was nothing. [CORA *at length approaches* ROLLA, *who appears to have been mournfully avoiding her.*] Where is Alonzo?

[ROLLA *turns away in silence.*

Cora. [*Falling at the* KING's *feet.*] Give me my husband, give this child his father!

Ata. I grieve that Alonzo is not here.

Cora. Hoped you to find him?

Ata. Most anxiously.

Cora. Ataliba! is he not dead?

Ata. No! the gods will have heard our prayers.

Cora. Is he not dead, Ataliba?

Ata. He lives—in my heart.

Cora. Oh king! torture me not thus!—speak out, is this child fatherless?

Ata. Dearest Cora! do not thus dash aside the little hope that still remains.

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Cora. The little hope! yet still there is hope! Speak to me Rolla, thou art the friend of truth.

Rol. Alonzo has not been found.

Cora. Not found! What mean'st thou! wilt not thou, Rolla, tell me true? Oh! let me not hear the thunder rolling at a distance; let the bolt fall and crush my brain at once.—Say not that he is not found; say at once that he is dead.

Rol. Then should I say false.

Cora. False! Blessings on thee for that word! But snatch me from this terrible suspense. Lift up thy little hands, my child; perhaps thy ignorance may plead better than thy mother's agony.

Rol. Alonzo is takeu prisoner.

Cora. Prisoner! and by the Spaniards?—Pizarro's prisoner? Then is he dead.

Ata. Hope better—the richest ransom which our realm can yield, a herald shall this instant bear.

Per. Wom. Oh! for Alonzo's ransom—our gold, our gems!—all! all!—Here, dear Cora! here! here! [*The Peruvian Women eagerly tear off all their ornaments, and offer them to* CORA.

Ata. Yes, for Alonzo's ransom they would give all!—I thank thee, Father, who hast given me such hearts to rule over!

Cora. Now one boon more, beloved monarch. Let me go with the herald.

Ata. Remember, Cora, thou art not a wife only, but a mother too: hazard not thy own honour, and the safety of thy infant. Among these barbarians the sight of thy youth, thy loveliness, and innocence, would but rivet faster thy Alonzo's chains, and rack his heart with added fears for thee.—Wait, Cora, the return of the herald.

Cora. Teach me how to live till then.

Ata. Now we go to offer to the gods, thanks for our victory, and prayers for our Alonzo's safety. [*March and procession. Exeunt omnes.*

SCENE II.—The Wood.

Enter CORA *and* CHILD.

Cora. Mild innocence! what will become of thee?

Enter ROLLA.

Rol. Cora, I attend thy summons at the appointed spot.

Cora. Oh my child, my boy!—hast thou still a father?

Rol. Cora, can thy child be fatherless while Rolla lives!

Cora. Will he not soon want a mother too!—For canst thou think I will survive Alonzo's loss?

Rol. Yes! for his child's sake.—Yes, as thou didst love Alonzo, Cora, listen to Alonzo's friend.

Cora. Thou bidd'st me listen to the world. Who was not Alonzo's friend?

Rol. His parting words——

Cor. His parting words! [*Wildly.*] Oh, speak!

Rol. Consigned to me two precious trusts—his blessing to his son, and a last request to thee.

Cora. His last request! his last!—Oh, name it!

Rol. If I fall, said he—(and sad forebodings shook him while he spoke)—promise to take Cora for thy wife; be thou a father to my child.—I pledged my word to him and we parted.—Observe me, Cora, I repeat this only as my faith to do so was given to Alonzo—for myself, I neither cherish claim nor hope.

Cora. Ha! does my reason fail me, or what is this horrid light that presses on my brain? Oh, Alonzo! it may be thou hast fallen a victim to thy own guileless heart—hadst thou been silent, hadst thou not made a fatal legacy of these wretched charms——

Rol. Cora! what hateful suspicion has possessed thy mind?

Cora. Yes, yes, 'tis clear—his spirit was ensnared; he was led to the fatal spot, where mortal valour could not front a host of murderers—He fell—in vain did he exclaim for help to Rolla. At a distance thou lookedst on and smild'st—Thou couldst have saved him—couldst—but didst not.

Rol. Oh, glorious sun! can I have deserved this? Cora, rather bid me strike this sword into my heart.

Cora. No! live! live for love! for that love thou seekest: whose blossoms are to shoot from the bleeding grave of thy betrayed and slaughtered friend!—But thou hast borne to me the last words of my Alonzo! now hear mine—Sooner shall this boy draw poison from this tortured breast—sooner would I link me to the pallid corse of the meanest wretch that perished with Alonzo, than he call Rolla father—than I call Rolla husband!

Rol. Yet call me what I am—thy friend, thy protector!

Cora. [*Distractedly.*] Away! I have no protector but my God!—With this child in my arms will I hasten to the field of slaughter—There with these hands will I turn up to the light, every mangled body—seeking, howe'er by death disfigured, the sweet smile of my Alonzo:—with fearful cries I will shriek out his name till my veins snap! If the smallest spark of life remain, he will know the voice of his Cora, open for a moment his unshrouded eyes, and bless me with a last look. But if we find him not—Oh! then, my boy, we will to the Spanish camp—that look of thine will win my passage through a thousand swords—they too are men.—Is there a heart that could drive back the wife that seeks her bleeding husband; or the innocent babe that cries for his imprisoned father? No, no, my child, every where we shall be safe.—A wretched mother, bearing a poor orphan in her arms, has nature's passport through the world. Yes, yes, my son, we'll go and seek thy father.

[*Exit with the* CHILD.

Rol. [*After a pause of agitation.*] Could I have merited one breath of thy reproaches, Cora, I should be the wretch—I think I was not formed to be.—Her safety must be my present purpose—then to convince her she has wronged me! [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—Pizarro's Tent.

PIZARRO *traversing the Stage in agitation.*

Piz. Well, capricious idol Fortune, be my ruin thy work and boast. To myself I will still be true.—Yet ere I fall, grant me thy smile to prosper in one act of vengeance, and be that smile Alonzo's death.

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Enter ELVIRA.

Who's there? who dares intrude? Why does my guard neglect their duty?

Elv. Thy guard did what they could—but they knew their duty better than to enforce authority, when I refused obedience.

Piz. And what is it thou desirest?

Elv. To see how a hero bears misfortune. Thou, Pizarro, art not now collected—nor thyself.

Piz. Wouldst thou, I should rejoice that the spears of the enemy, led by accursed Alonzo, have pierced the bravest hearts of my followers?

Elv. No! I would have thee cold and dark as the night that follows the departed storm; still and sullen as the awful pause that precedes Nature's convulsion: yet I would have thee feel assured, that a new morning shall arise, when the warrior's spirit shall stalk forth—nor fear the future, nor lament the past.

Piz. Woman! Elvira!—why had not all my men hearts like thine.

Elv. Then would thy brows have this day worn the crown of Quito.

Piz. Oh! hope fails me while that scourge of my life and fame, Alonzo, leads the enemy.

Elv. Pizarro, I am come to probe the hero farther: not now his courage, but his magnanimity—Alonzo is thy prisoner.

Piz. How!

Elv. 'Tis certain; Valverde saw him even now dragged in chains within thy camp. I chose to bring thee the intelligence myself.

Piz. Bless thee, Elvira, for the news!—Alonzo in my power!—then I am the conqueror—the victory is mine!

Elv. Pizarro, this is savage and unmanly triumph. Believe me, thou raisest impatience in my mind to see the man, whose valour and whose genius awe Pizarro; whose misfortunes are Pizarro's triumph; whose bondage is Pizarro's safety.

Piz. Guard!—

Enter GUARD.

Drag here the Spanish prisoner, Alonzo!—Quick, bring the traitor here! [*Exit* GUARD.

Elv. What shall be his fate?

Piz. Death! death! in lingering torments! protracted to the last stretch that burning vengeance can devise, and fainting life sustain.

Elv. Shame on thee! Wilt thou have it said, that the Peruvians found Pizarro could not conquer till Alonzo felt that he could murder?

Piz. Be it said—I care not! His fate is sealed.

Elv. Follow then thy will: but mark me, if basely thou dost shed the blood of this brave youth, Elvira's lost to thee for ever.

Piz. Why this interest for a stranger? What is Alonzo's fate to thee?

Elv. His fate!—nothing!—thy glory, every thing!—Think'st thou I could love thee, stripped of fame, of honour, and a just renown? Know me better.

Piz. Thou shouldst have known me better. Thou shouldst have known, that, once provoked to hate, I am for ever fixed in vengeance.—[ALONZO *is brought in, in chains, guarded.*] Welcome, welcome, Don Alonzo de Molina; 'tis long since we have met: thy mended looks should speak a life of rural indolence. How is it, that amid the toils and cares of war, thou dost preserve the healthful bloom of careless ease? Tell me thy secret?

Al. Thou wilt not profit by it. Whate'er the cares or toils of war, peace still is here.

[*Putting his hand to his heart.*

Piz. Sarcastic boy!

Elv. Thou art answered rightly. Why sport with the unfortunate?

Piz. And thou art wedded too, I hear; ay, and the father of a lovely boy—the heir, no doubt, of all his father's loyalty; of all his mother's faith.

Al. The heir, I trust, of all his father's scorn of fraud, oppression and hypocrisy—the heir, I hope, of all his mother's virtue, gentleness, and truth—the heir, I trust, to all Pizarro's hate.

Piz. Really! Now do I feel for this poor orphan; for fatherless to-morrow's sun shall see that child. Alonzo, thy hours are numbered.

Elv. Pizarro—no!

Piz. Hence—or dread my anger.

Elv. I will not hence; nor do I dread thy anger.

Al. Generous loveliness! spare thy unavailing pity.—Seek not to thwart the tiger with his prey beneath his fangs.

Piz. Audacious rebel! Thou a renegado from thy monarch and thy God!

Al. 'Tis false.

Piz. Art thou not, tell me, a deserter from thy country's legions—and with vile heathens leagued, hast thou not warred against thy native land?

Al. No! Deserter I am none! I was not born among robbers! pirates! murderers!—When those legions, lured by the abhorred lust of gold, and by thy foul ambition urged, forgot the honour of Castilians, and forsook the duties of humanity, they deserted me. I have not warred against my native land, but against those who have usurped its power. The banners of my country, when first I followed arms beneath them, were justice, faith and mercy. If these are beaten down, and trampled under foot—I have no country, nor exists the power entitled to reproach me with revolt.

Piz. The power to judge and punish thee at least exists.

Al. Where are my judges?

Piz. Thou wouldst appeal to the war council?

Al. If the good Las-Casas have yet a seat there, yes; if not, I appeal to Heaven!

Piz. And to impose upon the folly of Las-Casas, what would be the excuses of thy treason?

Elv. The folly of Las-Casas!—Such, doubtless, his mild precepts seem to thy hard-hearted wisdom!—O! would I might have lived as I will die, a sharer in the follies of Las-Casas!

Al. To him I should not need to urge the foul barbarities which drove me from your side; but I would gently lead him by the hand, through all the lovely fields of Quito; there, in many a spot, where late was barrenness and waste, I would show him how now the opening blossom, blade, or perfumed bud, sweet, bashful pledges of delicious harvest, wafting their incense to the ripening sun, give cheerful promise to the hope of industry. This I would say, is my work! Next I should tell how hurtful customs, and superstitions strange and sullen, would often scatter and dismay the credulous minds of these deluded innocents

and then would I point out to him where now, in clustered villages, they live like brethren, social and confiding, while through the burning day, content sits basking on the cheek of toil, till laughing pastime leads them to the hour of rest—this too is mine! And prouder yet—at that still pause between exertion and repose, belonging not to pastime, labour, or to rest, but unto Him who sanctions and ordains them all, I would show him many an eye, and many a hand, by gentleness from error won, raised in pure devotion to the true and only God!—This too I could tell him is Alonzo's work! Then would Las-Casas clasp me in his aged arms; from his uplifted eyes a tear of gracious thankfulness would fall upon my head, and that one blessed drop would be to me at once this world's best proof, that I had acted rightly here and surest hope of my Creator's mercy and reward hereafter.

Elv. Happy, virtuous Alonzo! And thou, Pizarro, wouldst appal with fear of death, a man who thinks and acts as he does!

Piz. Daring, obstinate enthusiast! But know, the pious blessing of thy preceptor's tears does not avail thee here; he has fled like thee—like thee, no doubt, to join the foes of Spain. The perilous trial of the next reward thou hopest, is nearer than perhaps thou'st thought; for, by my country's wrongs, and by mine own, to-morrow's sun shall see thy death.

Elv. Hold!—Pizarro, hear me!—If not always justly, at least act always greatly. Name not thy country's wrongs—'tis plain they have no share in thy resentment. Thy fury 'gainst this youth is private hate, and deadly, personal revenge; if this be so—and even now thy detected conscience in that look avows it—profane not the name of justice or thy country's cause, but let him arm, and bid him to the field on equal terms.

Piz. Officious advocate for treason—peace! Bear him hence—he knows his sentence.

Al. Thy revenge is eager, and I'm thankful for it;—to me thy haste is mercy. For thee, sweet pleader in misfortune's cause, accept my parting thanks. This camp is not thy proper sphere. Wert thou among yon savages, as they are called, thou'dst find companions more congenial to thy heart.

Piz. Yes; she shall bear the tidings of thy death to Cora.

Al. Inhuman man! that pang at least might have been spared me; but thy malice shall not shake my constancy. I go to death—many shall bless, and none will curse my memory. Thou still wilt live, and still wilt be—Pizarro.

[*Exit, guarded.*

Elv. Now by the indignant scorn that burns upon my cheek, my soul is shamed and sickened at the meanness of thy vengeance.

Piz. What has thy romantic folly aimed at! He is mine enemy, and in my power.

Elv. He is in your power, and therefore is no more an enemy. Pizarro, I demand not of thee virtue—I ask not from thee nobleness of mind—I require only just dealing to the fame thou hast acquired: be not the assassin of thine own renown. How often hast thou sworn that the sacrifice which thy wonderous valour's high report had won thee from subdued Elvira, was the proudest triumph of thy fame? Thou knowest I bear a mind not cast in the common mould—not formed for tame sequestered love—content 'mid household cares to prattle to an idle offspring, and wait the dull delight of an obscure lover's kindness—no! my heart was framed to look up with awe and homage to the object it adored; my ears to own no music but the thrilling records of his praise; my lips to scorn all babbling but the tales of his achievements; my brain to turn giddy with delight, reading the applauding tributes of his monarch's and his country's gratitude; my every faculty to throb with transport, while I heard the shouts of acclamation which announced the coming of my hero; my whole soul to love him with devotion! with enthusiasm! to see no other object—to own no other tie—but to make him my world! Thus to love is at least no common weakness. Pizarro!—was not such my love for thee?

Piz. It was, Elvira!

Elv. Then do not make me hateful to myself, by tearing off the mask at once—baring the hideous imposture that has undone me! Do not act which, howe'er thy present power may gloss it to the world, will make thee hateful to all future ages—accursed and scorned by posterity.

Piz. And should posterity applaud my deeds, think'st thou my mouldering bones would rattle then with transport in my tomb? This is renown for visionary boys to dream of—I understand it not. The fame I value shall uplift my living estimation—o'erbear with popular support the envy of my foes—advance my purposes, and aid my power.

Elv. Each word thou speakest—each moment that I hear thee—dispels the fatal mist through which I've judged thee. Thou man of mighty name, but little soul, I see thou wert not born to feel what genuine fame and glory are—go! prefer the flattery of thy own fleeting day, to the bright circle of a deathless name—go! prefer to stare upon the grain of sand on which you trample, to musing on the starred canopy above thee. Fame, the sovereign duty of proud ambition, is not to be worshipped so: who seeks alone for living homage, stands a mean canvasser in her temple's porch, wooing promiscuously from the fickle breath of every wretch that passes, the brittle tribute of his praise. He dares not approach the sacred altar—no noble sacrifice of his is placed there, nor ever shall his worshipped image, fixed above, claim for his memory a glorious immortality.

Piz. Elvira, leave me.

Elv. Pizarro, thou no longer lovest me.

Piz. It is not so, Elvira. But what might not I suspect—this wonderous interest for a stranger! Take back thy reproach.

Elv. No, Pizarro; as yet I am not lost to thee—one string still remains, and binds me to thy fate. Do not, I conjure thee—do not for mine own sake, tear it asunder—shed not Alonzo's blood!

Piz. My resolution is fixed.

Elv. Even though that moment lost thee Elvira for ever?

Piz. Even so.

Elv. Pizarro, if not to honour, if not to humanity, yet listen to affection; bear some memory of the sacrifices I have made for thy sake. Have I not for thee quitted my parents, my friends, my fame, my native land? When escaping, did I not risk in rushing to thy arms to bury myself in the bosom of the deep? Have I not shared all thy perils, heavy storms at sea, and frightful 'scapes on shore? Even on this dreadful day, amid the rout of battle who remained firm and constant at Pizarro's

side?—Who presented her bosom as his shield to the assailing foe?

Piz. 'Tis truly spoken all. In love thou art thy sex's miracle—in war the soldier's pattern—and therefore my whole heart and half my acquisitions are thy right.

Elv. Convince me I possess the first—I exchange all title to the latter, for—mercy to Alonzo.

Piz. No more!—Had I intended to prolong his doom, each word thou utterest now would hasten on his fate.

Elv. Alonzo then at morn will die?

Piz. Think'st thou yon sun will set?—As surely at his rising shall Alonzo die.

Elv. Then be it done—the string is cracked—sundered for ever.—But mark me—thou hast heretofore had cause, 'tis true, to doubt my resolution, howe'er offended—but mark me now—the lips which, cold and jeering, barbing revenge with rancorous mockery, can insult a fallen enemy, shall never more receive the pledge of love: the arm which, unshaken by its bloody purpose, shall assign to needless torture, the victim who avows his heart, never more shall press the hand of faith! Pizarro, scorn not my words—beware thou slightest them not! I feel how noble are the motives which now animate my thoughts—who could not feel as I do, I condemn:—who, feeling so, yet would not act as I shall, I despise.

Piz. I have heard thee, Elvira, and know well the noble motives which inspire thee, fit advocate in virtue's cause!—Believe me, I pity thy tender feelings for the youth Alonzo! He dies at sun-rise! [*Exit.*

Elv. 'Tis well! 'tis just I should be humbled—I had forgot myself, and in the cause of innocence assumed the tone of virtue. 'Twas fit I should be rebuked—and by Pizarro. Fall, fall, ye few reluctant drops of weakness—the last these eyes shall ever shed. How a woman can love, Pizarro, thou hast known too well—how she can hate, thou hast yet to learn. Yes, thou undaunted! now meet the last and fellest peril of thy life!—meet, and survive an injured woman's fury, if thou canst. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.—The Temple of the Sun.

Priests and Priestesses at Sacrifice.

CHORUS.

To Thee be praise,
O glorious Sun;
Beneath whose rays
The field was won!
Raise high the voice—
With shouts rejoice! [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Dungeon.

ALONZO *in Chains.—A* SENTINEL *walking near.*

Al. For the last time, I have beheld the shadowed ocean close upon the light. For the last time, through my cleft dungeon's roof, I now behold the quivering lustre of the stars. For the last time, O sun! (and soon the hour) I shall behold thy rising, and thy level beams melting the pale mists of morn to glittering dew-drops.—Then comes my death, and in the morning of my day, I fall, which—No, Alonzo, date not the life which thou hast run, by the mean reckoning of the hours and days which thou hast breathed:—a life spent worthily should be measured by a nobler line; by deeds, not years. Then wouldst thou murmur not, but bless Providence, which in so short a span, made thee the instrument of wide and spreading blessings, to the helpless and oppressed! Though sinking in decrepit age, he prematurely falls, whose memory records no benefit conferred by him on man.—They only have lived long, who have lived virtuously.

Enter a SOLDIER—*shows the* SENTINEL *a Passport, who withdraws.*

Al. What bear you there?

Sol. These refreshments I was ordered to leave in your dungeon.

Al. By whom ordered?

Sol. By the lady Elvira; she will be here herself before the dawn.

Al. Bear back to her my humblest thanks; and take thou the refreshments, friend—I need them not.

Sol. I have served under you, Don Alonzo.—Pardon my saying, that my heart pities you. [*Exit.*

Al. In Pizarro's camp, to pity the unfortunate, no doubt requires forgiveness. [*Looking out.*] Surely, even now, thin streaks of glimmering light steal on the darkness of the east. If so, my life is but one hour more. I will not watch the coming dawn; but in the darkness of my cell, my last prayer to thee, Power Supreme! shall be for my wife and child! Grant them to dwell in innocence and peace; grant health and purity of mind—all else is worthless. [*Enters the Cavern.*

Sen. Who's there? answer quickly! who's there?

Rol. [*Within.*] A friar, come to visit your prisoner.

Enter ROLLA, *disguised as a Monk.*

Rol. Inform me, friend, is not Alonzo, the Spanish prisoner, confined in this dungeon?

Sen. He is.

Rol. I must speak with him.

Sen. You must not.

Rol. He is my friend.

Sen. Not if he were thy brother.

Rol. What is to be his fate?

Sen. He dies at sun-rise.

Rol. Ha!—then I am come in time.

Sen. Just——to witness his death.

Rol. Soldier, I must speak with him.

Sen. Back, back—it is impossible!

Rol. I do entreat thee, but for one moment!

Sen. Thou entreatest in vain—my orders are most strict.

Rol. Even now, I saw a messenger go hence.

Sen. He brought a pass which we are all accustomed to obey.

Rol. Look on this wedge of massive gold—look on these precious gems. In thy own land they will be wealth for thee and thine, beyond thy hope or wish. Take them, they are thine—Let me but pass one minute with Alonzo.

Sen. Away!—wouldst thou corrupt me? Me!—an old Castilian! I know my duty better.

Rol. Soldier!—hast thou a wife?

Sen. I have.

Rol. Hast thou children?

Sen. Four—honest, lovely boys.

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Rol. Where didst thou leave them?

Sen. In my native village! even in the cot where myself was born.

Rol. Dost thou love thy children and thy wife?

Sen. Do I love them! God knows my heart—I do.

Rol. Soldier! imagine thou wert doomed to die a cruel death in this strange land—What would be thy last request?

Sen. That some of my comrades should carry my dying blessing to my wife and children.

Rol. Oh! but if that comrade was at thy prison gate, and should there be told——thy fellow-soldier dies at sun-rise, yet thou shalt not for a moment see him, nor shalt thou bear his dying blessing to his poor children or his wretched wife, what wouldst thou think of him, who thus could drive thy comrade from the door?

Sen. How!

Rol. Alonzo has a wife and child. I am come but to receive for her, and for her babe, the last blessing of my friend.

Sen. Go in. [*Retires.*

Rol. Oh, holy Nature! thou dost never plead in vain. There is not, of our earth, a creature bearing form, and life, human or savage—native of the forest wild, or giddy air—around whose parent bosom, thou hast not a cord entwined, of power to tie them to their offspring's claims, and at thy will to draw them back to thee. On iron pinions borne, the blood-stained vulture cleaves the storm, yet is the plumage closest to her heart, soft as the cygnet's down, and o'er her unshelled brood the murmuring ring-dove sits not more gently! Yes, now he is beyond the porch, barring the outer gate! Alonzo! Alonzo! my friend! Ha! in gentle sleep! Alonzo—rise!

Al. How! is my hour elapsed? Well, [*Returning from the recess.*] I am ready.

Rol. Alonzo—know me.

Al. What voice is that?

Rol. 'Tis Rolla's.

Al. Rolla! my friend! [*Embraces him.*] Heavens!—how couldst thou pass the guard? Did this habit——

Rol. There is not a moment to be lost in words;—this disguise I tore from the dead body of a friar, as I passed our field of battle: it has gained me entrance to thy dungeon, now take it thou, and fly.

Al. And Rolla——

Rol. Will remain here in thy place.

Al. And die for me? No! Rather eternal tortures rack me.

Rol. I shall not die, Alonzo. It is thy life Pizarro seeks, not Rolla's; and from my prison soon will thy arm deliver me; or, should it be otherwise, I am as a blighted plantain, standing alone amid the sandy desert—Nothing seeks or lives beneath my shelter. Thou art a husband and a father—the being of a lovely wife and helpless infant hangs upon thy life. Go! go! Alonzo! Go, to save, not thyself, but Cora and thy child!

Al. Urge me not thus, my friend; I had prepared to die in peace.

Rol. To die in peace! devoting her thou'st sworn to live for, to madness, misery, and death! for be assured, the state I left her in forbids all hope, but from thy quick return.

Al. Oh God!

Rol. If thou art yet irresolute, Alonzo, now heed me well. I think thou hast not known that Rolla ever pledged his word and shrunk from its fulfilment. And by the heart of truth I swear, if thou art proudly obstinate to deny thy friend the transport of preserving Cora's life, in thee no power that sways the will of man shall stir me hence; and thou'lt but have the desperate triumph, of seeing Rolla perish by thy side, with the assured conviction, that Cora and thy child—are lost for ever!

Al. Oh, Rolla! thou distractest me!

Rol. A moment's further pause, and all is lost. The dawn approaches. Fear not for me; I will treat with Pizarro as for surrender and submission; I shall gain time, doubt not, while thou, with a chosen band, passing the secret way, mayst at night return, release thy friend, and bear him back in triumph. Yes, hasten, dear Alonzo! Even now I hear the frantic Cora call thee! Haste!—Haste!—Haste!

Al. Rolla, I fear thy friendship drives me from honour, and from right.

Rol. Did Rolla ever counsel dishonour to his friend!

Al. Oh! my preserver! [*Embracing him.*

Rol. I feel thy warm tears dropping on my cheek. Go! I am rewarded! [*Throws the Friar's garment over* ALONZO.] There, conceal thy face; and that they may not clank, hold fast thy chains. Now, God be with thee!

Al. At night we meet again. Then, so aid me Heaven! I return to save, or perish with thee! [*Exit.*

Rol. [*Alone.*] He has passed the outer porch—he is safe! He will soon embrace his wife and child! Now, Cora, didst thou not wrong me? This is the first time throughout my life, I ever deceived man. Forgive me, God of truth! if I am wrong. Alonzo flatters himself that we shall meet again! Yes—there! [*Lifting his hands to Heaven.*] assuredly we shall meet again; there possess in peace, the joys of everlasting love and friendship;—on earth, imperfect and imbittered. I will retire, lest the guard return before Alonzo may have passed their lines. [*Retires into the recess.*

Enter ELVIRA.

Elv. No, not Pizarro's brutal taunts, not the glowing admiration which I feel for this noble youth, shall raise an interest in my harassed bosom, which honour would not sanction. If he reject the vengeance my heart has sworn against the tyrant, whose death alone can save this land; yet shall the delight be mine, to restore him to his Cora's arms, to his dear child, and to the unoffending people, whom his virtues guide, and valour guards. Alonzo, come forth!

Enter ROLLA.

Ha! who art thou? Where is Alonzo?

Rol. Alonzo's fled.

Elv. Fled!

Rol. Yes; and he must not be pursued. Pardon this roughness, [*Seizing her hand.*] but a moment's precious to Alonzo's flight.

Elv. What if I call the guard?

Rol. Do so; Alonzo still gains time.

Elv. What if thus I free myself?

[*Shows a dagger.*

Rol. Strike it to my heart! Still with the convulsive grasp of death, I'll hold thee fast.

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Elv. Release me! I give my faith, I neither will alarm the guard, nor cause pursuit.

Rol. At once, I trust thy word. A feeling boldness in those eyes assures me that thy soul is noble.

Elv. What is thy name? speak freely; by my order the guard is removed beyond the outer porch.

Rol. My name is Rolla.

Elv. The Peruvian leader?

Rol. I was so yesterday. To-day, the Spaniard's captive.

Elv. And friendship for Alonzo, moved thee to this act?

Rol. Alonzo is my friend. I am prepared to die for him. Yet is the cause a motive stronger far than friendship.

Elv. One only passion else could urge such generous rashness.

Rol. And that is——

Elv. Love?

Rol. True!

Elv. Gallant! ingenuous Rolla! Know that my purpose here was thine; and were I to save thy friend——

Rol. How! a woman blessed with gentleness and courage, and yet not Cora!

Elv. Does Rolla think so meanly of all female hearts?

Rol. Not so—you are worse and better than we are!

Elv. Were I to save thee, Rolla, from the tyrant's vengeance—restore thee to thy native land—and thy native land to peace—wouldst thou not rank Elvira with the good?

Rol. To judge the action, I must know the means.

Elv. Take this dagger.

Rol. How to be used?

Elv. I will conduct thee to the tent where fell Pizarro sleeps; the scourge of innocence—the terror of thy race—the fiend, that desolates thy afflicted country.

Rol. Hast thou not been injured by Pizarro?

Elv. Deeply as scorn and insult can infuse their deadly venom.

Rol. And thou askest that I should murder him in his sleep?

Elv. Would he not have murdered Alonzo in his chains? He that sleeps, and he that's bound, are equally defenceless. Hear me, Rolla, so may I prosper in this perilous act, as searching my full heart, I have put by all rancorous motive of private vengeance there, and feel that I advance to my dread purpose in the cause of human nature, and at the call of sacred justice.

Rol. The God of Justice sanctifies no evil as a step towards good. Great actions cannot be achieved by wicked means.

Elv. Then, Peruvian, since thou dost feel so coldly for thy country's wrongs, this hand, though it revolt my soul, shall strike the blow.

Rol. Then is thy destruction certain, and for Peru thou perishest! Give me the dagger!

Elv. Now follow me; but first—and dreadful is the hard necessity—thou must strike down the guard.

Rol. The soldier who was on duty here?

Elv. Yes, him; else, seeing thee, the alarm will be instant.

Rol. And I must stab that soldier as I pass?—Take back thy dagger.

Elv. Rolla!

Rol. That soldier, mark me, is a man! All are not men that bear the human form. He refused my prayers—refused my gold—denying to admit me—till his own feelings bribed him. For my nation's safety, I would not harm that man!

Elv. Then he must with us. I will answer for his safety.

Rol. Be that plainly understood between us: for, whate'er betide our enterprise, I will not risk a hair of that man's head, to save my heartstrings from consuming fire. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—The inside of PIZARRO'S *Tent.*

PIZARRO *on a Couch.*

Piz. [*In his sleep.*] No mercy, traitor. Now at his heart! Stand off there, you—Let me see him bleed!—Ha, ha, ha! Let me hear that groan again.

Enter ROLLA *and* ELVIRA.

Elv. There!—Now lose not a moment.

Rol. Thou must leave me now. This scene of blood fits not a woman's presence.

Elv. But a moment's pause may——

Rol. Go!—retire to thy own tent—and return not here. I will come to thee. Be thou not known in this business. I implore thee!

Elv. I will withdraw the guard that waits. [*Exit.*

Rol. Now have I in my power the accursed destroyer of my country's peace: yet tranquilly he rests. God! can this man sleep?

Piz. [*In his sleep.*] Away! away! Hideous fiends! Tear not my bosom thus!

Rol. No: I was in error—the balm of sweet repose he never more can know. Look here, ambition's fools!—Ye, by whose inhuman pride, the bleeding sacrifice of nations is held as nothing, behold the rest of the guilty! He is at my mercy; and one blow!—No! my heart and hand refuse the act: Rolla cannot be an assassin!—Yet Elvira must be saved! [*Approaches the Couch.*] Pizarro! awake!

Piz. [*Starts up.*] Who!—Guard!

Rol. Speak not—another word is thy death—Call not for aid! this arm will be swifter than thy guard.

Piz. Who art thou? and what is thy will?

Rol. I am thine enemy! Peruvian Rolla! Thy death is not my will, or I could have slain thee sleeping!

Piz. Speak, what else?

Rol. Now thou art at my mercy, answer me! Did a Peruvian ever yet wrong or injure thee, or any of thy nation? Didst thou, or any of thy nation, ever yet show mercy to a Peruvian in thy power? Now shalt thou feel, and if thou hast a heart, thou'lt feel it keenly!—a Peruvian's vengeance! [*Drops the dagger at his feet.*] There!

Piz. Is it possible!

Rol. Can Pizarro be surprised at this? I thought forgiveness of injuries had been the Christian's precept—Thou seest, at least, it is the Peruvian's practice.

Piz. Rolla, thou hast indeed surprised—subdued me.

Re-enter ELVIRA, *not seeing* PIZARRO.

Elv. Is it done? Is he dead? [*Sees* PIZARRO.] How! still living! Then I am lost! And for you, wretched Peruvians! mercy is no more! Oh, Rolla! treacherous, or cowardly?—

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Piz. How can it be, that—

Rol. Away! Elvira speaks she knows not what!—Leave me, [*To* ELVIRA.] I conjure thee, with Pizarro.

Elv. How! Rolla, dost thou think I shall retract—or that I meanly will deny, that in thy hand I placed a poniard to be plunged into that tyrant's heart? No! my sole regret is, that I trusted to thy weakness, and did not strike the blow myself. Too soon thou'lt learn that mercy to that man is direct cruelty to all thy race.

Piz. Guard! quick! a guard, to seize this frantic woman.

Elv. Yes, a guard! I call them too! And soon I know they'll lead me to my death. But think not, Pizarro, the fury of thy flashing eyes shall awe me for a moment!—Nor think that woman's anger, or the feelings of an injured heart, prompted me to this design. No! had I been only influenced so, thus failing, shame and remorse would weigh me down.—But though defeated, and destroyed, as now I am, such is the greatness of the cause that urged me, I shall perish, glorying in the attempt, and my last breath of life shall speak the proud avowal of my purpose—to have rescued millions of innocents from the bloodthirsty tyranny of one—by ridding the insulted world of thee!

Rol. Had the act been noble as the motive, Rolla would not have shrunk from its performance.

Enter GUARDS.

Piz. Seize this discovered fiend, who sought to kill your leader.

Elv. Touch me not, at the peril of your souls; I am your prisoner, and will follow you. But thou, their triumphant leader, shalt hear me. Yet, first, for thee, Rolla, accept my forgiveness: even had I been the victim of thy nobleness of heart, I should have admired thee for it. But 'twas myself provoked my doom. Thou wouldst have shielded me. Let not thy contempt follow me to the grave. Didst thou but know the spell-like arts, by which this hypocrite first undermined the virtue of a guileless heart! how, even in the pious sanctuary wherein I dwelt, by corruption and by fraud, he practised upon those in whom I most confided—till my distempered fancy led me, step by step, into the abyss of guilt——

Piz. Why am I not obeyed? Tear her hence!

Elv. 'Tis past—but didst thou know my story, Rolla, thou wouldst pity me.

Rol. From my soul I do pity thee!

Piz. Villains! drag her to the dungeon!—prepare the torture instantly.

Elv. Soldiers—but a moment more. 'Tis to applaud your general; it is to tell the astonished world, that, for once, Pizarro's sentence is an act of justice: yes, rack me with the sharpest tortures that ever agonized the human frame;—it will be justice. Yes, bid the minions of thy fury wrench forth the sinews of those arms that have caressed, and——even have defended thee! Bid them pour burning metal into the bleeding cases of these eyes, that so oft—oh, God! have hung with love and homage on thy look; then approach me bound on the abhorred wheel—there glut thy savage eyes with the convulsive spasms of that dishonoured bosom, which was once thy pillow! Yet, will I bear it all; for it will be justice, all! And when thou shalt bid them tear me to my death, hoping that thy unshrinking ears may at last be feasted with the music of my cries, I will not utter one shriek or groan;—but to the last gasp, my body's patience shall deride thy vengeance, as my soul defies thy power.

Piz. Hear'st thou the wretch whose hands were even now prepared for murder?

Rol. Yes! And if her accusation's false, thou wilt not shrink from hearing her: if true, thy barbarity cannot make her suffer the pangs thy conscience will inflict on thee.

Elv. And now, farewell, world! Rolla, farewell! Farewell, thou condemned of heaven! [*To* PIZARRO.] for repentance and remorse, I know, will never touch thy heart. We shall meet again. Ha! be it thy horror here, to know, that we shall meet hereafter! And when thy parting hour approaches, hark to the knell, whose dreadful beat will strike to thy despairing soul. Then will vibrate on thy ear, the curses of the cloistered saint from whom thou stolest me. Then, the last shrieks which burst from my mother's breaking heart, as she died, appealing to her God against the seducer of her child! Then the blood-stifled groan of my murdered brother, murdered by thee, fell monster! seeking atonement for his sister's ruined honour. I hear them now! To me the recollection's madness! At such an hour,—what will it be to thee?

Piz. A moment's more delay; and at the peril of your lives——

Elv. I have spoken and the last mortal frailty of my heart is past. And now, with an undaunted spirit, and unshaken firmness, I go to meet my destiny. That I could not live nobly, has been Pizarro's act. That I will die nobly, shall be my own. [*Exit, guarded.*

Piz. Rolla, I would not thou, a warrior valiant and renowned, shouldst credit the vile tales of this frantic woman. The cause of all this fury—O! a wanton passion for the rebel youth Alonzo, now my prisoner.

Rol. Alonzo is not now thy prisoner.

Piz. How!

Rol. I came to rescue him, to deceive his guard. I have succeeded; I remain thy prisoner.

Piz. Alonzo fled! Is then the vengeance dearest to my heart never to be gratified?

Rol. Dismiss such passions from thy heart; then thou'lt consult its peace.

Piz. I can face all enemies that dare confront me—I cannot war against my nature.

Rol. Then, Pizarro, ask not to be deemed a hero. To triumph o'er ourselves is the only conquest, where fortune makes no claim. In battle, chance may snatch the laurel from thee, or chance may place it on thy brow; but in a contest with thyself, be resolute, and the virtuous impulse must be the victor.

Piz. Peruvian! thou shalt not find me to thee ungrateful or ungenerous. Return to thy countrymen—thou art at liberty.

Rol. Thou dost act in this, as honour, and as duty, bid thee.

Piz. I cannot but admire thee, Rolla; I would we might be friends.

Rol. Farewell.—Pity Elvira! Become the friend of virtue, and thou wilt be mine. [*Exit.*

Piz. Ambition! tell me what is the phantom I have followed? where is the one delight which it has made my own? My fame is the mark of envy—my love the dupe of treachery—my glory eclipsed by the boy I taught—my revenge, defeated and rebuked by the rude

honour of a savage foe—before whose native dignity of soul I have sunk confounded and subdued! I would I could retrace my steps—I cannot. Would I could evade my own reflections! No! thought and memory are my hell. [*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A thick Forest.—In the back ground, a Hut.—A dreadful Storm.—CORA *has covered her Child on a bed of leaves and moss.*

Cora. O Nature! thou hast not the strength of love.—My anxious spirit is untired in its march; my wearied, shivering frame, sinks under it. And for thee, my boy, when faint beneath thy lovely burden, could I refuse to give thy slumbers that poor bed of rest! O my child! were I assured thy father breathes no more, how quickly would I lay me down by thy dear side—but down—down for ever.—[*Thunder and lightning.*] I ask thee not, unpitying storm! to abate thy rage, in mercy to poor Cora's misery: nor while thy thunders spare his slumbers, will I disturb my sleeping cherub—Though Heaven knows I wish to hear the voice of life, and feel that life is near me. But I will endure all, while what I have of reason holds. [*Thunder and lightning.*] Still, still, implacable!—unfeeling elements! yet still dost thou sleep, my smiling innocent! O death! when wilt thou grant to this babe's mother such repose?—Sure I may shield thee better from the storm; my veil may——

Alonzo. [*Within.*] Cora!

Cora. Hah!

Al. Cora!

Cora. O, my heart! Sweet Heaven deceive me not!—Is it not Alonzo's voice!

Al. [*Louder.*] Cora!

Cora. It is—it is Alonzo!

Al. [*Very loud.*] Cora! my beloved!

Cora. Alonzo! Here!—here!—Alonzo! [*Runs out.*

Enter two SPANISH SOLDIERS.

1*st Sol.* I tell you we are near our out-posts, and the word we heard just now was the countersign.

2*d Sol.* Well, in our escape from the enemy, to have discovered their secret passage through the rocks, will prove a lucky chance to us—Pizarro will reward us.

1*st Sol.* This way. The sun, though clouded, is on our left. [*Perceives the* CHILD.] What have we here? A child!—as I'm a soldier.

2*d Sol.* 'Tis a sweet little babe. Now would it be a great charity to take this infant from its pagan mother's power.

1*st Sol.* It would so. I have one at home shall play with it. Come along. [*Takes the* CHILD.—*Exeunt.*

Re-enter CORA *with* ALONZO.

Cora. [*Speaking without.*] This way, dear Alonzo. Now am I right—there—there—under that tree. Was it possible the instinct of a mother's heart could mistake the spot!—Now wilt thou look at him as he sleeps, or shall I bring him waking with his full blue laughing eyes to welcome thee at once? Yes—yes. Stand thou there; I'll snatch him from his rosy slumber, blushing like the perfumed morn. [*Finding only the mantle and veil, which she tears from the ground, and the* CHILD *gone, she screams.*

Al. [*Running to her.*] Cora! my heart's beloved!

Cora. He is gone!

Al. Eternal God!

Cora. He is gone!—my child! my child!

Al. Where didst thou leave him?

Cora. [*Dashing herself on the spot.*] Here!

Al. Be calm, beloved Cora! he has waked and crept to a little distance—we shall find him. Are you assured this was the spot you left him in?

Cora. Did not these hands make that bed, and shelter for him? And is not this the veil that covered him?

Al. Here is a hut yet unobserved.

Cora. Ha! yes, yes! there lives the savage that has robbed me of my child. [*Beats at the door exclaiming*] Give me back my child—restore to me my boy!

Enter LAS-CASAS *from the Hut.*

Las-C. Who calls me from my wretched solitude?

Cora. Give me back my child!

Al. Almighty Powers! do my eyes deceive me! Las-Casas!

Las-C. Alonzo!—my beloved young friend!

Al. My revered instructor! [*Embracing.*

Cora. [*Returned.*] Wilt thou embrace this man before he restores my boy?

Al. Alas, my friend! in what a moment of misery do we meet!

Cora. Yet his look is goodness and humanity.—Good old man, have compassion on a wretched mother, and I will be thy servant while I live. But do not, for pity's sake—do not say, thou hast not seen him. [*Runs into the wood.*

Las-C. What can this mean?

Al. She is my wife. Just rescued from the Spaniards' prison, I learned she had fled to this wild forest. Hearing my voice, she left the child, and flew to meet me—he was left sleeping under yonder tree.

Las-C. How! didst thou leave him? [CORA *returns.*

Cora. O, thou art right!—right!—unnatural mother that I was. I left my child—I forsook my innocent——but I will fly to the earth's brink,—but I will find him. [*Runs out.*

Al. Forgive me, Las-Casas, I must follow her: for at night, I attempt brave Rolla's rescue.

Las-C. I will not leave thee, Alonzo! Thou must try to lead her to the right—that way lies thy camp—Wait not my infirm steps—I follow thee, my friend. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—The Out-post of the Spanish Camp, and a Bridge.

(Trumpets sound without.)

Almagro. [*Within.*] Bear him along—his story must be false. [*Entering.*

ROLLA *in chains, brought in by* SOLDIERS.

Rol. False! Rolla utter falsehood! I would I had thee in a desert with a troop around thee! and I but with my sword in this unshackled hand! [*Trumpets without.*

Alm. Is it to be credited that Rolla, the renowned Peruvian hero, should be detected like a spy, skulking through our camp?

Rol. Skulking!

Alm. But answer to the general—he is here.

Enter PIZARRO.

Piz. What do I see! Rolla!

Rol. O! to thy surprize, no doubt.

Piz. And bound too!

Rol. So fast, thou need'st not fear approaching me.

Alm. The guards surprized him, passing our out-post.

Piz. Release him instantly. Believe me, I regret this insult.

Rol. Thou feel'st then as thou ought'st.

Piz. Nor can I brook to see a warrior of Rolla's fame disarmed. Accept this, though it has been thy enemy's. [*Gives a sword.*] The Spaniards know the courtesy that's due to valour.

Rol. And the Peruvian how to forget offence.

Piz. May not Rolla and Pizarro cease to be foes?

Rol. When the sea divides us; yes! May I now depart!

Piz. Freely.

Rol. And shall I not again be intercepted?

Piz. No!—Let the word be given that Rolla passes freely.

Enter DAVILLA *and* SOLDIERS, *with the* CHILD.

Dav. Here are two soldiers captived yesterday, who have escaped from the Peruvian hold, and by the secret way we have so long endeavoured to discover.

Piz. Silence!—imprudent! Seest thou not—? [*Pointing to* ROLLA.

Dav. In their way, they found a Peruvian child, who seems——

Piz. What is the imp to me? Bid them toss it into the sea.

Rol. Gracious Heavens! it is Alonzo's child! —give it to me.

Piz. Ha! Alonzo's child! Welcome, thou pretty hostage. Now Alonzo is again my prisoner!

Rol. Thou wilt not keep the infant from its mother?

Piz. Will I not? What, when I shall meet Alonzo in the heat of the victorious fight, think'st thou I shall not have a check upon the valour of his heart, when he is reminded that a word of mine is this child's death?

Rol. I do not understand thee.

Piz. My vengeance has a long arrear of hate to settle with Alonzo! and this pledge may help to settle the account.

Rol. Man! Man! Art thou a man! Couldst thou hurt that innocent! By Heaven! it's smiling in thy face.

Piz. Tell me, does it resemble Cora?

Rol. Pizarro! thou hast set my heart on fire. If thou dost harm that child, think not his blood will sink into the barren sand. No! faithful to the eager hope that now trembles in this indignant heart, 'twill rise to the common God of nature and humanity, and cry aloud for vengeance on his accursed destroyer's head.

Piz. Be that peril mine.

Rol. [*Throwing himself at his feet.*] Behold me at thy feet. Me, Rolla!—Me, the preserver of thy life!—Me, that have never yet bent or bowed before created man!—In humble agony I sue to thee, prostrate I implore thee —but spare that child, and I will be thy slave.

Piz. Rolla! still art thou free to go—this boy remains with me.

Rol. Then was this sword Heaven's gift, not thine! [*Seizes the* CHILD.] Who moves one step to follow me dies upon the spot.

[*Exit, with the* CHILD.

Piz. Pursue him instantly—but spare his life. [*Exeunt* ALMAGRO *and* SOLDIERS.] With what fury he defends himself! Ha! he fells them to the ground—and now—

Enter ALMAGRO.

Alm. Three of thy brave soldiers are already victims to thy command to spare this madman's life; and if he once gain the thicket—

Piz. Spare him no longer. [*Exit* ALMAGRO.] Their guns must reach him—he'll yet escape —holloa to those horse—the Peruvian sees them—and now he turns among the rocks—then is his retreat cut off.

[ROLLA *crosses the wooden bridge, pursued by the* SOLDIERS—*they fire at him—a shot strikes him.*]

Piz. Now!—quick, quick, seize the child!—

[ROLLA *retreats by the back ground, bearing off the* CHILD.]

Re-enter ALMAGRO.

Alm. By hell! he has escaped! and with the child unhurt.

Dav. No—he bears his death with him—Believe me, I saw him struck upon the side.

Piz. But the child is saved—Alonzo's child! Oh! the furies of disappointed vengeance!

Alm. Away with the revenge of words—let us to deeds. Forget not we have acquired the knowledge of the secret pass, which through the rocky cavern's gloom, brings thee at once to the strong hold, where are lodged their women, and their treasures.

Piz. Right, Almagro! Swift as thy thought draw forth a daring and a chosen band—I will not wait for numbers. Stay, Almagro!—Valverde is informed Elvira dies to-day?

Alm. He is—and one request alone she——

Piz. I'll hear of none!

Alm. The boon is small—'tis but for the noviciate habit which you first beheld her in. She wishes not to suffer in the gaudy trappings which remind her of her shame.

Piz. Well, do as thou wilt—but tell Valverde, that at our return, as his life shall answer it, to let me hear that she is dead.

[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE III.—ATALIBA'S *Tent.*

Enter ATALIBA, *followed by* CORA *and* ALONZO.

Cora. Oh! avoid me not, Ataliba! To whom, but to her king, is the wretched mother to address her griefs? The gods refuse to hear my prayers. Did not my Alonzo fight for thee?—And will not my sweet boy, if thou'lt but restore him to me, one day fight thy battles too?

Al. Oh! my suffering love—my poor heart-broken Cora!—thou but woundest our sovereign's feeling soul, and not relievest thy own.

Cora. Is he our sovereign, and has he not the power to give me back my child?

Ata. When I reward desert, or can relieve my people, I feel what is the real glory of a king; when I hear them suffer, and cannot

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aid them, I mourn the impotence of all mortal power.

[*Voices behind.*] Rolla! Rolla! Rolla!

Enter ROLLA, *bleeding, with the* CHILD, *followed by Peruvians.*

Rol. Thy child! [*Gives the* CHILD *into* CORA'S *arms and falls.*

Cora. Oh God!—there's blood upon him!

Rol. Tis my blood, Cora!

Al. Rolla, thou diest!

Rol. For thee and Cora. [*Dies.*

Enter ORANO.

Ora. Treachery has revealed our asylum in the rocks. Even now the foe assails the peaceful band retired for protection there.

Al. Lose not a moment! Swords be quick! Your wives and children cry to you. Bear our loved hero's body in the van; 'twill raise the fury of our men to madness.—Now, fell PIZARRO! the death of one of us is near! Away! Be the word of assault, Revenge and Rolla! [*Exeunt; charge.*

SCENE IV.—A Recess among the rocks.

Enter PIZARRO, ALMAGRO, VALVERDE, *and Spanish Soldiers.*

Piz. Well!—if surrounded we must perish in the centre of them. Where do Rolla and Alonzo hide their heads?

Enter ALONZO, ORANO, *and Peruvians.*

Al. Alonzo answers thee, and Alonzo's sword shall speak for Rolla.

Piz. Thou know'st the advantage of thy numbers. Thou darest not singly face Pizarro.

Al. Peruvians, stir not a man! Be this contest only ours.

Piz. Spaniards!—observe ye the same.

[*Charge; they fight.* ALONZO'S *shield is broken, and he is beat down.*]

Piz. Now, traitor, to thy heart!

ELVIRA *enters, habited as when* PIZARRO *first beheld her.*—PIZARRO, *appalled, staggers back.*—ALONZO *renews the fight and slays him.*

ATALIBA *enters, and embraces* ALONZO.

Ata. My brave Alonzo!

Alm. Alonzo, we submit. Spare us! we will embark and leave the coast.

Val. Elvira will confess I saved her life; she has saved thine.

Al. Fear not. You are safe.

[SPANIARDS *lay down their arms.*

Elv. Valverde speaks the truth; nor could he think to meet me here. An awful impulse, which my soul could not resist, impelled me hither

Al. Noble Elvira! my preserver! How can I speak what I, Ataliba, and his rescued country, owe to thee! If amid this grateful nation thou wouldst remain——

Elv. Alonzo, no! the destination of my future life is fixed. Humbled in penitence, I will endeavour to atone the guilty errors, which, however masked by shallow cheerfulness, have long consumed my secret heart. When, by my sufferings purified, and penitence sincere, my soul shall dare address the throne of mercy in behalf of others, for thee, Alonzo, for thy Cora, and thy child—for thee, thou virtuous monarch, and the innocent race thou reignest over, shall Elvira's prayers address the God of nature.—Valverde thou hast preserved my life. Cherish humanity, avoid the foul examples thou hast viewed. Spaniards, returning to your native home, assure your rulers, they mistake the road to glory, or to power. Tell them, that the pursuits of avarice, conquest, and ambition, never yet made a people happy, or a nation great.

[*Exit; flourish of trumpets.*

Al. Ataliba, think not I wish to check the voice of triumph, when I entreat we first may pay the tribute due to our loved Rolla's memory.

A solemn March. Procession of Peruvian Soldiers, bearing ROLLA'S *body on a bier.*

DIRGE.—*Priests and Priestesses.*

Let tears of gratitude and wo,
For the brave Rolla ever flow!

ALONZO, CORA, &c. *mourn over the bier, as the Curtain slowly descends.*

EPILOGUE.

WRITTEN BY THE HON. WILLIAM LAMB.

ERE yet Suspense has still'd its throbbing fear,
Or Melancholy wip'd the grateful tear,
While e'en the miseries of a sinking State,
A Monarch's danger, and a Nation's fate,
Command not now your eyes with grief to flow,
Lost in a trembling Mother's nearer wo;
What moral lay shall Poetry rehearse,
Or how shall Elocution pour the verse
So sweetly, that its music shall repay
The lov'd illusion, which it drives away?
Mine is the task to rigid custom due,
To me ungrateful, as 'tis harsh to you,
To mar the work the tragic scene has wrought,
To rouse the mind that broods in pensive thought,
To scare Reflection, which, in absent dreams,
Still lingers musing on the recent themes;
Attention, ere with contemplation tir'd,
To turn from all that pleas'd, from all that fir'd;
To weaken lessons strongly now impress'd,
And chill the interest glowing in the breast—
Mine is the task; and be it mine to spare
The souls that pant, the griefs they see, to share;
Let me with no unhallow'd jest deride
The sigh, that sweet Compassion owns with pride—
The sigh of Comfort, to Affliction dear,
That Kindness heaves, that Virtue loves to hear.
E'en gay THALIA will not now refuse
This gentle homage to her Sister-Muse.
O ye, who listen to the plaintive strain,
With strange enjoyment, and with rapturous pain,
Who erst have felt the *Stranger's* lone despair,
And *Haller's* settled, sad, remorseless care,
Does *Rolla's* pure affection less excite
The inexpressible anguish of delight?
Do *Cora's* fears, which beat without control,
With less solicitude engross the soul?
Ah, no! your minds with kindred zeal approve
Maternal feeling, and heroic love.
You must approve: where man exists below,
In temperate climes, or 'midst drear wastes of snow;

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Or where the solar fires incessant flame,
Thy laws, all-powerful Nature are the same:
Vainly the Sophist boasts, he can explain
The causes of thy universal reign—
More vainly would his cold, presumptuous art
Disprove thy general empire o'er the heart:
A voice proclaims thee, that we must believe,
A voice, that surely speaks not to deceive:
That voice poor *Cora* heard, and closely press'd
Her darling infant to her fearful breast;
Distracted, dared the bloody field to tread,
And sought *Alonzo* through the heaps of dead,
Eager to catch the music of his breath,
Though faltering in the agonies of death,
To touch his lips, though pale and cold, once more,
And clasp his bosom, though it stream'd with gore;
That voice too, *Rolla* heard, and greatly brave,
His *Cora's* dearest treasure died to save,
Gave to the hopeless parent's arms her child,
Beheld her transports and expiring smiled.
That voice we hear—Oh! be its will obey'd!
'Tis Valour's impulse, and 'tis Virtue's aid—
It prompts to all Benevolence admires,
To all that heavenly Piety inspires,
To all that Praise repeats through lengthen'd years,
That Honour sanctifies, and time reveres.

PROLOGUE.

WRITTEN BY R. B. SHERIDAN, ESQ.

CHILL'D by rude gales, while yet reluctant May
Withholds the beauties of the vernal day;
As some fond maid, whom matron frowns reprove,
Suspends the smile her heart devotes to love;
The season's pleasures too delay their hour,
And Winter revels with protracted power:
Then blame not, Critics, if, thus late, we bring
A Winter Drama—but reproach—the Spring.
What prudent Cit dares yet the season trust,
Bask in his whisky, and enjoy the dust?
Horsed in Cheapside, scarce yet the gayer spark
Achieves the Sunday triumph of the Park;
Scarce yet you see him, dreading to be late,
Scour the New Road, and dash through Grosvenor-gate:—
Anxious—yet timorous too!—his steed to show,
The hack Bucephalus of Rotten-row.
Careless he seems, yet vigilantly sly,
Wooes the stray glance of ladies passing by,
While his off heel, insidiously aside,
Provokes the caper which he seems to chide.
Scarce rural Kensington due honour gains;
The vulgar verdure of her walk remains!
Where night-robed misses amble two by two,
Nodding to booted beaux——"How'do, how'do?"
With generous questions that no answer wait,
"How vastly full! An't you come vastly late?
I'n't it quite charming? When do you leave town?
A'n't you quite tired? Pray can we set down?"
These suburb pleasures of a London May,
Imperfect yet, we hail the cold delay;
Should our play please—and you're indulgent ever—
Be your decree—"'Tis better late than never."

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EVERY MAN IN HIS HUMOUR:

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY BEN JONSON.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

KITELY, a Merchant.
CAPTAIN BOBADIL.
KNO'WELL, an old Gentleman.
ED. KNO'WELL, his Son.
BRAIN-WORM, the Father's Man.
MR. STEPHEN, a Country Gull.
DOWNRIGHT, a plain Squire.
WELL-BRED, his Half-Brother.
JUSTICE CLEMENT, an old, merry Magistrate.
ROGER FORMAL, his Clerk.
MR. MATTHEW, the Town Gull.
CASH, Kitely's Man.
COB, a Water-Bearer.

DAME KITELY.
MRS. BRIDGET, Sister to Kitely.
TIB, Cob's Wife.

SCENE.—London.

PROLOGUE.

CRITIC's, your favour is our author's right—
The well known scenes we shall present to-night
Are no weak efforts of a modern pen,
But the strong touches of immortal Ben;
A rough old Bard, whose honest pride disdain'd
Applause itself, unless by merit gain'd——
And would to-night your loudest praise disclaim,
Should his great shade perceive the doubtful fame,
Not to his labours granted, but his name.
Boldly he wrote, and boldly told the age,
" He dar'd not prostitute the useful stage,
Or purchase their delight at such a rate,
As, for it, he himself must justly hate:
But rather begg'd they would be pleas'd to see
From him, such plays as other plays should be:
Would learn from him to scorn a motley scene,
And leave their monsters to be pleas'd with men."
Thus spoke the bard—and though the times are chang'd,
Since his free muse for fools the city rang'd,
And satire had not then appeared in state,
To lash the finer follies of the great,
Yet let not prejudice infect your mind,
Nor slight the gold, because not quite refin'd;
With no false niceness this performance view,
Nor damn for *low*, whate'er is just and true:
Sure to those scenes some honour should be paid,
Which *Camden* patroniz'd, and *Shakspeare* play'd;
Nature was Nature then, and still survives;
The garb may alter, but the substance lives.
Lives in this play——where each may find complete
His pictur'd self——Then favour the deceit—
Kindly forget the hundred years between;
Become *old* Britons, and admire *old* Ben.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Court-Yard before KNO'WELL'S *House.*

Enter KNO'WELL *and* BRAIN-WORM.

Kno. A goodly day toward! and a fresh morning! Brain-worm,
Call up young master. Bid him rise, Sir.
Tell him I have some business to employ him.
Bra. I will, Sir, presently.
Kno. But hear you, sirrah.
If he be at his book disturb him not.
Bra. Well, Sir. [*Exit.*
Kno. How happy yet should I esteem myself,
Could I, by any practice, wean the boy
From one vain course of study he affects.
He is a scholar, if a man may trust
The liberal voice of fame in her report,
Of good account, in both our universities:

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Either of which have favoured him with graces:
But their indulgence must not spring in me
A fond opinion that he cannot err.
Myself was once a student; and, indeed,
Fed with the self-same humour he is now,
Dreaming on nought but idle poetry,
That fruitless and unprofitable art,
Good unto none, but least to the professors,
Which, then, I thought the mistress of all knowledge:
But since time and the truth have wak'd my judgment,
And reason taught me better to distinguish
The vain from th' useful learnings——

Enter MASTER STEPHEN.

Cousin Stephen!
What news with you, that you are here so early?

Steph. Nothing, but e'en come to see how you do, uncle.

Kno. That's kindly done, you are welcome, coz.

Steph. Ay, I know that, Sir, I would not ha' come else. How doth my cousin Edward, uncle?

Kno. O, well, coz, go in and see: I doubt he be scarce stirring yet.

Steph. Uncle, afore I go in, can you tell me an' he have e'er a book of the sciences of hawking and hunting? I would fain borrow it.

Kno. Why, I hope you will not a-hawking now, will you?

Steph. No worse, but I'll practise against the next year, uncle. I have bought me a hawk, and a hood, and bells and all; I lack nothing but a book to keep it by.

Kno. O, most ridiculous!

Steph. Nay, look you now, you are angry, uncle. Why, you know, an' a man have not skill in the hawking and hunting languages now-a-days, I'll not give a rush for him. They are more studied than the Greek, or the Latin. He is for no gallant's company without 'em. And by Gad's lid I scorn it, I, so I do, to be a consort for every hum-drum, hang-'em scroyls, there's nothing in 'em, i' the world. What do you talk on it? Because I dwell at Hogsden, I shall keep company with none but the archers of Finsbury! or the citizens that come a-ducking to Islington ponds! A fine jest i'faith! slid, a gentleman mun show himself like a gentleman. Uncle, I pray you be not angry. I know what I have to do, I trow, I am no novice.

Kno. You are a prodigal, absurd coxcomb: go to!
Nay, never look at me, it's I that speak.
Take't as you will, Sir, I'll not flatter you.
Ha' you not yet found means enow to waste
That which your friends have left you, but you must
Go cast away your money on a kite,
And know not how to keep it when you've done?
O, it's comely! this will make you a gentleman!
Well, cousin, well! I see you are e'en past hope
Of all reclaim. Ay, so, now you're told on it,
You look another way.

Steph. What would you ha' me do?

Kno. What would I have you do! I'll tell you, kinsman;
Learn to be wise, and practise how to thrive;
That would I have thee do: and not to spend
Your coin on every bauble that you fancy,
Or every foolish brain that humours you.
I would not have you to invade each place,
Nor thrust yourself on all societies,
Till men's affections, or your own desert,
Should worthily invite you to your rank.
He that is so respectless in his courses,
Oft sells his reputation at cheap market.
Nor would I you should melt away yourself
In flashing bravery, lest while you affect
To make a blaze of gentry to the world,
A little puff and scorn extinguish it,
And you be left like an unsavoury snuff,
Whose property is only to offend.
I'd ha' you sober and contain yourself:
Not, that your sail be bigger than your boat:
But mod'rate your expenses now (at first)
As you may keep the same proportion still.
Nor stand so much on your gentility,
Which is an airy and mere borrow'd thing,
From dead men's dust and bones: and none of yours,
Except you make, or hold it. Who comes here?

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Save you, gentlemen.

Steph. Nay, we do not stand much on our gentility, friend; yet, you are welcome; and I assure you mine uncle here is a man of a thousand a-year, Middlesex land: he has but one son in all the world; I am his next heir (at the common law) Master Stephen, as simple as I stand here: if my cousin die (as there's hope he will). I have a pretty living o' my own too, beside, hard by here.

Serv. In good time, Sir.

Steph. In good time, Sir; why? and in very good time, Sir. You do not flout, friend, do you?

Serv. Not I, Sir.

Steph. Not you, Sir! you were not best, Sir; an' you should, here be them can perceive it, and that quickly too: go to. And they can give it again soundly too, an' need be.

Serv. Why, Sir, let this satisfy you: good faith, I had no such intent.

Steph. Sir, an' I thought you had, I would talk with you, and that presently.

Serv. Good Master Stephen, so you may, Sir, at your pleasure.

Steph. And so I would, Sir, good my saucy companion, an' you were out o' my uncle's ground, I can tell you; though I do not stand upon my gentility neither in't.

Kno. Cousin! cousin! will this ne'er be left?

Steph. Whoreson, base fellow! a mechanical serving man! By this cudgel, an' twere not for shame, I would—

Kno. What would you do, you peremptory gull?
If you cannot be quiet, get you hence.
You see, the honest man demeans himself
Modestly towards you, giving no reply
To your unseason'd, quarrelling, rude fashion:
And still you huff it, with a kind of carriage,
As void of wit, as of humanity.
Go, get you in, 'fore heaven, I am asham'd
Thou hast a kinsman's interest in me.

[*Exit* STEPHEN.

Serv. I pray you, Sir, is this Master Kno'well's house?

Kno. Yes, marry is't, Sir.

Serv. I should inquire for a gentleman here, one Master Edward Kno'well: do you know any such, Sir, I pray you?

Kno. I should forget myself else, Sir.

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Serv. Are you the gentleman? cry you mercy, Sir: I was required by a gentleman i' the city, as I rode out at this end of the town, to deliver you this letter, Sir.

Kno. To me, Sir! [*To his most selected friend,* MASTER EDWARD KNO'WELL.] What might the gentleman's name be, Sir, that sent it?

Serv. One Master Well-bred, Sir.

Kno. Master Well-bred! A young gentleman? Is he not?

Serv. The same, Sir; Master Kitely married his sister: the rich merchant i' the Old Jewry.

Kno. You say very true. Brain-worm!

Enter BRAIN-WORM.

Brain. Sir!

Kno. Make this honest friend drink here.—
Pray you go in.
[*Exeunt* BRAIN-WORM *and* SERVANT.
This letter is directed to my son:
Yet I am Edward Kno'well too, and may,
With the safe conscience of good manners, use
The fellow's error to my satisfaction.
Well, I will break it ope (old men are curious)
Be it but for the style's sake, and the phrase,
To see if both do answer my son's praises,
Who is, almost, grown the idolater
Of this young Well-bred: What have we here?—What's this?

[Reads.] *Why, Ned, I beseech thee, hast thou forsworn all thy friends i' th' Old Jewry? or dost thou think us all Jews that inhabit there? Leave thy vigilant father alone, to number over his green apricots, evening and morning, o' the north-west wall: an' I had been his son, I had saved him the labour long since; if taking in all the young wenches that pass by, at the back-door, and coddling every kernel of the fruit for 'em would ha' served. But pr'ythee, come over to me, quickly, this morning: I have such a present for thee (our Turkey company never sent the like to the Grand Signior). One is a rhymer, Sir, o' your own batch, your own leaven; but doth think himself poet-major o' the town; willing to be shown and worthy to be seen. The other—I will not venture his description with you till you come, because I would have you make hither with an appetite. If the worst of 'em be not worth your journey, draw your bill of charges, as unconscionable as any Guildhall verdict will give it you, and you shall be allowed your* Viaticum.

From THE WINDMILL.

From the Burdello it might come as well;
The Spittal: is this the man,
My son hath sung so, for the happiest wit,
The choicest brain, the times hath sent us forth?
I know not what he may be in the arts;
Nor what in schools: but surely, for his manners,
I judge him a profane and dissolute wretch:
Worse, by profession of such great good gifts,
Being the master of so loose a spirit.
Why, what unhallow'd ruffian would have writ,
In such a scurrilous manner, to a friend?
Why should he think, I tell my apricots?
Or play th' Hesperian dragon with my fruit,
To watch it? Well, my son, I 'ad thought
You'd had more judgment, t' have made election,
Of your companions, than t' have ta'en on trust
Such petulant, jeering gamesters, that can spare
No argument or subject from their jest.
But I perceive, affection makes a fool
Of any man, too much the father. Brain-worm!

Enter BRAIN-WORM.

Brain. Sir!

Kno. Is the fellow gone that brought this letter?

Brain. Yes, Sir, a pretty while since.

Kno. And where's your young master?

Brain. In his chamber, Sir.

Kno. He spake not with the fellow, did he?

Brain. No, Sir, he saw him not.

Kno. Take you this letter, seal it, and deliver it my son;
But with no notice that I have opened it, on your life.

Brain. O lord, Sir, that were a jest indeed!

Kno. I am resolv'd; I will not stop his journey,
Nor practise any violent means to stay
The unbridled course of youth in him: for that
Restrain'd, grows more impatient; and, in kind,
Like to the eager, but the generous grey-hound,
Who, ne'er so little from his game withheld,
Turns head, and leaps up at his holder's throat.
There is a way of winning, more by love,
And urging of the modesty, than fear:
Force works on servile natures, not the free.
He that's compelled to goodness, may be good;
But, 'tis but for that fit: where others, drawn
By softness, and example, get a habit.
Then if they stray, but warn 'em; and the same
They would for virtue do, they'll do for shame.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—YOUNG KNO'WELL'S *Study.*

Enter EDWARD KNO'WELL *and* BRAIN-WORM.

E. Kno. Did he open it, say'st thou?

Brain. Yes, o' my word, Sir, and read the contents.

E. Kno. That's bad. What countenance, pray thee, made he i' the reading of it? Was he angry or pleased!

Brain. Nay, Sir, I saw him not read it, nor open it, I assure your worship.

E. Kno. No! How know'st thou then, that he did either?

Brain. Marry, Sir, because he charged me on my life, to tell nobody that he opened it: which, unless he had done, he would never fear to have it revealed.

E. Kno. That's true: well, I thank thee, Brain-worm.

Enter MASTER STEPHEN.

Steph. O! Brain-worm, didst thou not see a fellow here, in a what sha' call doublet? He brought mine uncle a letter e'en now.

Brain. Yes, Master Stephen, what of him?

Steph. O! I ha' such a mind to beat him—where is he? canst thou tell?

Brain. Faith, he is not of that mind: he is gone, Master Stephen.

Steph. Gone! which way? When went he? How long since?

Brain. He is rid hence. He took horse at the street-door.

Steph. And I stayed i' the fields! Whoreson, Scanderbeg rogue! O that I had but a horse to fetch him back again!

Brain. Why, you may ha' my master's gelding to save your longing, Sir.

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Steph. But I ha' no boots, that's the spite on't.

Brain. Why, a fine whisp of hay, rolled hard, Master Stephen.

Steph. No, faith, it's no boot to follow him now; let him e'en go and hang. Pr'ythee, help to truss me a little. He does so vex me—

Brain. You'll be worse vexed when you are trussed, Master Stephen. Best keep unbraced, and walk yourself till you be cold, your choler may founder you else.

Steph. By my faith, and so I will, now thou tell'st me on't. How dost thou like my leg, Brainworm?

Brain. A very good leg, Master Stephen: but the woollen stocking does not commend it so well.

Steph. Foh, the stockings be good enough, now summer is coming on, for the dust; I'll have a pair of silk against winter, that I go to dwell i' the town. I think my leg would show in a silk hose.

Brain. Believe me, Master Stephen, rarely well.

Steph. In sadness, I think it would; I have a reasonable good leg.

Brain. You have an excellent good leg, Master Stephen; but I cannot stay to praise it longer now; I am very sorry for't. [*Exit.*

Steph. Another time will serve, Brain-worm. Gramercy, for this.

Enter YOUNG KNO'WELL.

E. Kno. Ha, ha, ha!

Steph. 'Slid! I hope he laughs not at me; an' he do——

E. Kno. Here was a letter, indeed, to be intercepted by a man's father! He cannot but think most virtuously both of me and the sender, sure, that make the careful costermonger of him in our familiar epistles. I wish I knew the end of it, which now is doubtful, and threatens—What! my wise cousin! Nay, then I'll furnish our feast with one gull more toward the mess. He writes to me of a brace, and here's one, that's three: O, for a fourth! Fortune! if ever thou'lt use thine eyes, I entreat thee——

Steph. O, now I see who he laughs at. He laughs at somebody in that letter. By this good light, an' he had laughed at me——

E. Kno. How now, cousin Stephen, melancholy?

Steph. Yes, a little. I thought you had laughed at me, cousin.

E. Kno. Why, what an' I had, coz, what would you ha' done?

Steph. By this light, I would ha' told mine uncle.

E. Kno. Nay, if you would ha' told your uncle, I did laugh at you, coz.

Steph. Did you, indeed?

E. Kno. Yes, indeed.

Steph. Why, then——

E. Kno. What then?

Steph. I am satisfied; it is sufficient.

E. Kno. Why, be so, gentle coz. And I pray you, let me entreat a courtesy of you. I am sent for this morning, by a friend i' the Old Jewry, to come to him: it's but crossing over the fields to Moor-gate: will you bear me company? I protest it is not to draw you into bond, or any plot against the state, coz.

Steph. Sir, that's all one, an 'twere; you shall command me, twice so far as Moor-gate, to do you good, in such a matter. Do you think I would leave you? I protest——

E. Kno. No, no, you shall not protest, coz.

Steph. By my fackins, but I will, by your leave; I'll protest more to my friend, than I'll speak of at this time.

E. Kno. You speak very well, coz.

Steph. Nay, not so, neither; you shall pardon me: but I speak to serve my turn.

E. Kno. Your turn, coz! Do you know what you say? A gentleman of your sort, parts, carriage, and estimation, to talk o' your turn in this company, and to me, alone, like a water-bearer at a conduit! fy! A wight, that, hitherto, his every step hath left the stamp of a great foot behind him, at every word the savour of a strong spirit; and he, this man, so graced, so gilded, or, as I may say, so tinfoiled by nature—Come, come, wrong not the quality of your desert, with looking downward, coz; but hold up your head, so; and let the idea of what you are be pourtrayed i' your face, that men may read i' your physiognomy, *here, within this place, is to be seen the true and accomplished monster, or miracle of nature,* which is all one. What think you of this, coz?

Steph. Why I do think of it; and will be more proud, and melancholy, and gentlemanlike, than I have been, I'll assure you.

E. Kno. Why that's resolute, Master Stephen! [*Aside.*] Now, if I can but hold him up to his height, as it is happily begun, it will do well for a suburb humour: we may hap have a match with the city, and play him for forty pounds. Come, coz.

Steph. I'll follow you.

E. Kno. Follow me; you must go before.

Steph. Nay, an' I must, I will: Pray you, show me, good cousin. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—The Street before COB'S *House.*

Enter MR. MATTHEW.

Mat. I think this be the house. What, hoa!

Enter COB *from the House.*

Cob. Who's there? O, Master Matthew! gi' your worship good-morrow.

Mat. What, Cob! How dost thou, good Cob? Dost thou inhabit here, Cob?

Cob. Ay, Sir, I and my lineage ha' kept a poor house here in our days.

Mat. Cob, canst thou show me of a gentleman, one Captain Bobadil, where his lodging is?

Cob. O, my guest, Sir, you mean!

Mat. Thy guest! Alas! ha, ha.

Cob. Why do you laugh, Sir? Do you not mean Captain Bobadil?

Mat. Cob, pray thee, advise thyself well: do not wrong the gentleman and thyself too. I dare be sworn he scorns thy house. He! he lodge in such a base, obscure place as thy house! Tut, I know his disposition so well, he would not lie in thy bed, if thou'ldst gi' it him.

Cob. I will not give it him, though, Sir. Mass, I thought somewhat was in't, we could not get him to bed all night! Well, Sir, though he lies not o' my bed, he lies o' my bench. An't please you to go up, Sir, you shall find him with two cushions under his head, and his cloak wrapped about him, as though he had neither won nor lost; and yet, I warrant, he ne'er

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cast better in his life, than he has done to-night.

Mat. Why, was he drunk?

Cob. Drunk, Sir! you hear not me say so. Perhaps he swallowed a tavern-token, or some such device, Sir: I have nothing to do withal. I deal with water, and not with wine! Gi' me my bucket there, hoa! God b' wi' you, Sir, it's six o'clock: I should ha' carried two turns by this. What hoa! my stopple! come.

Mat. Lie in a water-bearer's house! A gentleman of his havings! Well, I'll tell him my mind.

Cob. What, Tib, show this gentleman up to the captain. [TIB *shows* MASTER MAT. *into the house.*] You should ha' some now, would take this Mr. Matthew to be a gentleman at the least. His father is an honest man, a worshipful fishmonger, and so forth: and now does he creep and wriggle into acquaintance with all the brave gallants about the town, such as my guest is. O, my guest is a fine man! he does swear the legiblest of any man christened: by St. George—the foot of Pharaoh—the body of me—as I am a gent'eman—and a soldier; such dainty oaths! and withal, he does take this same filthy roguish tobacco, the finest and cleanliest! It would do a man good to see the fume come forth out at's tonnels! Well, he owes me forty shillings, my wife lent him out of her purse by six-pence a time, besides his lodging; I would I had it. I shall ha' it, he says, the next action. Helter skelter, hang sorrow, care'll kill a cat, uptails all, and a louse for the hangman. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.—A Room in COB'S *House.*

BOBADIL *discovered upon a bench.* TIB *enters to him.*

Bob. Hostess, hostess!

Tib. What say you, Sir?

Bob. A cup o' thy small beer, sweet hostess.

Tib. Sir, there's a gentleman below would speak with you.

Bob. A gentleman! 'ods so, I'm not within.

Tib. My husband told him you were, Sir.

Bob. What a plague—what meant he?

Mat. [*Within.*] Captain Bobadil!

Bob. Who's there!—Take away the bason, good hostess. Come up, Sir.

Tib. He would desire you to come up Sir. You come into a cleanly house here.

Enter MR. MATTHEW.

Mat. 'Save you, Sir; 'save you, captain.

Bob. Gentle Master Matthew! is it you, Sir? Please you, sit down.

Mat. Thank you, good captain; you may see I am somewhat audacious.

Bob. Not so, Sir. I was requested to supper, last night, by a sort of gallants, where you were wished for, and drank to, I assure you.

Mat. Vouchsafe me by whom, good captain.

Bob. Marry, by young Well-bred, and others. Why, hostess! a stool here for this gentleman.

Mat. No haste, Sir, 'tis very well.

Bob. Body of me! it was so late ere we parted last night, I can scarce open my eyes yet: I was but new risen as you came. How passes the day abroad, Sir you can tell.

Mat. Faith, some half hour to seven. Now, trust me, you have an exceeding fine lodging here, very neat, and private!

Bob. Ay, Sir, sit down. I pray you, Master Matthew, in any case, possess no gentleman of our acquaintance with notice of my lodging.

Mat. Who? I, Sir? No.

Bob. Not that I need to care who know it, for the cabin is convenient; but in regard I would not be too popular and generally visited, as some are.

Mat. True, captain, I conceive you.

Bob. For, do you see, Sir, by the heart of valour in me, except it be to some peculiar and choice spirits, to whom I am extraordinarily engaged, as yourself, or so, I could not extend thus far.

Mat. O lord, Sir, I resolve so.

[*Pulls out a paper, and reads.*

Bob. I confess, I love a cleanly and quiet privacy, above all the tumult and roar of fortune. What new piece ha' you there? Read it.

Mat. [Reads.] *To thee, the purest object of my sense,*
The most refined essence Heaven covers,
Send I these lines, wherein I do commence
The happy state of turtle-billing lovers.

Bob. 'Tis good; proceed, proceed. Where's this?

Mat. This, Sir? a toy of mine own, in my nonage: the infancy of my muses. But when will you come and see my study? Good faith, I can show you some very good things I have done of late—That boot becomes your leg, passing well, captain, methinks.

Bob. So, so; it's the fashion gentlemen now use.

Mat. Troth, captain, and now you speak o' the fashion, Master Well-bred's elder brother and I are fallen out exceedingly: this other day, I happened to enter into some discourse of a hanger, which, I assure you, both for fashion and workmanship, was most peremptory beautiful, and gentleman-like; yet he condemned, and cried it down, for the most pied and ridiculous that ever he saw.

Bob. 'Squire Downright, the half-brother, was't not?

Mat. Ay, Sir, George Downright.

Bob. Hang him, rook! He! why, he has no more judgment than a malt-horse. By St. George, I wonder you'd lose a thought upon such an animal! The most peremptory absurd clown of Christendom, this day, he is holden. I protest to you, as I am a gentleman and a soldier, I ne'er changed words with his like. By his discourse he should eat nothing but hay. He was born for the manger, pannier, or pack-saddle! He has not so much as a good phrase in his belly, but all old iron and rusty proverbs! a good commodity for some smith to make hob-nails of.

Mat. Ay, and he thinks to carry it away with his manhood still, where he comes. He brags he will gi' me the bastinado, as I hear.

Bob. How! he the bastinado! how came he by that word, trow?

Mat. Nay, indeed, he said cudgel me; I term'd it so, for my more grace.

Bob. That may be; for I was sure it was none of his word. But when! when said he so?

Mat. Faith, yesterday, they say: a young gallant, a friend of mine told me so.

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Bob. By the foot of Pharaoh, an' 'twere my case now, I should send him a challenge, presently. The bastinado! A most proper and sufficient dependence, warranted by the great Caranza. Come hither you shall challenge him. I'll show you a trick or two, you shall kill him with at pleasure: the first, stoccata, if you will, by this air.

Mat. Indeed, you have absolute knowledge i' the mystery, I have heard, Sir.

Bob. Of whom? Of whom ha' you heard it, I beseech you?

Mat. Troth, I have heard it spoken of by divers, that you have very rare and un-in-one-breath-utterable skill, Sir.

Bob. By Heaven, no, not I; no skill i' the earth; some small rudiments i' the science, as to know my time, distance, or so. I have profest it more for noblemen, and gentlemen's use than mine own practice, I assure you. I'll give you a lesson. Look you, Sir. Exalt not your point above this state, at any hand; so, Sir. Come on! O, twine your body more about, that you may fall to a more sweet, comely, gentleman-like guard. So, indifferent. Hollow your body more, Sir, thus. Now, stand fast o' your left leg; note your distance; keep your due proportion of time—Oh, you disorder your point most irregularly! Come, put on your cloak, and we'll go to some private place, where you are acquainted, some tavern or so—and have a bit—What money ha' you about you, Mr. Matthew?

Mat. Faith, I ha' not past a two shillings, or so.

Bob. 'Tis somewhat with the least: but come, we will have a bunch of radishes, and salt, to taste our wine; and a pipe o' tobacco, to close the orifice of the stomach: and then we'll call upon young Well-bred. Perhaps we shall meet the Corydon, his brother, there, and put him to the question. Come along, Mr. Matthew. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Warehouse belonging to KITELY.

Enter KITELY, CASH, *and* DOWNRIGHT.

Kite. Thomas, come hither.
There lies a note within, upon my desk,
Here, take my key—It is no matter, neither.
Where is the boy?

Cash. Within, Sir, i' the warehouse.

Kite. Let him tell over, straight, that Spanish gold,
And weigh it, with the pieces of eight. Do you
See the delivery of those silver stuffs
To Mr. Lucar. Tell him, if he will,
He shall ha' the grograms at the rate I told him,
And I will meet him, on the Exchange, anon.

Cash. Good, Sir. [*Exit.*

Kite. Do you see that fellow, brother Downright?

Dow. Ay, what of him?

Kite. He is a jewel, brother,——
I took him of a child, up, at my door,
And christened him; gave him my own name, Thomas;
Since bred him at the hospital; where proving
A toward imp, I call'd him home, and taught him
So much, as I have made him my cashier,
And find him, in his place, so full of faith,
That I durst trust my life into his hands.

Dow. So would not I in any bastard's, brother,
As, it is like, he is, although I knew
Myself his father. But you said you'd somewhat
To tell me, gentle brother, what is't? what is't?

Kite. Faith, I am very loath to utter it,
As fearing it may hurt your patience:
But that I know your judgment is of strength
Against the nearness of affection——

Dow. What need this circumstance! Pray you be direct.

Kite. I will not say how much I do ascribe
Unto your friendship; nor in what regard
I hold your love: but let my past behaviour,
And usage of your sister, but confirm
How well I've been affected to your——

Dow. You are too tedious, come to the matter, the matter.

Kite. Then, without further ceremony, thus:
My brother, Well-bred, Sir, I know not how;
Of late, is much declined in what he was,
And greatly alter'd in his disposition.
When he came first to lodge here in my house,
Ne'er trust me, if I were not proud of him:
Methought he bare himself in such a fashion,
So full of man, and sweetness in his carriage,
And what was chief, it show'd not borrow'd in him,
But all he did, became him as his own,
And seem'd as perfect, proper, and possess'd,
As breath with life, or colour with the blood:
But now his course is so irregular,
So loose, affected, and deprived of grace,
And he himself withal so far fallen off
From that first place, as scarce no note remains,
To tell men's judgments where he lately stood.
He's grown a stranger to all due respect;
Forgetful of his friends, and not content
To stale himself in all societies,
He makes my house here, common as a mart,
A theatre, a public receptacle
For giddy humour, and diseased riot;
And here, as in a tavern or a stew,
He and his wild associates spend their hours
In repetition of lascivious jests:
Swear, leap, drink, dance, and revel night by night,
Control my servants; and indeed what not!

Dow. 'Sdains, I know not what I should say to him i' the whole world! He values me at a cracked three-farthings, for ought I see. It will never out o' the flesh that's bred i' the bone! I have told him enough, one would think, if that would serve. Well; he knows what to trust to, 'fore George. Let him spend and spend, and domineer till his heart ache; an' he think to be relieved by me, when he is got into one o' your city-pounds, the counters, he has the wrong sow by the ear, i' faith, and claps his dish at a wrong man's door. I'll lay my hand o' my half-penny, ere I part with't, to fetch him out, I'll assure him.

Kite. Nay, good brother, let it not trouble you thus.

Dow. 'Sdeath, he made me—I could eat my very spur-leathers for anger! But, why are you so tame? Why do not you speak to him, and tell him how he disquiets your house?

Kite. O, there are divers reasons to dissuade, brother;
But, would yourself vouchsafe to travail in it,
Though but with plain and easy circumstance.
It would both come much better to his sense
And savour less of stomach, or of passion.

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You are his elder brother, and that title
Both gives and warrants you authority:
Whereas, if I should intimate the least,
It would but add contempt to his neglect,
Heap worse on ill, make up a pile of hatred,
That, in the rearing, would come tott'ring down,
And, in the ruin, bury all our love.
Nay, more than this, brother, if I should speak,
He would be ready, from his heat of humour,
And overflowing of the vapour in him,
To blow the ears of his familiars
With the false breath of telling what disgraces
And low disparagements I had put upon him,
Whilst they, Sir, to relieve him in the fable,
Make their loose comments upon every word,
Gesture, or look, I use; mock me all o'er;
And, out of their impetuous rioting phant'sies,
Beget some slander that shall dwell with me.
And what would that be, think you? Marry this:
They would give out, because my wife is fair,
Myself but newly married, and my sister
Here sojourning a virgin in my house,
That I were jealous! Nay, as sure as death,
That they would say. And how that I had quarrelled
My brother, purposely, thereby to find
An apt pretext to banish them my house.

Dow. Mass, perhaps so: they're like enough to do it.

Kite. Brother, they would, believe it: so should I,
Like one of these penurious quack-salvers,
But set the bills up to mine own disgrace,
And try experiments upon myself;
Lend scorn and envy opportunity
To stab my reputation and good name.—

Enter MATTHEW *and* BOBADIL.

Mat. I will speak to him—

Bob. Speak to him! Away! by the foot of Pharaoh, you shall not; you shall not do him that grace.

Kite. What's the matter, Sirs?

Bob. The time of day, to you, gentlemen o' the house. Is Mr. Well-bred stirring?

Dow. How then? what should he do?

Bob. Gentleman of the house, it is you: is he within, Sir?

Kite. He came not to his lodging to-night, Sir, I assure you.

Dow. Why, do you hear? you!

Bob. The gentleman-citizen hath satisfied me, I'll talk to no scavenger.

[*Exeunt* BOB. *and* MAT.

Dow. How, scavenger! stay, Sir, stay!

Kite. Nay, brother Downright.

Dow. 'Heart! stand you away an' you love me.

Kite. You shall not follow him now, I pray you, brother; good faith you shall not: I will overrule you.

Dow. Ha! scavenger! Well, go to, I say little: but by this good day (God forgive me I should swear) if I put it up so, say I am the rankest coward ever lived. 'Sdains, an' I swallow this, I'll ne'er draw my sword in sight of Fleet-street again, while I live; I'll sit in a barn with Madge Howlet, and catch mice first. Scavenger!

Kite. Oh, do not fret yourself thus, never think on't.

Dow. These are my brother's consorts, these! these are his comrades, his walking mates! he's a gallant, a cavaliero too, right hangman cut! Let me not live, and I could not find in my heart to swinge the whole gang of 'em, one after another: and begin with him first. I am grieved it should be said he is my brother, and take these courses. Well, as he brews so he shall drink, for George, again. Yet, he shall hear on't, and that tightly too, an' I live, i faith.

Kite. But, brother, let your reprehension then
Run in an easy current, not o'er high,
Carried with rashness, or devouring choler;
But rather use the soft persuading way,
More winning than enforcing the consent.

Dow. Ay, ay, let me alone for that, I warrant you. [*Bell rings.*

Kite. How now! Oh, the bell rings to breakfast.
Brother, I pray you, go in, and bear my wife
Company till I come; I'll but give order
For some despatch of business to my servant—

Dow. I will—Scavenger!—scavenger!—

[*Exit.*

Kite. Well, tho' my troubled spirit's somewhat eas'd,
It's not repos'd in that security
As I could wish: but, I must be content.
Howe'er I set a face on't to the world,
Would I had lost this finger, at a venture,
So Well-bred had ne'er lodg'd within my house.
Why't cannot be, where there is such resort
Of wanton gallants and young revellers,
That any woman should be honest long.
Is't like that factious beauty will preserve
The public weal of chastity unshaken,
When such strong motives muster, and make head
Against her single peace? No, no. Beware.
When mutual appetite doth meet to treat,
And spirts of one kind and quality
Come once to parley, in the pride of blood,
It is no slow conspiracy that follows.
Well, to be plain, if I but thought the time
Had answered their affections, all the world
Should not persuade me, but I were a cuckold!
Marry, I hope they ha' not got that start;
For opportunity hath balk'd them yet,
And shall do still, while I have eyes and ears
To attend the impositions of my heart.
My presence shall be as an iron-bar,
'Twixt the conspiring motions of desire:
Yea, every look or glance mine eye ejects,
Shall check occasion, as one doth his slave,
When he forgets the limits of prescription.

Enter DAME KITELY.

Dame. Sister Bridget, pray you fetch down the rose-water above in the closet. Sweetheart, will you come in to breakfast?

Kite. An' she have overheard me now!

Dame. I pray thee, good muss, we stay for you.

Kite. By Heaven, I would not for a thousand angels.

Dame. What ails you, sweetheart? are you not well? Speak, good muss.

Kite. Troth my head aches extremely, on a sudden.

Dame. Oh, the lord!

Kite. How now! what!

Dame. Alas, how it burns! Muss, keep you warm; good truth it is this new disease; there's a number are troubled withal. For love's sake, sweetheart, come in, out of the air.

Kite. How simple and how subtle are her answers!

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A new disease, and many troubled with it!
Why true! she heard me, all the world to nothing.

Dame. I pray thee, good sweetheart, come; the air will do you harm, in troth.

Kite. I'll come to you, presently; 'twill way, I hope.

Dame. Pray Heaven it do. [*Exit.*

Kite. A new disease! I know not, new or old,
But it may well be call'd poor mortals' plague:
For, like a pestilence, it doth infect
The houses of the brain. First, it begins
Solely to work upon the phantasy,
Filling her seat with such pestiferous air
As soon corrupts the judgment, and from thence
Sends like contagion to the memory;
Still to each other giving the infection,
Which, as a subtile vapour, spreads itself
Confusedly through every sensive part,
Till not a thought, or motion in the mind,
Be free from the black poison of suspect.
Ah, but what misery it is to know this!
Or, knowing it, to want the mind's direction
In such extremes! Well, I will once more strive,
In spite of this black cloud, myself to be,
And shake the fever off, that thus shakes me.
[*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*Moorfields.*

Enter BRAIN-WORM, *disguised like a Soldier.*

Brain. 'Slid, I cannot choose but laugh to see myself translated thus. Now I must create an intolerable sort of lies, or my present profession loses the grace; and yet the lie to a man of my coat is as ominous a fruit as the Fico. O, Sir, it holds for good polity ever, to have that outwardly in vilest estimation that inwardly is most dear to us. So much for my borrowed shape. Well, the truth is, my old master intends to follow my young, dry-foot, over Moorfields to London this morning: now I, knowing of this hunting match, or rather conspiracy, and to insinuate with my young master, (for so must we that are blue-waiters, and men of hope and service do) have got me afore in this disguise, determining here to lie in ambuscade, and intercept him in the midway. If I can but get his cloak, his purse, his hat, nay, any thing to cut him off, that is, to stay his journey—*Veni, vidi, vici,* I may say with captain Cæsar; I am made for ever, i' faith. Well, now must I practise to get the true garb of one of those lance knights, my arm here, and my——Young master! and his cousin Mr. Stephen, as I am a true counterfeit man of war, and no soldier! [*Retires.*

Enter ED. KNO'WELL *and* MASTER STEPHEN.

E. Kno. So, Sir, and how then, coz?

Steph. 'Sfoot, I have lost my purse, I think.

E. Kno. How! lost your purse! Where? When had you it?

Steph. I cannot tell: stay.

Brain. 'Slid, I am afraid they will know me, would I could get by them! [*Aside.*

E. Kno. What? ha' you it?

Steph. No, I think I was bewitched, I—

E. Kno. Nay, do not weep the loss, hang it, let it go.

Steph. Oh, it's here—No, an' it had been lost, I had not cared, but for a jet-ring Mistress Mary sent me.

E. Kno. A jet-ring! on, the poesy, the poesy!

Steph. Fine, i' faith! *Though fancy sleep, my love is deep;* meaning that though I did not fancy her, yet she loved me dearly.

E. Kno. Most excellent!

Steph. And then I sent her another, and my poesy was, *The deeper the sweeter, I'll be judged by St. Peter.*

E. Kno. How by St. Peter? I do not conceive that.

Steph. Marry, St. Peter, to make up the metre.

E. Kno. well, there the saint was your good patron; he helped you at your need: thank him, thank him.

Brain. I cannot take leave on 'em so; I will venture, come what will. [*Aside.*]—Gentlemen, please you change a few crowns, for a very excellent good blade, here? I am a poor gentleman, a soldier, that, in the better state of my fortunes, scorned so mean a refuge, but now it is the humour of necessity to have it so. You seem to be, gentlemen, well affected to martial men, else I should rather die with silence than live with shame: however, vouchsafe to remember, it is my want speaks, not myself. This condition agrees not with my spirit.——

E. Kno. Where hast thou served?

Brain. May it please you, Sir, in all the late wars of Bohemia, Hungaria, Dalmatia, Poland; where not, Sir? I have been a poor servitor by sea and land, any time these fourteen years, and followed the fortunes of the best commanders in Christendom. I was twice shot at the taking of Aleppo, once at the relief of Vienna; I have been at Marseilles, Naples, and the Adriatic gulf; a gentleman-slave in the galleys thrice, where I was most dangerously shot in the head, through both the thighs: and yet, being thus maimed, I am void of maintenance; nothing left me but my scars, the noted marks of my resolution.

Steph. How will you sell this rapier, friend?

Brain. Generous Sir, I refer it to your own judgment; you are a gentleman, give me what you please.

Steph. True, I am a gentleman, I know that, friend: but what though? I pray you say, what would you ask?

Brain. I assure you the blade may become the side or thigh of the best prince in Europe.

E. Kno. Ay, with a velvet scabbard.

Steph. Nay, and't be mine, it shall have a velvet scabbard, coz, that's flat; I'd not wear it as 'tis, an' you would give me an angel.

Brain. At your worship's pleasure, Sir; nay, it is a most pure Toledo.

Steph. I had rather it were a Spaniard; but tell me what shall I give you for t? An' it had a silver hilt——

E. Kno. Come, come, you shall not buy it; hold, there's a shilling, fellow, take thy rapier.

Steph. Why, but I will buy it now, because you say so; and there's another shilling, fellow: I scorn to be outbidden. What, shall I walk with a cudgel, like a higgin-bottom, and may have a rapier for money.

E. Kno. You may buy one in the city.

Steph. Tut, I'll buy this i' the field, so I will; I have a mind to't, because 'tis a field rapier. Tell me your lowest price.

E. Kno. You shall not buy it, I say.

Steph. By this money but I will, though I give more than 'tis worth

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E. Kno. Come away, you are a fool.

Steph. Friend, I am a fool, that's granted: but I'll have it for that word's sake. Follow me for your money.

Brain. At your service, Sir. [*Exeunt.*

Enter KNO'WELL.

Kno. I cannot lose the thought yet of this letter
Sent to my son; nor leave to admire the change
Of manners, and the breeding of our youth
Within the kingdom, since myself was one.
When I was young, he liv'd not in the stews
Durst have conceived a scorn, and utter'd it,
On a gray head: age was authority
Against a buffoon; and a man had then
A certain reverence paid unto his years
That had none due unto his life.
But now we are fall'n; youth from their fear,
And age from that which bred it, good example. [parents,
Nay, would ourselves were not the first, even
That did destroy the hopes in our own children;
Or they not learn'd our vices in their cradles,
And suck'd in our ill customs with their milk;
Ere all their teeth be born, or they can speak,
We make their palates cunning! The first words [jests.
We form their tongues with, are licentious
Can it call whore, cry bastard; O, then kiss it; [ling!
A witty child! Can't swear; the father's dar-
Give it two plums. Nay, rather than't shall learn [it!
No bawdy song, the mother herself will teach
But this is in the infancy;
When it puts on the breeches,
It will put off all this. Ay, it is like;
When it is gone into the bone already!
No, no: this dye goes deeper than the coat,
Or shirt, or skin; it stains unto the liver
And heart in some: and rather that it should not,
Note what we fathers do; look how we live;
What mistresses we keep; at what expense;
And teach them all bad ways to buy affliction;
Well, I thank Heav'n, I never yet was he,
That travell'd with my son before sixteen,
To show him the Venetian courtezans,
Nor read the grammar of cheating I had made
To my sharp boy at twelve; repeating still
The rule, get money, still get money, boy,
No matter by what means.
These are the trades of fathers now. However
My son, I hope, hath met within my threshold
None of these household precedents; which are strong
And swift, to rape youth to their precipice.
But let the house at home be ne'er so clean
Swept, or kept sweet from filth
If he will live abroad with his companions,
In riot and misrule, 'tis worth a fear.
Nor is the danger of conversing less
Than all that I have mentioned of example.

Enter BRAIN-WORM.

Brain. My master! Nay, faith have at you; I am flesh'd now, I have sped so well; though I must attack you in a different way. Worshipful Sir, I beseech you, respect the state of a poor soldier! I am ashamed of this base course of life, (God's my comfort,) but extremity provokes me to't: what remedy?

Kno. I have not for you now.

Brain. By the faith I bear unto truth, gentleman, it is no ordinary custom in me, but only to preserve manhood, I protest to you, a man I have been, a man I may be, by your sweet bounty.

Kno. Pr'ythe, good friend, be satisfied.

Brain. Good Sir, by that hand you must do the part of a kind gentleman, in lending a poor soldier the price of two cans of beer, a matter of small value; the King of Heaven shall pay you, and I shall rest thankful: sweet worship—

Kno. Nay, an' you be so importunate—

Brain. Oh, tender Sir, need will have his course: I was not made to this vile use! Well, the edge of the enemy could not have abated me so much. [*He weeps.*] It's hard, when a man hath served in his prince's cause, and be thus—Honourable worship, let me derive a small piece of silver from you, it shall not be given in the course of time. By this good ground, I was fain to pawn my rapier last night for a poor supper; I had suck'd the hilts long before, I am a pagan else: sweet honour.

Kno. Believe me, I am taken with some wonder,
To think a fellow of thy outward presence,
Should, in the frame and fashion of his mind,
Be so degenerate and sordid base!
Art thou a man, and sham'st thou not to beg;
To practise such a servile kind of life?
Why, were thy education ne'er so mean,
Having thy limbs, a thousand fairer courses
Offer themselves to thy election.
Either the wars might still supply thy wants,
Or service of some virtuous gentleman,
Or honest labour: nay, what can I name,
But would become thee better than to beg?
But men of thy condition feed on sloth,
As doth the beetle on the dung she breeds in,
Not caring how the metal of your minds
Is eaten with the rust of idleness.
Now, afore me, whate'er he be that should
Relieve a person of thy quality,
While thou insist in this loose desperate course,
I would esteem the sin not thine, but his.

Brain. Faith, Sir, I would gladly find some other course, if so—

Kno. Ay, you'll gladly find it, but you will not seek it.

Brain. Alas! Sir, where should a man seek? In the wars there's no ascent by desert in these days, but—and for service, would it were as soon purchased as wished for, (the air's my comfort) I know what I would say—

Kno. What's thy name?

Brain. Please you, Fitz-Sword, Sir.

Kno. Fitz-Sword,
Say that a man should entertain thee now
Wouldst thou be honest, humble, just and true?

Brain. Sir, by the place and honour of a soldier—

Kno. Nay, nay, I like not those affected oaths!
Speak plainly, man: what think'st thou of my words?

Brain. Nothing, Sir, but wish my fortunes were as happy, as my service should be honest.

Kno. Well, follow me; I'll prove thee, if thy deeds will carry a proportion to thy words. [*Exit.*

Brain. Yes, Sir straight; I'll but garter my hose. Oh, that my belly were hooped now, for I am ready to burst with laughing. Never was a bottle or bag-pipe fuller. 'Slid! was

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there ever seen a fox in years to betray himself thus? Now I shall be possessed of all his counsels! and by that conduct my young master. Well, he is resolved to prove my honesty; faith, and I am resolved to prove his patience. Oh, I shall abuse him intolerably! This small piece of service will bring him clean out of love with the soldier for ever. He will never come within the sight of a red coat, or a musquet-rest again. It's no matter, let the world think me a bad counterfeit, if I cannot give him the slip at an instant. Why, this is better than to have staid his journey! Well, I'll follow him. Oh, how I long to be employed!

With change of voice, these scars, and many an oath,
I'll follow son and sire, and serve 'em both.
[*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—Stocks-Market.

Enter MATTHEW, WELL-BRED, *and* BOBADIL.

Mat. Yes, faith, Sir! we were at your lodging to seek you too.

Well. Oh, I came not there to-night.

Bob. Your brother delivered us as much.

Well. Who? My brother, Down-right?

Bob. He. Mr. Well-bred, I know not in what kind you hold me: but let me say to you this: as sure as honour, I esteem it so much out of the sunshine of reputation to throw the least beam of regard upon such a——

Well. Sir, I must hear no ill-words of my brother.

Bob. I protest to you, as I have a thing to be saved about me, I never saw any gentleman-like part—

Well. Good captain, [*Faces about.*] to some other discourse.

Bob. With your leave, Sir, an' there were no more men living upon the face of the earth, I should not fancy him, by St. George.

Mat. Troth, nor I; he is of a rustical cut, I know not how: he doth not carry himself like a gentleman of fashion—

Well. Oh, Mr. Matthew, that's a grace peculiar but to a few, *quos æquus amavit Jupiter.*

Mat. I understand you, Sir.

Enter YOUNG KNO'WELL *and* STEPHEN.

Well. No question you do, or you do not, Sir! Ned! by my soul, welcome! How dost thou, sweet spirit, my genius? 'Slid I shall love Apollo, and the mad Thespian girls, the better while I live for this, my dear fury. Now I see there's some love in thee! Sirrah, these be the two I wrote to thee of. Nay, what a drowsy humour is this now? Why dost thou not speak?

E. Kno. Oh, you are a fine gallant; you sent me a rare letter.

Well. Why, was't not rare?

E. Kno. Yes, I'll be sworn, I was never guilty of reading the like. Match it in all Pliny's epistles and I'll have my judgment burned in the ear for a rogue: make much of thy vein, for it is inimitable. But I marvel what camel it was that had the carriage of it, for doubtless he was no ordinary beast that brought it.

Well. Why?

E. Kno. Why, sayest thou? Why, dost thou think that any reasonable creature, especially in the morning, the sober time of the day too, could have mistaken my father for me?

Well. 'Slid, you jest, I hope.

E. Kno. Indeed, the best use we can turn it to, is to make a jest on't now; but I'll assure you, my father had the full view o' your flourishing style, before I saw it.

Well. What a dull slave was this! But, sirrah, what said he to it, i'faith?

E. Kno. Nay, I know not what he said: but I have a shrewd guess what he thought.

Well. What, what?

E. Kno. Marry, that thou art some strange, dissolute young fellow, and I not a grain or two better, for keeping thee company.

Well. Tut, that thought is like the moon in her last quarter, 'twill change shortly. But, sirrah, I pray thee be acquainted with my two hang-bys here; thou wilt take exceeding pleasure in 'em, if thou hearest 'em once go: my wind instruments. I'll wind 'em up—But what strange piece of silence is this! The sign of the dumb man.

E. Kno. Oh, Sir, a kinsman of mine, one that may make your music the fuller, an' he please; he has his humour, Sir.

Well. Oh, what is't, what is't?

E. Kno. Nay, I'll neither do your judgment, nor his folly that wrong, as to prepare your apprehension. I'll leave him to the mercy o your search, if you can take him so.

Well. Well, Captain Bobadil, Mr. Matthew, I pray you know this gentleman here; he is a friend of mine, and one that will deserve your affection. I know not your name, Sir, but shall be glad of any occasion to render me more familiar to you.

Steph. My name is Mr. Stephen, Sir; I am this gentleman's own cousin, Sir; his father is mine uncle, Sir; I am somewhat melancholy, but you shall command me, Sir, in whatsoever is incident to a gentleman.

Bob. Sir, I must tell you this, I am no general man; but for Mr. Well-bred's sake (you may embrace it at what height of favour you please) I do communicate with you; and conceive you to be a gentleman of some parts. I love few words.

E. Kno. And I fewer, Sir. I have scarce enow to thank you.

Mat. But are you indeed, Sir, so given to it? [*To* STEPHEN.

Steph. Ay, truly, Sir, I am mightily given to melancholy.

Mat. Oh, it's your only fine humour, Sir; your true melancholy breeds you perfect fine wit, Sir: I am melancholy myself divers times, Sir; and then do I no more but take a pen and paper presently, and overflow you half a score or a dozen of sonnets at a sitting.

Steph. Cousin, it is well; am I melancholy enough?

E. Kno. Oh, ay, excellent!

Well. Captain Bobadil, why muse you so?

E. Kno. He is melancholy too.

Bob. Faith, Sir, I was thinking of a most honourable piece of service was performed, tomorrow, being St. Mark's day, shall be some ten years now.

E. Kno. In what place, captain?

Bob. Why, at the beleaguering of Strigonium, where, in less than two hours, seven hundred resolute gentlemen, as any were in Europe, lost their lives upon the breach. I'll tell you, gentlemen, it was the first, but the

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best leaguer, that ever I beheld with these eyes, except the taking of—what do you call it, last year, by the Genoese; but that (of all others) was the most fatal and dangerous exploit that ever I was ranged in, since I first bore arms before the face of the enemy, as I am a gentleman and a soldier.

Steph. 'So I had as lief as an angel, I could swear as well as that gentleman.

E. Kno. Then you were a servitor at both, it seems; at Strigonium, and what do you call't?

Bob. Oh, lord, Sir! by St. George, I was the first man that entered the breach; and had I not effected it with resolution, I had been slain, if I had had a million of lives.

E. Kno. 'Twas a pity you had not ten; a cat's, and your own, i'faith. But was it possible?

Mat. Pray you, mark this discourse, Sir.

Steph. So I do.

Bob. I assure you, upon my reputation, 'tis true, and yourself shall confess.

E. Kno. You must bring me to the rack first.

Bob. Observe me judicially, sweet Sir: they had planted me three demi-culverins, just in the mouth of the breach: now, Sir, as we were to give on, their master gunner (a man of no mean skill and mark, you must think) confronts me with his linstock, ready to give fire: I spying his intendment, discharged my petrionel in his bosom, and with these single arms, my poor rapier, ran violently upon the Moors that guarded the ordnance, and put them all pell-mell to the sword.

Well. To the sword! to the rapier, captain!

E. Kno. Oh, it was a good figure observed, Sir! but did you all this, captain, without hurting your blade?

Bob. Without any impeach o' earth you shall perceive, Sir. It is the most fortunate weapon that ever rid on poor gentleman's thigh. Shall I tell you, Sir? You talk of Morglay, Excalibur, Durindana, or so? Tut, I lend no credit to that is fabled of 'em; I know the virtue of mine own, and therefore I dare the bolder maintain it.

Steph. I marvel whether it be a Toledo, or no.

Bob. A most perfect Toledo, I assure you, Sir.

Steph. I have a countryman of his, here.

Mat. Pray you, let's see, Sir. Yes, faith, it is!

Bob. This, a Toledo! pish!

Steph. Why do you pish, captain?

Bob. A Fleming by Heaven! I'll buy them for a guilder a piece, an' I would have a thousand of them.

E. Kno. How say you, cousin? I told you thus much.

Well. Where bought you it, Mr. Stephen?

Steph. Of a scurvy rogue soldier (a hundred of lice go with him) he swore it was a Toledo.

Bob. A poor provant rapier, no better.

Mat. Mass, I think it be, indeed! now I look on't better.

E. Kno. Nay, the longer you look on't, the worse. Put it up, put it up!

Steph. Well, I will put it up, but by—(I ha' forgot the captain's oath, I thought to have sworn by it) an e'er I meet him—

Well. O, 'tis past help now, Sir; you must ha' patience.

Steph. Whoreson, cony-catching rascal! I could eat the very hilts for anger.

E. Kno. A sign of good digestion; you have an ostrich stomach, cousin.

Steph. A stomach! I would I had him here, you should see an' I had a stomach.

Well. It's better as 'tis. Come, gentlemen, shall we go?

Enter BRAIN-WORM.

E. Kno. A miracle, cousin! look here! look here!

Steph. O, god'slid, by your leave, do you know me, Sir?

Brain. Ay, Sir I know you by sight.

Steph. You sold me a rapier, did you not?

Brain. Yes, marry, did I, Sir.

Steph. You said it was a Toledo, ha?

Brain. True, I did so.

Steph. But it is none!

Brain. No, Sir, I confess it is none.

Steph. Do you confess it? Gentlemen, bear witness he has confessed it. By God's will an' you had not confessed it——

E. Kno. Oh, cousin, forbear, forbear.

Steph. Nay, I have done, cousin.

Well. Why, you have done like a gentleman, he has confessed it, what would you more?

Steph. Yet, by his leave, he is a rascal, under his favour, do you see.

E. Kno. Ay, by his leave, he is, and under favour. Pretty piece of civility! Sirrah, how dost like him?

Well. Oh, it's a most precious fool, make much on him. I can compare him to nothing more happily than a drum; for every one may play upon him.

E. Kno. No, no, a child's whistle were far the fitter.

Brain. Sir, shall I entreat a word with you?

E. Kno. With me, Sir? You have not another Toledo to sell, ha' you?

Brain. You are conceited, Sir; your name is Mr. Kno'well, as I take it?

E. Kno. You are i' the right. You mean not to proceed in the catechism, do you?

Brain. No, Sir, I am none of that coat.

E. Kno. Of as bare coat, though! Well, say, Sir!

Brain. Faith, Sir, I am but a servant to the drum extraordinary, and, indeed, this smoky varnish being washed off, and three or four patches removed, I appear your worship's in reversion, after the decease of your good father—Brain-worm.

E. Kno. Brain-worm! 'Slight, what breath of a conjurer hath blown thee hither in this shape?

Brain. The breath o' your letter, Sir, this morning: the same that blew you to the windmill, and your father after you.

E. Kno. My father!

Brain. Nay, never start; 'tis true; he has followed you over the fields by the foot, as you would do a hare i' the snow.

E. Kno. Sirrah, Well-bred, what shall we do, sirrah? My father is come over after me.

Well. Thy father! Where is he?

Brain. At Justice Clement's house, here, in Coleman-street, where he but stays my return; and then——

Well. Who's this? Brain-worm?

Brain. The same, Sir.

Well. Why, how, i' the name of wit, comest thou transmuted thus?

Brain. Faith, a device! a device! Nay, for the love of reason, gentlemen, and avoiding

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the danger, stand not here, withdraw, and I'll tell you all.

E. Kno. Come, cousin. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—The Warehouse.

Enter KITELY *and* CASH.

Kite. What says he, Thomas? Did you speak with him?

Cash. He will expect you, Sir, within this half hour.

Kite. Has he the money ready, can you tell?

Cash. Yes, Sir, the money was brought in last night.

Kite. O, that's well: fetch me my cloak, my cloak.
Stay, let me see, an hour to go and come;
Ay, that will be the least; and then 'twill be
An hour before I can despatch him,
Or very near: well, I will say two hours.
Two hours! ha! things, never dream'd of yet,
May be contrived, ay, and effected too,
In two hours' absence. Well, I will not go.
Two hours! No, fleering opportunity,
I will not give your subtlety that scope.
Who will not judge him worthy to be robbed,
That sets his doors wide open to a thief,
And shows the felon where his treasure lies?
Again, what earthly spirit but will attempt
To taste the fruit of beauty's golden tree,
When leaden sleep seals up the dragon's eyes?
I will not go. Business, go by for once.
No, beauty, no; you are too, too precious
To be left so, without a guard, or open!
You must be then kept up close, and well watch'd;
For, give you opportunity, no quick-sand
Devours or swallows swifter! He that lends
His wife, if she be fair, or time, or place,
Compels her to be false. I will not go.
The dangers are too many. I am resolv'd for that.
Carry in my cloak again. Yet stay. Yet do, too.
I will defer going on all occasions.

Cash. Sir, Snare, your scrivener, will be there with the bonds.

Kite. That's true! fool on me! I had clean forgot it! I must go. What's o'clock?

Cash. Exchange time, Sir.

Kite. Heart, then will Well-bred presently be here too,
With one or other of his loose consorts.
I am a knave, if I know what to say,
What course to take, or which way to resolve.
My brain, methinks, is like an hour-glass,
Wherein my imagination runs, like sands,
Filling up time; but then are turn'd and turn'd;
So that I know not what to stay upon.
And less to put in act. It shall be so.
Nay, I dare build upon his secrecy,
He knows not to deceive me. Thomas!

Cash. Sir.

Kite. Yet now, I have bethought too, I will not
—Thomas, is Cob within?

Cash. I think he be, Sir.

Kite. But he'll prate too, there's no speech of him.
No, there were no man o' the earth to Thomas,
If I durst trust him; there is all the doubt.
But should he have a chink in him; I were gone,
Lost i' my fame for ever: talk for the ex-change. [ent,
The manner he hath stood with, 'till this pres-
Doth promise no such change! What should I fear, then?
Well, come what will, I'll tempt my fortune once.
Thomas—you may deceive me, but I hope—
Your love to me is more—

Cash. Sir, if a servant's
Duty, with faith, may be call'd love, you are
More than in hope, you are possess'd of it.

Kite. I thank you heartily, Thomas; gi' me your hand.
With all my heart, good Thomas. I have, Thomas,
A secret to impart to you—but
When once you have it, I must seal your lips
So far I tell you, Thomas. [up

Cash. Sir, for that—

Kite. Nay, hear me out. Think, I esteem you, Thomas,
When I will let you in, thus to my private.
It is a thing sits nearer to my crest,
Than thou art aware of, Thomas. If thou shouldst
Reveal it, but——

Cash. How! I reveal it!

Kite. Nay,
I do not think thou wouldst; but if thou shouldst,
'Twere a great weakness.

Cash. A great treachery.
Give it no other name.

Kite. Thou wilt not do't then?

Cash. Sir, if I do, mankind disclaim me ever.

Kite. He will not swear; he has some reservation,
Some conceal'd purpose, and close meaning, sure, [choose,
Else being urged so much, how should he
But lend an oath to all this protestation?
He's no fanatic, I have heard him swear.
What should I think of it? Urge him again,
And by some other way? I will do so. [*Aside.*
Well, Thomas, thou hast sworn not to disclose:
Yes, you did swear!

Cash. Not yet, Sir, but I will,
Please you——

Kite. No, Thomas, I dare take thy word,
But if thou wilt swear, do, as thou think'st good;
I am resolved without it, at thy pleasure.

Cash. By my soul's safety then, Sir, I protest
My tongue shall ne'er take knowledge of a word,
Deliver'd me in nature of your trust.

Kite. It's too much, these ceremonies need not;
I know thy faith to be as firm as rock.
Thomas, come hither, near; we cannot be
Too private in this business. So it is.
(Now he has sworn, I dare the safelier venture.)
I have of late, by divers observations—
But whether his oath can bind him, there it is.
I will bethink me ere I do proceed.
Thomas, it will be now too long to stay,
I'll spy some fitter time soon, or to-morrow.

Cash. Sir, at your pleasure!

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Kite. I will think. Give me my cloak. And, Thomas,
I pray you, search the books 'gainst my return,
For the receipts 'twixt me and Traps.
Cash. I will, Sir.
Kite. And hear you, if your mistress's brother, Well-bred,
Chance to bring hither any gentlemen,
Ere I come back, let one straight bring me word.
Cash. Very well, Sir.
Kite. To the Exchange; do you hear?
Or here in Coleman-street, to Justice Clement's.
Forget it not, nor be out of the way.
Cash. I will not, Sir.
Kite. I pray you have a care on't.
Or whether he come or no, if any other
Stranger, or else, fail not to send me word.
Cash. I shall not, Sir.
Kite. Be't your special business
Now to remember it.
Cash. Sir, I warrant you.
Kite. But, Thomas, this is not the secret,
Thomas, I told you of.
Cash. No, Sir, I do suppose it.
Kite. Believe me it is not.
Cash. Sir, I do believe you.
Kite. By Heaven! it is not; that's enough. But, Thomas,
I would not you should utter it, do you see,
To any creature living; yet I care not.
Well, I must hence. Thomas, conceive thus much;
It was a trial of you, when I meant
So deep a secret to you: I mean not this,
But that I have to tell you. This is nothing, this.
But, Thomas, keep this from my wife, I charge you.
Lock'd up in silence, midnight, buried here,
No greater hell than to be slave to fear. [*Exit.*
Cash. Lock'd up in silence, midnight, buried here!
Whence should this flood of passion, trow, take head? ha!
Best dream no longer of this running humour,
For fear I sink! the violence of the stream
Already hath transported me so far,
That I can feel no ground at all! But soft,
Here is company: now must I—— [*Exit.*

Enter WELL-BRED, EDW. KNO'WELL, BRAIN-WORM, BOBADIL, *and* STEPHEN.

Well. Beshrew me, but it was an absolute good jest, and exceedingly well carried.
E. Kno. Ay, and our ignorance maintained it as well, did it not?
Well. Yes, faith! but was't possible thou shouldst not know him? I forgive Mr. Stephen, for he is stupidity itself.
E. Kno. 'Fore Heaven, not I. He had so written himself into the habit of one of your poor infantry, your decayed, ruinous, worm-eaten gentlemen of the round.
Well. Why, Brain-worm, who would have thought thou hadst been such an artificer?
E. Kno. An artificer! an architect! Except a man had studied begging all his life-time, and been a weaver of language from his infancy, for the clothing of it! I never saw his rival.
Well. Where got'st thou this coat, I marvel?
Brain. Of a Houndsditch man, Sir, one of the devil's near kinsmen, a broker

Enter CASH.

Cash. Francis! Martin! Ne'er a one to be found now? What a spite's this?
Well. How now, Thomas, is my brother Kitely within?
Cash. No, Sir; my master went forth e'en now; but Master Downright is within. Cob! what Cob! Is he gone too?
Well. Whither went your master, Thomas, canst thou tell?
Cash. I know not; to Justice Clement's, I think, Sir. Cob! [*Exit.*
E. Kno. Justice Clement! What's he?
Well. Why, dost thou not know him? He is a city magistrate, a justice here; an excellent good lawyer, and a great scholar: but the only mad and merry old fellow in Europe! I showed you him the other day.
E. Kno. Oh, is that he? I remember him now. Good faith! and he has a very strange presence, methinks; it shows as if he stood out of the rank from other men. I have heard many of his jests i' the university. They say, he will commit a man for taking the wall of his horse.
Well. Ay, or wearing his cloak on one shoulder, or serving of God. Any thing indeed, if it come in the way of his humour.

Enter CASH.

Cash. Gasper, Martin, Cob! 'Heart! where should they be, trow?
Bob. Master Kitely's man, pr'ythee vouchsafe us the lighting of this match.
Cash. Fire on your match, no time but now to vouchsafe? [*Aside.*] Francis! Cob! [*Exit.*
Bob. Body of me! Here's the remainder of seven pound since yesterday was seven-night. 'Tis your right Trinidado! Did you never take any, Master Stephen?
Steph. No, truly, Sir; but I'll learn to take it now, since you commend it so.
Bob. Sir, believe me, upon my relation, for what I tell you the world shall not reprove. I have been in the Indies, where this herb grows, where neither myself, nor a dozen gentlemen more, of my knowledge, have received the taste of any other nutriment in the world for the space of one and twenty weeks, but the fume of this simple only. Therefore it cannot be but 'tis most divine, especially your Trinidado. Your Nicotian is good too. I do hold it, and will affirm it before any prince in Europe, to be the most sovereign and precious weed that ever the earth tendered to the use of man.
E. Kno. This speech would have done decently in a tobacco-trader's mouth.

Enter CASH *and* COB.

Cash. At Justice Clement's he is, in the middle of Coleman-Street.
Col. O, ho!
Bob. Where's the match I gave thee, Master Kitely's man?
Cash. Here it is, Sir.
Cob. By God's me! I marvel what pleasure or felicity they have in taking this roguish tobacco! it's good for nothing but to choke a man, and to fill him full of smoke and embers.
[BOB. *beats him with a cudgel,* MAT. *runs away.*
All. Oh, good captain! hold! hold!
Bob. You base scullion, you.

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Cash. Come, thou must need be talking too! thou'rt well enough served.

Cob. Well, it shall be a dear beating, an' I live I will have justice for this.

Bob. Do you prate? Do you murmur? [BOB. *beats him off.*

E. Kno. Nay, good captain, will you regard the humour of a fool?

Bob. A whoreson, filthy slave, a dung-worm, an excrement! Body o' Cæsar, but that I scorn to let forth so mean a spirit, I'd have stabbed him to the earth.

Well. Marry, the law forbid, Sir.

Bob. By Pharaoh's foot, I would have done it. [*Exit.*

Steph. Oh, he swears admirably! By Pharaoh's foot, body of Cæsar; I shall never do it, sure; upon mine honour, and by St. George; no, I ha'n't the right grace.

Well. But soft, where's Mr. Matthew?—gone!

Brain. No, Sir; they went in here.

Well. O, let's follow them: Master Matthew is gone to salute his mistress in verse. We shall have the happiness to hear some of his poetry now. He never comes unfurnish'd.—Brain-worm!

Steph. Brain-worm! Where? Is this Brain-worm?

E. Kno. Ay, cousin, no words of it upon your gentility,

Steph. Not I, body of me! by this air, St. George, and the foot of Pharaoh!

Well. Rare! your cousin's discourse is simply drawn out with oaths.

E. Kno. 'Tis larded with 'em. A kind of French dressing, if you love it. Come, let's in. Come, cousin. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—A hall in JUSTICE CLEMENT'S *House.*

Enter KITELY *and* COB.

Kite. Ha! How many are there say'st thou?

Cob. Marry, Sir, your brother, Master Wellbred—

Kite. Tut, beside him: what strangers are there, man?

Cob. Strangers! let me see; one, two;—mass, I know not well, they are so many.

Kite. How, so many?

Cob. Ay, there's some five or six of them, at the most.

Kite. A swarm, a swarm!
Spite of the devil! how they sting my head
With forked stings, thus wide and large!—But Cob,
How long hast thou been coming hither, Cob?

Cob. A little while, Sir.

Kite. Didst thou come running?

Cob. No, Sir.

Kite. Nay, then I am familiar with thy haste!
Bane to my fortunes. What meant I to marry!
I, that before was rank'd in such content,
My mind at rest too in so soft a peace,
Being free master of my own free thoughts,
And now become a slave? What, never sigh!
Be of good cheer, man, for thou art a cuckold.
'Tis done, 'tis done! Nay, when such flowing store,
Plenty itself falls into my wife's lap,
The Cornucopia will be mine, I know. But, Cob,
What entertainment had they? I am sure
My sister and my wife would bid them welcome! ha?

Cob. Like enough, Sir; yet I heard not a word of it.

Kite. No; their lips were seal'd with kisses, and the voice,
Drown'd in a flood of joy at their arrival,
Had lost her motion, state and faculty.
Cob, which of them was't that first kiss'd my wife?
My sister, I should say, my wife, alas!
I fear not her. Ha! Who was it, say'st thou!

Cob. By my troth, Sir, will you have the truth of it?

Kite. Ay, good Cob, I pray thee heartily.

Cob. Then I am a vagabond, and fitter for Bridewell than your worship's company, if I saw any body to be kissed, unless they would have kissed the post in the middle of the warehouse; for there I left 'em all at their tobacco, with a pox!

Kite. How! were they not gone in then, ere thou cam'st?

Cob. O, no, Sir!

Kite. Spite o' the devil! What do I stay here then? Cob, follow me. [*Exit.*

Cob. Nay, soft and fair, I have eggs on the spit. Now am I for some five and fifty reasons hammering, hammering revenge! Nay, an' he had not lain in my house, 'twould never have grieved me; but, being my guest, one that I'll be sworn I loved and trusted; and he to turn monster of ingratitude and strike his lawful host! Well, I hope to raise up a host of fury for't. I'll to Justice Clement for a warrant. Strike his lawful host! [*Exit.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Room in KITELY'S *House.*

Enter DOWNRIGHT *and* DAME KITELY.

Dow. Well, sister, I tell you true; and you'll find it so in the end.

Dame. Alas, brother, what would you have me to do? I cannot help it. You see my brother brings 'em in here, they are his friends.

Dow. His friends! his friends! 'Slud they do nothing but haunt him up and down, like a sort of unlucky spirits, and tempt him to all manner of villany that can be thought of.—Well, by this light, a little thing would make me play the devil with some of 'em. And 'twere not more for your husband's sake than any thing else, I'd make the house too hot for the best on 'em. They should say, and swear, hell were broken loose ere they went hence.—But, by God's will, 'tis nobody's fault but yours; for an' you had done as you might have done, they should have been parboiled and baked too, every mother's son, ere they should ha' come in, e'er a one of 'em.

Dame. God's my life! did you ever hear the like? What a strange man is this! Could I keep out all them, think you? I should put myself against half a dozen men, should I?—Good faith, you'd make the patient'st body in the world mad to hear you talk so without any sense or reason!

Enter MRS. BRIDGET. MR. MATTHEW, WELLBRED, STEPHEN, ED. KNO'WELL, BOBADIL *and* CASH.

Bridg. Servant, in troth, you are too prodigal
Of your wit's treasure, thus to pour it forth
Upon so mean a subject as my worth.

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Mat. You say well, mistress; and I mean as well.

Dow. Hey-day, here is stuff!

Well. O, now stand close. Pray Heaven she can get him to read; he should do it of his own natural impudence.

Bridg. Servant, what is this same, I pray you?

Mat. Marry, an elegy! an elegy! an odd toy—I'll read it, if you please.

Bridg. Pray you do, servant.

Dow. O, here's no foppery! Death! I can endure the stocks better.

E. Kno. What ails thy brother? Can he not bear the reading of a ballad?

Well. O, no; a rhyme to him is worse than cheese, or a bag-pipe. But, mark, you lose the protestation.

Bob. Master Matthew, you abuse the expectation of your dear mistress, and her fair sister. Fy, while you live, avoid this prolixity.

Mat. I shall, Sir.

Rare creature, let me speak without offence,
Would Heaven my rude words had the influence
To rule thy thoughts, as thy fair looks do mine,
Then shouldst thou be his prisoner, who is thine.

[Master STEPHEN answers with shaking his head.]

E. Kno. 'Slight, he shakes his head like a bottle, to feel an' there be any brain in it!

Well. Sister, what ha' you here? Verses? Pray you, let's see. Who made these verses? They are excellent good.

Mat. O, Master Well-bred, 'tis your disposition to say so, Sir. They were good i' the morning; I made 'em extempore this morning.

Well. How, extempore!

Mat. I would I might be hanged else; ask Captain Bobadil. He saw me write them at the——(pox on it) the Star yonder.

Steph. Cousin, how do you like this gentleman's verses?

E. Kno. O, admirable! the best that ever I heard, coz!

Steph. Body o' Cæsar! they are admirable! The best that ever I heard, as I am a soldier.

Dow. I am vexed, I can hold ne'er a bone of me still! 'Heart, I think they mean to build and breed here.

Well. Sister Kitely, I marvel you get you not a servant that can rhyme and do tricks too.

Dow. Oh, monster! Impudence itself, tricks! Come, you might practise your ruffian tricks somewhere else, and not here, I wuss—This is no tavern, nor drinking-school, to vent your exploits in.

Well. How now! whose cow has calved?

Dow. Marry, that has mine, Sir. Nay, boy, never look askance at me for the matter; I'll tell you of it; ay, Sir, you and your companions; mend yourselves, when I ha' done.

Well. My companions!

Dow. Yes, Sir, your companions, so I say; I am not afraid of you nor them neither, your hang-boys here. You must have your poets, and your potlings, your soldados and foolados, to follow you up and down the city, and here they must come to domineer and swagger. Sirrah, you ballad-singer; and slops, you fellow there, get you out, get you home; or, by this steel, I'll cut off your ears, and that presently.

Well. 'Slight, stay, let's see what he dare do. Cut off his ears! cut a whetstone. You are an ass, do you see; touch any man here, and, by this hand, I'll run my rapier to the hilts in you.

Dow. Yea, that would I fain see, boy.

[*They all draw and they of the house make out to part them.*

Dame. O, Jesu! murder! Thomas, Gasper!

Bridg. Help, help, Thomas!

E. Kno. Gentlemen, forbear, I pray you.

Bob. Well, sirrah! you Holofernes! by my hand, I will pink your flesh full of holes with my rapier, for this; I will, by this good Heaven. Nay, let him come, gentlemen, by the body of St. George, I'll not kill him.

[*They offer to fight again, and are parted.*

Cash. Hold, hold, good gentlemen.

Dow. You whoreson, bragging coistrel!

Enter KITELY.

Kite. Why, how now, what's the matter?—
What's the stir here?
Put up your weapons, and put off this rage.
My wife and sister, they're the cause of this.
What, Thomas, where is the knave?

Cash. Here, Sir.

Well. Come, let's go; this is one of my brother's ancient humours, this. [*Exit.*

Steph. I am glad nobody was hurt by his ancient humour. [*Exit.*

Kite. Why, how now, brother, who enforced this brawl?

Dow. A sort of lewd rake-hells, that care neither for God nor the devil. And they must come here to read ballads, and roguery, and trash! I'll mar the knot of 'em ere I sleep, perhaps; especially Bob there; he that's all manner of shapes; and songs and sonnets, his fellow. But I'll follow 'em. [*Exit.*

Bridg. Brother, indeed you are too violent,
Too sudden in your humour.
There was one a civil gentleman,
And very worthily demeaned himself.

Kite. O, that was some love of yours, sister.

Bridg. A love of mine! I would it were no worse, brother! You'd pay my portion sooner than you think for. [*Exit.*

Dame. Indeed, he seemed to be a gentleman of exceeding fair disposition, and of very excellent good parts. What a coil and stir is here! [*Exit.*

Kite. Her love, by Heaven! My wife's minion!
Death, these phrases are intolerable!
Well, well, well, well, well, well, well!
It is too plain, too clear. Thomas, come hither.
What, are they gone?

Cash. Ay, Sir, they went in.

My mistress, and your sister——

Kite. Are any of the gallants within?

Cash. No, Sir, they are all gone.

Kite. Art thou sure of it?

Cash. I can assure you, Sir.

Kite. What gentleman was it that they praised so, Thomas?

Cash. One, they call him Master Kno'well, a handsome young gentleman, Sir.

Kite. Ay, I thought so. My mind gave me as much.
I'll die but they have hid him in the house
Somewhere; I'll go and search. Go with me, Thomas,
Be true to me, and thou shalt find me a master.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—Moorfields.

Enter E. KNO'WELL, WELL-BRED, *and* BRAIN-WORM.

E. Kno. Well, Brain-worm, perform this

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business happily, and thou makest a purchase of my love for ever.

Well. I'faith, now let thy spirits use their best faculties; but at my hand, remember the message to my brother; for there's no other means to start him out of his house.

Brain. I warrant you, Sir, fear nothing. I have a nimble soul has waked all forces of my phant'sy by this time, and put 'em in true motion. What you have possessed me withal, I'll discharge it amply, Sir. Make it no question. [*Exit*.

Well. Forth, and prosper, Brain-worm. Faith, Ned, how dost thou approve of my abilities in this device?

E. Kno. Troth, well, howsoever: but it will come excellent, if it take.

Well. Take, man! Why, it cannot choose but take, if the circumstances miscarry not. But tell me ingenuously, dost thou affect my sister Bridget, as thou pretend'st?

E. Kno. Friend, am I worth belief?

Well. Come, do not protest. In faith, she is a maid of good ornament, and much modesty; and except I conceived very worthily of her, thou shouldst not have her.

E. Kno. Nay, that I am afraid will be a question yet, whether I shall have her or no.

Well. 'Slid, thou shalt have her; by this light thou shalt.

E. Kno. Nay, do not swear.

Well. By this hand thou shalt have her. I'll go fetch her presently. 'Point but where to meet, and, as I am an honest man, I'll bring her.

E. Kno. Hold, hold, be temperate.

Well. Why, by——what shall I swear by? thou shalt have her, as I am—

E. Kno. 'Pray thee be at peace, I am satisfied; and do believe thou wilt omit no offered occasion to make my desires complete.

Well. Thou shalt see, and know I will not. [*Exeunt*.

Enter FORMAL *and* KNO'WELL.

Form. Was your man a soldier, Sir?

Kno. Ay, a knave, I took him begging o' the way, this morning, as I came over Moorfields.

Enter BRAIN-WORM.

O, here he is! you have made fair speed, believe me.
Where i' the name of sloth could you be thus—

Brain. Marry, peace be my comfort, where I thought I should have had little comfort of your worship's service.

Kno. How so?

Brain. O, Sir! your coming to the city, your entertainment of me, and your sending me to watch—indeed, all the circumstances either of your charge, or my employment, are as open to your son as to yourself.

Kno. How should that be! unless that villain, Brain-worm,
Have told him of the letter, and discovered
All that I strictly charg'd him to conceal! 'Tis so!

Brain. I am partly o' that faith, 'tis so, indeed.

Kno. But how should he know you to be my man?

Brain. Nay, Sir, I cannot tell; unless it be by the black art! Is not your son a scholar, Sir?

Kno. Yes, but I hope his soul is not allied
Unto such hellish practice: if it were,
I had just cause to weep my part in him,
And curse the time of his creation.
But where didst thou find them, Fitz-sword?

Brain. You should rather ask, where they found me, Sir; for I'll be sworn I was going along in the street, thinking nothing, when (of a sudden) a voice calls, Mr. Kno'well's man; another cries, soldier; and thus, half a dozen of 'em, till they had called me within a house, where I no sooner came, but out flew all their rapiers at my bosom, with some three or fourscore oaths to accompany 'em, and all to tell me, I was a dead man, if I did not confess where you were, and how I was employed, and about what, which, when they could not get out of me (as I protest they must have dissected me, and made an anatomy of me first, and so I told 'em) they locked me up into a room i' the top of a high house, whence, by great miracle, having a light heart, I slid down by a bottom of packthread into the street, and so 'scaped! But, Sir, thus much, I can assure you; for I heard it while I was locked up; there was a great many rich merchants and brave citizens' wives with 'em at a feast, and your son, Mr. Edward, withdrew with one of 'em, and has 'pointed to meet her anon, at one Cob's house, a water-bearer, that dwells by the wall. Now, there your worship shall be sure to take him, for there he preys, and fail he will not.

Kno. Nor will I fail to break his match, I doubt not.
Go thou along with Justice Clement's man,
And stay there for me. At one Cob's house, say'st thou?

Brain. Ay, Sir, there you shall have him. [*Exit* KNO'WELL.] Yes! Invisible! Much wench, or much son! 'Slight, when he has staid there three or four hours, travelling with the expectation of wonders, and at length be delivered of air! O, the sport that I should then take to look on him, if I durst. But now I mean to appear no more before him in this shape. I have another trick to act yet. Sir, I make you stay somewhat long.

Form. Not a whit, Sir.
You have lately been in the wars, Sir, it seems.

Brain. Marry have I, Sir, to my loss and expense of all, almost——

Form. Troth, Sir, I would be glad to bestow a bottle of wine o' you, if it please you to accept it——

Brain. O, Sir——

Form. But to hear the manner of your services and your devices in the wars; they say they be very strange, and not like those a man reads in the Roman histories, or sees at Mile-End.

Brain. No, I assure you, Sir; why any time when it please you, I shall be ready to discourse with you all I know; and more too, somewhat.

Form. No better time than now, Sir. We'll go to the Windmill, there we shall have a cup of neat grist, as we call it. I pray you, Sir, let me request you to the Windmill.

Brain. I'll follow you, Sir, and make grist o' you, if I have good luck. [*Exeunt*.

Enter MATTHEW, ED. KNO'WELL, BOBADIL, *and* STEPHEN.

Mat. Sir, did your eyes ever taste the ike

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clown of him, where we were to-day, Mr. Well-bred's half-brother? I think the whole earth cannot show his parallel, by this day-light.

E. Kno. We are now speaking of him. Captain Bobadil tells me he is fallen foul o' you too.

Mat. O, ay, Sir! he threatened me with the bastinado.

Bob. Ay, but I think I taught you prevention this morning for that—You shall kill him beyond question, if you be so generously minded.

Mat. Indeed, it is a most excellent trick!

Bob. O, you do not give spirit enough to your motion, you are too tardy, too heavy! O, it must be done like lightning; hey!

[*He practises at a post.*

Mat. Rare captain!

Bob. Tut, 'tis nothing, an't be not done in a—punto!

E. Kno. Captain did you ever prove yourself upon any of our masters of defence here?

Mat. O, good Sir! yes, I hope he has.

Bob. I will tell you, Sir. They have assaulted me some three, four, five, six of them together, as I have walked alone in divers skirts o' the town, where I have driven them before me the whole length of a street, in the open view of all our gallants, pitying to hurt them, believe me. Yet all this lenity will not overcome their spleen; they will be doing with the pismire, raising a hill, a man may spurn abroad with his foot at pleasure. By myself I could have slain them all, but I delight not in murder. I am loath to bear any other than this bastinado for 'em; yet I hold it good policy not to go disarmed, for though I be skilful, I may be oppressed with multitudes.

E. Kno. Ay, believe me, may you, Sir; and, in my conceit, our whole nation should sustain the loss by it, if it were so.

Bob. Alas, no! What's a peculiar man to a nation? Not seen.

E. Kno, O, but your skill, Sir!

Bob. Indeed that might be some loss: but who respects it? I will tell you, Sir, by the way of private, and under seal, I am a gentleman, and live here obscure, and to myself: but were I known to his majesty, and the lords, observe me, I would undertake, upon this poor head and life, for the public benefit of the state, not only to spare the entire lives of his subjects in general, but to save the one half, nay, three parts of his yearly charge in holding war, and against what enemy soever. And how would I do it, think you?

E. Kno. Nay, I know not, nor can I conceive.

Bob. Why thus, Sir. I would select nineteen more to myself, throughout the land; gentlemen they should be, of good spirit, strong and able constitution; I would choose them by an instinct, a character that I have; and I would teach these nineteen the special rules, as your Punto, your Reverso, your Stoccata, your Imbroccata, your Passada, your Montanto; till they could all play very near, or altogether, as well as myself. This done, say the enemy were forty thousand strong, we twenty would come into the field the tenth of March, or thereabouts; and we would challenge twenty of the enemy; they could not in their honour refuse us! Well, we would kill them; challenge twenty more, kill them; twenty more, kill them; twenty more, kill them too; and thus would we kill every man his twenty a day, that's twenty score; twenty score, that's two hundred; two hundred a day, five days a thousand; forty thousand; forty times five, five times forty, two hundred days, kill them all up by computation. And this I will venture my poor gentleman-like carcass to perform, provided there be no treason practised upon us, by fair and discreet manhood, that is, civilly by the sword.

E. Kno. Why are you so sure of your hand, captain, at all times?

Bob. Tut, never miss thrust, upon my reputation with you.

E. Kno. I would not stand in Downright's state then, an' you meet him, for the wealth of any one street in London.

Bob. Why, Sir, you mistake! If he were here now, by this welkin I would not draw my weapon on him! Let this gentleman do his mind: but I will bastinado him, by the bright sun, wherever I meet him.

Mat. Faith and I'll have a fling at him, at my distance.

Enter DOWNRIGHT, *walking over the stage.*

E. Kno. God's so! look ye where he is; yonder he goes.

Dow. What peevish luck have I, I cannot meet with these bragging rascals!

Bob. It's not he, is it?

E. Kno. 'Yes, faith, it is he!

Mat. I'll be hanged then, if that were he.

E. Kno. I assure you that was he.

Steph. Upon my reputation, it was he.

Bob. Had I thought it had been he, he must not have gone so: but I can hardly be induced to believe it was he yet.

E. Kno. That I think, Sir. But see, he is come again!

Dow. O, Pharaoh's foot! Have I found you? Come, draw; to your tools. Draw, gipsey, or I'll thresh you.

Bob. Gentleman of valour, I do believe in thee, hear me——

Dow. Draw your weapon, then.

Bob. Tall man, I never thought on't till now; body of me? I had a warrant of the peace served on me even now, as I came along, by a water-bearer; this gentleman saw it, Mr. Matthew.

Dow. 'Sdeath, you will not draw then?

[*He beats him and disarms him.* MATTHEW *runs away.*

Bob. Hold, hold, under thy favour, forbear.

Dow. Prate again, as you like this, you whoreson, foist, you. You'll control the point, you! Your consort is gone; had he staid, he had shared with you, Sir. [*Exit* DOWNRIGHT.

E. Kno. Twenty, and kill 'em: twenty more, kill them too. Ha, ha!

Bob. Well, gentlemen, bear witness, I was bound to the peace by this good day.

E. Kno. No, faith, it's an ill day, captain, never reckon it other: but say you were bound to the peace, the law allows you to defend yourself; that will prove but a poor excuse.

Bob. I cannot tell, Sir. I desire good construction, in fair sort. I never sustained the like disgrace by Heaven. Sure I was struck with a planet thence, for I had not power to touch my weapon.

E. Kno. Ay, like enough, I have heard of many that have been beaten under a planet. Go, get you to a surgeon. 'Slid, an these be

your tricks, your passados and your montantos, I'll none of them.

Bob. I was planet-struck certainly. [*Exit.*

E. Kno. O, manners! that this age should bring forth such creatures! that nature should be at leisure to make 'em! Come, coz.

Steph. Mass, I'll have this cloak.

E. Kno. God's will, 'tis Downright's.

Steph. Nay, it's mine now; another might have ta'en it up as well as I. I'll wear it, so I will.

E. Kno. How, an' he see it? He'll challenge it, assure yourself.

Steph. Ay, but he shall not ha't; I'll say I bought it.

E. Kno. Take heed you buy it not too dear, coz. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—A Chamber in KITELY'S *House.*

Enter KITELY *and* CASH.

Kite. Art thou sure, Thomas, we have pried into all and every part throughout the house? Is there no by-place, or dark corner, has escaped our searches?

Cash. Indeed, Sir, none; there's not a hole or nook unsearched by us, from the upper loft unto the cellar.

Kite. They have conveyed him then away, or hid him in some privacy of their own—Whilst we were searching of the dark closet by my sister's chamber, didst thou not think thou heard'st a rustling on the other side, and a soft tread of feet?

Cash. Upon my truth, I did not, Sir; or if you did, it might be only the vermin in the wainscot; the house is old, and over-run with 'em.

Kite. It is, indeed, Thomas,—we should bane these rats—Dost thou understand me—we will—they shall not harbour here; I'll cleanse my house from 'em, if fire or poison can effect it—I will not be tormented thus—They gnaw my brain, and burrow in my heart—I cannot bear it.

Cash. I do not understand you, Sir! Good now, what is't disturbs you thus? Pray, be composed; these starts of passion have some cause, I fear, that touches you more nearly.

Kite. Sorely, sorely, Thomas—it cleaves too close to me—Oh, me—[*Sighs.*] Lend me thy arm—so, good Cash.

Cash. You tremble and look pale! Let me call assistance.

Kite. Not for ten thousand worlds—Alas! alas! 'tis not in medicine to give me ease—here, here it lies.

Cash. What, Sir?

Kite. Why—nothing, nothing—I am not sick, yet more than dead; I have a burning fever in my mind, and long for that, which having would destroy me.

Cash. Believe me, 'tis your fancy's imposition; shut up your generous mind from such intruders—I'll hazard all my growing favour with you; I'll stake my present, my future welfare, that some base whispering knave, nay, pardon me, Sir, hath in the best and richest soil, sown seeds of rank and evil nature! O, my master, should they take root——

[*Laughing within.*

Kite. Hark! hark! thou dost not hear? what think'st thou now? Are they not laughing at me? They are, they are. They have deceived the wittol, and thus they triumph in their infamy—This aggravation is not to be borne. [*Laughing again.*] Hark, again!—Cash, do thou unseen steal in upon 'em, and listen to their wanton conference.

Cash. I shall obey you, though against my will. [*Exit.*

Kite. Against his will! Ha! it may be so—He's young, and may be bribed for them—they've various means to draw the unwary in; if it be so, I'm lost, deceived, betrayed, and my bosom, my full-fraught bosom, is unlocked and opened to mockery and laughter! Heaven forbid! He cannot be that viper; sting the hand that raised and cherished him! was this stroke added, I should be cursed—But it cannot be—no, it cannot be.

Enter CASH.

Cash. You are musing, Sir.

Kite. I ask your pardon, Cash—ask me not why—I have wronged you, and am sorry—'tis gone.

Cash. If you suspect my faith—

Kite. I do not—say no more—and for my sake let it die and be forgotten—Have you seen your mistress, and heard—whence was that noise?

Cash. Your brother, Master Well-bred, is with 'em, and I found them throwing out their mirth on a very truly ridiculous subject; it is one Formal, as he styles himself, and he appertains, so he phrases it, to Justice Clement, and would speak with you.

Kite. With me! Art thou sure it is the Justice's clerk! Where is he?

Enter BRAIN-WORM, *as* FORMAL.

Who are you, friend?

Brain. An appendix to Justice Clement, vulgarly called his clerk!

Kite. What are your wants with me?

Brain. None.

Kite. Do you not want to speak with me?

Brain. No, but my master does.

Kite. What are the Justice's commands?

Brain. He doth not command, but entreats Master Kitely to be with him directly, having matters of some moment to communicate unto him.

Kite. What can it be? Say, I'll be with him instantly, and if your legs, friend, go no faster than your tongue, I shall be there before you.

Brain. I will. Vale. [*Exit.*

Kite. 'Tis a precious fool, indeed!—I must go forth—But first, come hither, Thomas—I have admitted thee into the close recesses of my heart, and showed thee all my frailties, passions, every thing.

Be careful of thy promise, keep good watch.
Wilt thou be true, my Thomas?

Cash. As truth's self, Sir—

But be assured you're heaping care and trouble
Upon a sandy base; ill-placed suspicion
Recoils upon yourself—She's chaste as comely!
Believe 't she is—Let her not note your humour;
Disperse the gloom upon your brow, and be
As clear as her unsullied honour.

Kite. I will then, Cash—thou comfort'st me—I'll drive these
Fiend-like fancies from me, and be myself again.

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Think'st thou she has perceived my folly? 'Twere
Happy if she had not—She has not—
They who know no evil, will suspect none.
Cash. True, Sir! nor has your mind a blemish now.
This change has gladdened me—Here's my mistress,
And the rest; settle your reason to accost 'em,
Kite. I will, Cash, I will——

Enter WELL-BRED, DAME KITELY, *and* BRIDGET.

Well. What are you plotting, brother Kitely,
That thus of late you muse alone and bear
Such weighty care upon your pensive brow? [*Laughs.*
Kite. My care is all for you, good sneering brother,
And well I wish you'd take some wholesome counsel,
And curb your head-strong humours; trust me, brother,
You were to blame to raise commotions here,
And hurt the peace and order of my house.
Well. No harm done, brother, I warrant you.
Since there is no harm done, anger costs
A man nothing, and a brave man is never
His own man till he be angry—To keep
His valour in obscurity, is to keep himself,
As it were, in a cloak-bag. What's a brave
Musician unless he play?
What's a brave man unless he fight?
Dame. Ay, but what harm might have come of it, brother?
Well. What, school'd on both sides! Pr'ythee,
Bridget, save me from the rod and lecture. [BRIDGET *and* WELL. *retire.*
Kite. With what a decent modesty she rates him!
My heart's at ease, and she shall see it is—
How art thou, wife? Thou look'st both gay and comely,
In troth, thou dost—I'm sent for out, my dear,
But I shall soon return—Indeed, my life,
Business that forces me abroad, grows irksome.
I could content me with less gain and 'vantage,
To have thee more at home, indeed I could.
Dame. Your doubts as well as love, may breed these thoughts.
Kite. That jar untunes me. [*Aside.*
What dost thou say? Doubt thee?
I should as soon suspect myself—No, no,
My confidence is rooted in thy merit,
So fix'd and settled, that wert thou inclin'd
To masks, to sports, and balls, where lusty youth
Leads up the wanton dance, and the rais'd pulse
Beats quicker measures, yet I could with joy,
With heart's ease and security—not but
I had rather thou shouldst prefer my home,
And me, to toys and such like vanities,
Dame. But sure, my dear,
A wife may more moderately use these pleasures,
Which numbers and the time give sanction to,
Without the smallest blemish on her name.
Kite. And so she may—And I'll go with thee, child,
I will indeed—I'll lead thee there myself,
And be the foremost reveller—I'll silence
The sneers of envy, stop the tongue of slander;
Nor will I more be pointed at as one
Disturb'd with jealousy——
Dame. Why, were you ever so?
Kite. What!—Ha! never—ha, ha, ha!
She stabs me home. [*Aside.*] Jealous of thee!
No, do not believe it—Speak low, my love,
Thy brother will overhear us—No, no, my dear,
It could not be, it could not be—for—for—
What is the time now?—I shall be too late—
No, no, thou mayst be satisfied
There's not the smallest spark remaining—
Remaining! What do I say? There never was,
Nor can, nor ever shall be—so be satisfied—
Is Cob within there? Give me a kiss,
My dear; there, there, now we are reconciled—
I'll be back immediately—Good-bye, good-bye—
Ha! ha! jealous! I shall burst my sides with laughing.
Ha, ha! Cob, where are you, Cob? Ha, ha.— [*Exit.*

WELL-BRED *and* BRIDGET *come forward.*

Well. What have you done to make your husband part so merry from you? He has of late been little given to laughter.
Dame. He laughed indeed, but seemingly without mirth. His behaviour is new and strange. He is much agitated, and has some whimsey in his head, that puzzles mine to read it.
Well. 'Tis jealousy, good sister, and writ so largely, that the blind may read it; have you not perceived it yet?
Dame. If I have, 'tis not always prudent that my tongue should betray my eyes; so far my wisdom tends, good brother, and little more I boast—But what makes him ever calling for Cob so? I wonder how he can employ him.
Well. Indeed, sister, to ask how he employs Cob, is a necessary question for you, that are his wife, and a thing not very easy for you to be satisfied in—But this I'll assure you, Cob's wife is an excellent bawd, sister, and oftentimes your husband haunts her house; marry, to what end, I cannot altogether accuse him. Imagine you what you think convenient. But I have known fair hides have foul hearts ere now, sister.
Dame. Never said you truer than that, brother; so much I can tell you for your learning. O, ho! is this the fruit of 's jealousy? I thought some game was in the wind, he acted so much tenderness but now, but I'll be quit with him.—Thomas!

Enter CASH.

Fetch your hat, and go with me; I'll get my hood, and out the backward way. I would to fortune I could take him there, I'd return him his own, I warrant him; I'd fit him for jealousy! [*Exeunt.*
Well. Ha, ha! so e'en let them go; this may make sport anon—What, Brain-worm!

Enter BRAIN-WORM.

Brain. I saw the merchant turn the corner

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and came back to tell you, all goes well; wind and tide, my master.

Well. But how gott'st thou this apparel of the Justice's man?

Brain. Marry, Sir, my proper fine penman would needs bestow the grist o' me at the Windmill, to hear some martial discourse, where I so marshalled him, that I made him drunk with admiration; and because too much heat was the cause of his distemper, I stripped him stark naked, as he lay along asleep, and borrowed his suit to deliver this counterfeit message in, leaving a rusty armour, and an old brown bill, to watch him 'till my return: which shall be, when I have pawned his apparel, and spent the better part of the money, perhaps.

Well. Well, thou art a successful, merry knave, Brain-worm; his absence will be subject for more mirth. I pray thee return to thy young master, and will him to meet me and my sister Bridget at the Tower instantly; for here, tell him, the house is so stored with jealousy, there is no room for love to stand upright in. We must get our fortunes committed to some large prison, say: and then the Tower, I know no better air, nor where the liberty of the house may do us more present service.—Away. [*Exit* BRAIN.

Bridg. What, is this the engine that you told me off? What farther meaning have you in the plot

Well. That you may know, fair sister-in-law, how happy a thing it is to be fair and beautiful.

Bridg. That touches not me, brother.

Well. That's true: that's even the fault of it; for, indeed, beauty stands a woman in no stead, unless it procure her touching—Well, there's a dear and well-respected friend of mine, sister, stands very strongly and worthily affected towards you, and hath vowed to inflame whole bonfires of zeal at his heart, in honour of your perfections. I have already engaged my promise to bring you where you shall hear him confirm much more. Ned Knowell, is the man, sister.—There's no exception against the party; you are ripe for a husband, and a minute's loss to such an occasion is a great trespass in a wise beauty. What say you, sister? On my soul, he loves you; will you give him the meeting?

Bridg. Faith, I had very little confidence in my own constancy, brother, if I durst not meet a man: but this motion of yours savours of an old knight adventurer's servant a little too much, methinks.

Well. What's that, sister?

Bridg. Marry, of the go-between.

Well. No matter if it did; I would be such a one for my friend. But see, who is returned to hinder us.

Enter KITELY.

Kite. What villainy is this? Called out on a false message! This was some plot. I was not sent for. Bridget, where's your sister?

Bridg. I think she be gone forth, Sir.

Kite. How! is my wife gone forth? Whither, for Heaven's sake?

Bridg. She's gone abroad with Thomas.

Kite. Abroad with Thomas! Oh, that villain cheats me!
He hath discovered all unto my wife;
Beast that I was to trust him! Whither, I pray
You, went she?

Bridg. I know not, Sir.

Well. I'll tell you, brother, whither I suspect she's gone.

Kite. Whither, good brother?

Well. To Cob's house, I believe; but keep my counsel.

Kite. I will, I will. To Cob's house! Does she haunt there?
She's gone on purpose now to cuckold me.
With that lewd rascal, who to win her favour,
Hath told her all—Why would you let her go?

Well. Because she's not my wife: if she were, I'd keep her to her tether.

Kite. So, so; now 'tis plain. I shall go mad
With my misfortunes; now they pour in torrents.
I'm bruted by my wife, betray'd by my servant,
Mock'd at by my relations, pointed at by my neighbours, [now
Despis'd by myself.—There is nothing left
But to revenge myself first, next hang myself;
And then—all my cares will be over. [*Exit.*

Bridg. He storms most loudly; sure you have gone too far in this.

Well. 'Twill all end right, depend upon't.—But let us lose no time; the coast, is clear; away, away; the affair is worth it, and cries haste.

Bridg. I trust me to your guidance, brother; and so fortune for us. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—Stocks-Market.

Enter MATTHEW *and* BOBADIL.

Mat. I wonder, captain, what they will say of my going away?

Bob. Why, what should they say? but as of a discreet gentleman; quick, wary, respectful of nature's fair lineaments, and that's all.

Mat. Why so! but what can they say of your beating?

Bob. A rude part, a touch with soft wood, a kind of gross battery used, laid on strongly, borne most patiently, and that's all. But wherefore do I wake their remembrance? I was fascinated, by Jupiter! fascinated; but I will be unwitched, and revenged by law.

Mat. Do you hear? Is't not best to get a warrant, and have him arrested, and brought before Justice Clement?

Bob. It were not amiss; would we had it!

Mat. Why, here comes his man, let's speak to him.

Bob. Agreed. Do you speak.

Enter BRAIN-WORM *as* FORMAL.

Mat. Save you, Sir.

Brain. With all my heart, Sir!

Mat. Sir, there is one Downright hath abused this gentleman and myself, and we determine to make ourselves amends by law; now, if you would do us the favour to procure a warrant to bring him before your master, you shall be well considered of, I assure you, Sir.

Brain. Sir, you know my service is my living: such favours as these, gotten of my master, is his only preferment, and therefore you must consider me, as I may make benefit of my place.

Mat. How is that, Sir?

Brain. Faith, Sir, the thing is extraordinary, and the gentleman may be of great account. Yet, be he what he will, if you will lay me down a brace of angels in my hand, you shall have it, otherwise not.

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Mat. How shall we do, captain? He asks a brace of angels; you have no money.

Bob. Not a cross, by fortune.

Mat. Nor I, as I am a gentleman, but twopence left of my two shillings in the morning for wine and raddish. Let's find him some pawn.

Bob. Pawn! we have none to the value of his demand.

Mat. O, yes, I can pawn my ring here

Bob. And hark'ee, he shall have my trusty Toledo too. I believe I shall have no service for it to-day.

Mat. Do you hear, Sir? We have no store of money at this time, but you shall have good pawns; look you, Sir, I will pledge this ring, and that gentleman his Toledo, because we would have it despatched.

Brain. I am content, Sir; I will get you the warrant presently. What's his name, say you? Downright?

Mat. Ay, ay, George Downright.

Brain. Well, gentlemen, I'll procure you the warrant presently: but who will you have to serve it?

Mat. That's true, captain, that must be considered.

Bob. Body o' me, I know not! 'Tis service of danger!

Brain. Why, you were best get one of the varlets o' the city, a serjeant; I'll appoint you one if you please.

Mat. Will you, Sir? Why we can wish no better.

Bob. We'll leave it to you, Sir.

[*Exeunt* Bob. *and* Mat.

Brain. This is rare! Now will I go pawn this cloak of the Justice's man, at the broker's for a varlet's suit, and be the varlet myself, and so get money on all sides. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—The Street before Cob's *House.*

Enter Kno'well.

Kno. O, here it is; I have found it now—Hoa, who is within here?

[Tib. *appears at the window.*

Tib. I am within, Sir, what is your pleasure?

Kno. To know who is within beside yourself.

Tib. Why, Sir, you are no constable, I hope?

Kno. O, fear you the constable? Then I doubt not you have some guests within deserve that fear—I'll fetch him straight.

Tib. For Heaven's sake, Sir—

Kno. Go to, come tell me, is not young Kno'well here?

Tib. Young Kno'well! I know none such, Sir, o' my honesty.

Kno. Your honesty, dame! it flies too lightly from you. There is no way but fetch the constable.

Tib. The constable! the man is mad, I think.

Enter Cash *and* Dame Kitely.

Cash. Hoa! who keeps house here?

Kno. O, this is the female copesmate of my son. Now shall I meet him straight. [*Aside.*

Dame. Knock, Thomas, hard.

Cash. Hoa! good wife.

Tib. Why, what's the matter with you?

Dame. Why, woman, grieves it you to ope the door? Belike you get something to keep it shut.

Tib. What mean these questions, pray you?

Dame. So strange you make it! Is not my husband here?

Kno. Her husband! [*Aside.*

Dame. My tried and faithful husband, Master Kitely.

Tib. I hope he needs not be tried here.

Dame. Come hither, Cash—I see my turtle coming to his haunts: let us retire.

[*They retire.*

Kno. This must be some device to mock me withal.
Soft—who is this?—Oh! 'tis my son disguis'd.
I'll watch him and surprise him.

Enter Kitely, *muffled in a cloak.*

Kite. 'Tis truth, I see, there she skulks.
But I will fetch her from her hold—I will—
I tremble so, I scarce have power to do the justice
Her infamy demands.

[*As* Kitely *goes forward,* Dame Kitely *and* Kno'well *lay hold of him.*

Kno. Have I trapped you, youth? You cannot 'scape me now.

Dame. O, Sir, have I forestalled your honest market?
Found your close walks? You stand amaz'd
Now, do you? Ah, hide, hide your face for shame!
I'faith, I am glad I have found you out at last.
What is your jewel, trow? In, come let's see her; fetch
Forth the wanton dame—If she be fairer,
In any honest judgment, than myself,
I'll be content with it: but she is change;
She feeds you fat, she soothes your appetite,
And you are well. Your wife, an honest woman,
Is meat twice sod to you, Sir. O, you treacher!

Kno. What mean you, woman? Let go your hold.
I see the counterfeit—I am his father, and claim him as my own.

Kite. [*Discovering himself.*] I am your cuckold, and claim my vengeance.

Dame. What, do you wrong me, and insult me too?
Thou faithless man!

Kite. Out on thy more than strumpet's impudence!
Steal'st thou thus to thy haunts? And have I taken
Thy bawd and thee, and thy companion,
This hoary-headed lecher, this old goat,
Close at your villainy, and wouldst thou 'scuse it
With this stale harlot's jest, accusing me?
O, old incontinent! dost thou not shame,
To have a mind so hot; and to entice,
And feed the enticement of a lustful woman!

Dame. Out, I defy thee, thou dissembling wretch!

Kite. Defy me, strumpet! Ask thy pander here,
Can he deny it, or that wicked elder?

Kno. Why, hear you, Sir—

Cash. Master, 'tis in vain to reason, while these passions blind you—I'm grieved to see you thus.

Kite. Tut, tut, never speak, I see thro' every
Veil you cast upon your treachery: but I have
Done with you and root you from my heart for ever.

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For you, Sir, thus I demand my honour's due;
Resolved to cool your lust, or end my shame.
[*Draws.*

Kno. What lunacy is this? Put up your sword, and undeceive yourself—No arm that e'er poised weapon can affright me. But I pity folly nor cope with madness.

Kite. I will have proofs—I will—so you good wife-bawd, Cob's wife; and you, that make your husband such a monster; and you, young pander, and old cuckold-maker, I'll ha' you every one before the Justice—Nay, you shall answer it; I charge you go. Come forth, thou bawd.

[*Goes into the house, and brings out* TIB.

Kno. Marry, with all my heart, Sir; I go willingly.
Though I do taste this as a trick put on me,
To punish my impertinent search; and justly;
And half forgive my son for the device.

Kite. Come, will you go?

Dame. Go, to thy shame, believe it.

Kite. Though shame and sorrow both my heart betide,
Come on—I must, and will be satisfied.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—Stocks-Market.

Enter BRAIN-WORM.

Brain. Well, of all my disguises yet, now am I most like myself; being in this serjeant's gown. A man of my present profession never counterfeits, till he lays hold upon a debtor, and says he 'rests him; for then he brings him to all manner of unrest. A kind of little kings we are, bearing the diminutive of a mace, made like a young artichoke, that always carries pepper and salt in itself. Well, I know not what danger I undergo by this exploit; pray Heaven I come well off!

Enter BOBADIL *and* MR. MATTHEW.

Mat. See, I think, yonder is the varlet, by his gown. 'Save you, friend; are not you here by appointment of Justice Clement's man?

Brain. Yes, an't please you, Sir, he told me two gentlemen had willed him to procure a warrant from his master, which I have about me, to be served on one Downright.

Mat. It is honestly done of you both; and see where the party comes you must arrest. Serve it upon him quickly, before he be aware—

Enter MR. STEPHEN, *in* DOWNRIGHT'S *cloak.*

Bob. Bear back, Mr. Matthew.

Brain. Master Downright, I arrest you i' the queen's name, and must carry you before a Justice, by virtue of this warrant.

Steph. Me, friend, I am no Downright, I. I am Master Stephen; you do not well to arrest me, I tell you truly. I am in nobody's bonds or books, I would you should know it. A plague on you heartily, for making me thus afraid before my time!

Brain. Why now you are deceived gentlemen!

Bob. He wears such a cloak, and that deceived us. But see, here he comes indeed! this is he, officer.

Enter DOWNRIGHT.

Dow. Why, how now, signor Gull! are you turned filcher of late? Come, deliver up my cloak.

Steph. Your cloak, Sir, I bought it even now in open market.

Brain. Master Downright, I have a warrant, I must serve upon you, procured by these two gentlemen.

Dow. These gentlemen! these rascals!

Brain. Keep the peace, I charge you in her majesty's name.

Dow. I obey thee. What must I do, officer?

Brain. Go before Master Justice Clement, to answer what they can object against you, Sir. I will use you kindly, Sir.

Mat. Come, let's before, and make the Justice, captain— [*Exit.*

Bob. The varlet's a tall man, before Heaven.
[*Exit.*

Dow. Gull, you'll gi' me my cloak.

Steph. Sir, I bought it, and I'll keep it.

Dow. You will?

Steph. Ay, that I will.

Dow. Officer, there's thy fee, arrest him.

Brain. Master Stephen, I must arrest you.

Steph. Arrest me! I scorn it; there, take your cloak, I'll none on't.

Dow. Nay, that shall not serve your turn now, Sir. Officer, I'll go with thee to the Justice's. Bring him along.

Steph. Why, is not here your cloak? what would you have?

Brain. Sir, I'll take your word, and this gentleman's too, for his appearance.

Dow. I'll ha' no words taken. Bring him along.

Brain. So, so, I have made a fair mash on't.

Steph. Must I go?

Brain. I know no remedy, Master Stephen.

Dow. Come along before me. I do not love your hanging look behind.

Steph. Why, Sir, I hope you cannot hang me for it. Can he, fellow?

Brain. I think not, Sir. It is but a whipping matter sure!

Steph. Why, then let him do his worst, I am resolute. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—A Hall in JUSTICE CLEMENT'S *House.*

Enter CLEMENT, KNO'WELL, KITELY, DAME KITELY, TIB, CASH, COB, *and Servants.*

Clem. Nay, but stay, stay, give me leave. My chair, sirrah. You, Master Kno'well, say you went thither to meet your son?

Kno. Ay, Sir.

Clem. But who directed you thither?

Kno. That did mine own man, Sir.

Clem. Where is he?

Kno. Nay, I know not now; I left him with your clerk; and appointed him to stay for me.

Clem. My clerk! About what time was this?

Kno. Marry, between one and two, as I take it.

Clem. And what time came my man with the false message to you, master Kitely?

Kite. After two, Sir.

Clem. Very good: but, Mrs. Kitely, how chance it that you were at Cob's? Ha!

Dame. An' please you, Sir, I'll tell you. My brother Well-bred told me, that Cob's house was a suspected place—

Clem. So it appears, methinks: but on.

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Dame. And that my husband used thither daily.

Clem. No matter, so he used himself well, mistress.

Dame. True, Sir; but you know what grows by such haunts oftentimes.

Clem. I see rank fruits of a jealous brain, Mistress Kitely. But did you find your husband there, in that case, as you suspected?

Kite. I found her there, Sir.

Clem. Did you so? That alters the case. Who gave you knowledge of your wife's being there?

Kite. Marry, that did my brother, Well-bred.

Clem. How, Well-bred first tell her, then tell you after? Where is Well-bred?

Kite. Gone with my sister, Sir, I know not whither.

Clem. Why, this is a mere trick, a device; you are gulled in this most grossly, all! Alas, poor wench, wert thou suspected for this?

Tib. Yes, an't please you.

Clem. I smell mischief here, plot and contrivance, Master Kitely. However, if you will step into the next room with your wife, and think coolly of matters, you'll find some trick has been played you—I fear there have been jealousies on both parts, and the wags have been merry with you.

Kite. I begin to feel it—I'll take your counsel—Will you go in, Dame?

Dame. I will have justice, Mr. Kitely.

[*Exit* KITE. *and* DAME.

Clem. You will be a woman, Mrs. Kitely, that I see—How now, what's the matter?

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Sir, there's a gentleman i' the court without desires to speak with your worship.

Clem. A gentleman! What's he?

Serv. A soldier, Sir, he says.

Clem. A soldier! My sword, quickly. A soldier speak with me? Stand by, I will end your matters anon—Let the soldier enter Now, Sir, what ha' you to say to me?

Enter BOBADIL *and* MATTHEW.

Bob. By your worship's favour——

Clem. Nay, keep out, Sir, I know not your pretence; you send me word, Sir, you are a soldier. Why, Sir, you shall be answered here; here be them have been among soldiers Sir, your pleasure?

Bob. Faith, Sir, so it is, this gentleman and myself have been most uncivilly wronged and beaten by one Downright, a coarse fellow about the town here; and for my own part, I protest, being a man in no sort given to this filthy humour of quarrelling, he hath assaulted me in the way of my peace; despoiled me of mine honour; disarmed me of my weapons; and rudely laid me along in the open streets; when I not so much as once offered to resist him.

Clem. O, God's precious! Is this the soldier? Lie there, my sword, 'twill make him swoon, I fear; he is not fit to look on't, that will put up a blow.

Mat. An't please your worship, he was bound to the peace.

Clem. Why, an' he were, Sir, his hands were not bound, were they?

Serv. There's one of the varlets of the city, Sir, has brought two gentlemen here, one upon your worship's warrant.

Clem. My warrant!

Serv. Yes, Sir, the officer says, procured by these two.

Clem. Bid him come in. Set by this picture. What, Mr. Downright! are you brought at Mr. Freshwater's suit here?

Enter DOWNRIGHT, STEPHEN, *and* BRAIN-WORM.

Dow. I'faith, Sir. And here's another, brought at my suit.

Clem. What are you, Sir?

Steph. A gentleman, Sir. O, uncle!

Clem. Uncle! Who, Master Kno'well?

Kno. Ay, Sir, this is a wise kinsman of mine.

Steph. God's my witness, uncle, I am wronged here monstrously; he charges me with stealing of his cloak, and would I might never stir, if I did not find it in the street by chance.

Dow. O, did you find it, now? You said you bought it ere-while.

Steph. And you said I stole it. Nay, now my uncle is here, I'll do well enough with you.

Clem. Well, let this breathe awhile. You that have cause to complain there, stand forth. Had you my warrant for this gentleman's apprehension.

Bob. Ay, an't please your worship.

Clem. Nay, do not speak in passion so. Where had you it?

Bob. Of your clerk, Sir.

Clem. That's well, an' my clerk can make warrants and my hand not at 'en! where is the warrant? officer, have you it?

Brain. No, Sir, your worship's man, Master Formal, bid me do it for these gentlemen, and he would be my discharge.

Clem. Why, Master, Downright, are you such a novice to be served and never see the warrant!

Dow. Sir, he did not serve it on me.

Clem. No, how then?

Dow. Marry, Sir, he came to me, and said he must serve it, and he would use me kindly, and so.

Clem. O, God's pity, was it so, Sir? He must serve it? Give me a warrant, I must serve one too—you knave, you slave, you rogue, do you say you must, sirrah! Away with him to the gaol, I'll teach you a trick for your must, Sir.

Brain. Good Sir, I beseech you be good to me.

Clem. Tell him, he shall go to the gaol, away with him, I say.

Brain. Ay, Sir, if you will commit me, it shall be for committing more than this. I will not lose by my travel any grain of my fame certain. [*Throws off his disguise.*

Clem. How is this?

Kno. My man, Brain-worm!

Steph. O, yes, uncle, Brain-worm has been with my cousin Edward and I, all this day.

Clem. I told you all there was some device.

Brain. Nay, excellent Justice, since I have laid myself thus open to you, now stand strong for me, both with your sword and your balance.

Clem. Body o' me, a merry knave! Give me

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a bowl of sack. If he belongs to you, Master Kno'well, I bespeak your patience.

Brain. That is it I have most need of. Sir, if you'll pardon me only, I'll glory in all the rest of my exploits.

Kno. Sir, you know I love not to have my favours come hard from me. You have your pardon though I suspect you shrewdly for being of counsel with my son against me.

Brain. Yes, faith, I have, Sir; though you retained me doubly this morning for yourself; first as Brain-worm, after, as Fitz-Sword. I was your reformed soldier. 'Twas I sent you to Cob's upon the errand without end.

Kno. Is it possible! Or that thou shouldst disguise thyself so as I should not know thee?

Brain. O, Sir! this has been the day of my metamorphoses; it is not that shape alone that I have run through to-day. I brought Master Kitely a message too, in the form of Master Justice's man here, to draw him out o' the way, as well as your worship; while Master Well-bred might make a conveyance of Mistress Bridget to my young master.

Kno. My son is not married, I hope.

Brain. Faith, Sir, they are both as sure as love, a priest, and three thousand pounds, which is her portion, can make 'em; and by this time are ready to bespeak their wedding supper at the Windmill, except some friend here prevent em', and invite 'em home.

Clem. Marry, that will I; thank thee for putting me in mind on't. Sirrah, go you and fetch them hither upon my warrant. Neither's friends have cause to be sorry, if I know the young couple aright. But, I pray thee, what hast thou done with my man, Formal?

Brain. Faith, Sir, after some ceremony past, as making him drunk, first with story, and then with wine, but all in kindness, and stripping him to his shirt; I left him in that cool vein, departed, sold your worship's warrant to these two, pawned his livery for that varlet's gown to serve it in; and thus have brought myself, by my activity, to your worship's consideration.

Clem. And I will consider thee in a cup of sack. Here's to thee; which having drank off, this is my sentence, pledge me. Thou hast done, or assisted to nothing, in my judgment, but deserves to be pardoned for the wit o' the offence. Go into the next room; let Master Kitely into this whimsical business, and if he does not forgive thee, he has less mirth in him than an honest man ought to have. How now, who are these?

Enter Ed. Kno'well, Well-bred, *and* Bridget.

O, the young company. Welcome, welcome. Give you joy. Nay, Mrs. Bridget, blush not, you are not so fresh a bride, but the news of it is come hither before you. Master Bridegroom, I have made your peace, give me your hand. So will I for the rest, ere you forsake my roof.

All. We are the more bound to your humanity, Sir.

Clem. Only these two have so little of man in 'em, they are no part of my care.

Steph. And what shall I do?

Clem. O! I had lost a sheep, an' he had not bleated. Why, Sir, you shall give Mr. Downright his cloak; and I will entreat him to take it. A trencher and a napkin you shall have in the buttery, and keep Cob and his wife company here; whom I will intreat first to be reconciled; and you to endeavour with your wit to keep 'em so.

Steph. Ill do my best.

Clem. Call Master Kitely and his wife, there.

Enter Mr. Kitely *and* Dame Kitely.

Did not I tell you there was a plot against you? Did I not smell it out, as a wise magistrate ought? Have not you traced, have you not found it, Eh, Master Kitely?

Kite. I have—I confess my folly, and own I have deserved what I have suffered for it.—The trial has been severe, but it is past. All I have to ask now, is, that as my folly is cured, and my persecutors forgiven, my shame may be forgotten.

Clem. That will depend upon yourself, Master Kitely; do not you yourself create the food for mischief, and the mischievous will not prey upon you. But come, let a general reconciliation go round, and let all discontents be laid aside. You, Mr. Downright, put off your anger, You, Master Kno'well, your cares.—And do you, Master Kitely, and your wife, put off your jealousies.

Kite. Sir, thus, they go from me: kiss me, my wife.

See, what a drove of horns fly in the air,
Wing'd with my cleansed, and my credulous breath;
Watch 'em, suspicious eyes, watch where they fall,
See, see, on heads that think they've none at all.
O, what a plenteous world of this will come!
When air rains horns, all may be sure of some.

Clem. 'Tis well, 'tis well. This night we'll dedicate to friendship, love, and laughter.—Master Bridegroom, take your bride, and lead, every one a fellow. Here is my mistress, Brain-worm! to whom all my addresses of courtship shall have their reference: whose adventures this day, when our grandchildren shall hear to be made a fable, I doubt not but it shall find both spectators and applause.

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LOVE IN A VILLAGE:

A COMIC OPERA,

IN THREE ACTS.

BY ISAAC BICKERSTAFF.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	DRURY-LANE.	COVENT-GARDEN.
SIR WILLIAM MEADOW,	*Mr. Aickin.*	*Mr. Powell.*
YOUNG MEADOWS,	*Mr. Kelly.*	*Mr. Johnstone.*
JUSTICE WOODCOCK,	*Mr. Parsons.*	*Mr. Quick.*
HAWTHORN,	*Mr. Dignum.*	*Mr. Townshend.*
EUSTACE,	*Mr. Williames.*	*Mr. Davies.*
HODGE,	*Mr. Hollingsworth.*	*Mr. Knight.*
ROSETTA,	*Mrs. Crouch.*	*Mrs. Clending.*
LUCINDA,	*Miss Stageldoir.*	*Mrs. Mountain.*
DEBORAH WOODCOCK,	*Mrs. Love.*	*Mrs. Davenport.*
MARGERY,	*Miss Collett.*	*Mrs. Martyr.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Garden, with statues, fountains, and flower-pots. Several arbours appear in the side scenes.

ROSETTA *and* LUCINDA *are discovered at work, seated upon two garden-chairs.*

AIR.

Ros. Hope! thou nurse of young desire,
Fairy promiser of joy,
Painted vapour, glow-worm fire,
Temp'rate sweet, that ne'er can cloy.

Luc. Hope! thou earnest of delight,
Softest soother of the mind,
Balmy cordial, prospect bright,
Surest friend the wretched find.

Both. Kind deceiver, flatter still,
Deal out pleasures unpossess'd,
With thy dreams my fancy fill,
And in wishes make me bless'd.

Luc. Heigho!—Rosetta!

Ros. Well, child, what do you say?

Luc. Tis a devilish thing to live in a village, a hundred miles from the capital, with a preposterous gouty father, and a superannuated maiden aunt.—I am heartily sick of my situation.

Ros. And with reason—But 'tis in a great measure your own fault: here is this Mr. Eustace, a man of character and family; he likes you, you like him; you know one another's minds, and yet you will not resolve to make yourself happy with him.

AIR.

Whence can you inherit
So slavish a spirit?
Confin'd thus, and chain'd to a log!
Now fondled, now chid,
Permitted, forbid;
'Tis leading the life of a dog.

For shame, you a lover!
More firmness discover;
Take courage, nor here longer mope;
Resist and be free,
Run riot like me,
And, to perfect the picture, elope.

Luc. And is this your advice?

Ros. Positively.

Luc. Here's my hand; positively I'll follow it—I have already sent to my gentleman, who is now in the country, to let him know he may come hither this day; we will make use of the opportunity to settle all preliminaries—And then—But take notice, whenever we decamp, you march off along with us.

Ros. Oh! Madam, your servant; I have no inclination to be left behind, I assure you—But you say you got acquainted with this spark while you were with your mother during her last illness at Bath, so that your father has never seen him?

Luc. Never in his life, my dear; and, I am confident he entertains not the least suspicion of my having any such connection: my aunt, indeed, has her doubts and surmises; but, besides that my father will not allow any one to be wiser than himself, it is an established maxim between these affectionate relations, never to agree in any thing.

Ros. Except being absurd; you must allow they sympathize perfectly in this—But, now we are on the subject, I desire to know, what I am to do with this wicked old justice of peace, this libidinous father of yours? He follows me about the house like a tame goat.

Luc. Nay. I'll assure you he hath been a wag in his time—you must have a care of yourself.

Ros. Wretched me! to fall into such hands who have been just forced to run away from my parents to avoid an odious marriage.—You smile at that now; and I know you think me whimsical, as you have often told me; but you must excuse my being a little over-delicate in this particular.

AIR.

My heart's my own, my will is free,
And so shall be my voice;
No mortal man shall wed with me,
Till first he's made my choice.

Let parents rule, cry nature's laws,
And children still obey;
And is there then no saving clause,
Against tyrannic sway?

Luc. Well, but my dear, mad girl——

Ros. Lucinda, dont talk to me—Was your father to go to London; meet there by accident with an old fellow as wrong-headed as himself; and in a fit of absurd friendship agree to marry you to that old fellow's son, whom you had never seen, without consulting your inclination, or allowing you a negative, in case he should not prove agreeable——

Luc. Why, I should think it a little hard, I confess—yet, when I see you in the character of a chambermaid—

Ros. It is the only character, my dear, in which I could hope to lie concealed; and, I can tell you, I was reduced to the last extremity, when, in consequence of our old boarding-school friendship, I applied to you to receive me in this capacity: for we expected the parties the very next week.

Luc. But had not you a message from your intended spouse, to let you know he was as little inclined to such ill-concerted nuptials as you were?

Ros. More than so, he wrote to advise me, by all means, to contrive some method of breaking them off, for he had rather return to his dear studies at Oxford; and after that what hopes could one have of being happy with him?

Luc. Then you are not at all uneasy at the strange rout you must have occasioned at home? I warrant, during this month you have been absent—

Ros. Oh! don't mention it, my dear; I have had so many admirers since I commenced Abigail, that I am quite charmed with my situation—But hold, who stalks yonder in the yard, that the dogs are so glad to see?

Luc. Daddy Hawthorn, as I live! He is come to pay my father a visit; and never more luckily, for he always forces him abroad. By the way, what will you do with yourself while I step into the house to see after my trusty messenger, Hodge?

Ros. No matter, I'll sit down in that arbour, and listen to the singing of the birds: you know I am fond of melancholy amusements.

Luc. So it seems, indeed: sure, Rosetta, none of your admirers had power to touch your heart; you are not in love, I hope?

Ros. In love! that's pleasant: who do you suppose I should be in love with, pray?

Luc. Why, let me see——What do you think of Thomas, our gardener? There he is, at the other end of the walk—He is a pretty young man, and the servants say he's always writing verses on you.

Ros. Indeed, Lucinda, you are very silly.

Luc. Indeed, Rosetta, that blush makes you look very handsome.

Ros. Blush? I'm sure I don't blush.

Luc. Ha, ha, ha!

Ros. Pshaw, Lucinda, how can you be so ridiculous?

Luc. Well, don't be angry, and I have done——But suppose you did like him, how could you help yourself?

AIR.

When once Love's subtile poison gains
A passage to the female breast,
Like lightning rushing through the veins,
Each wish, and every thought's possess'd:

To heal the pangs our minds endure,
Reason in vain its skill applies;
Nought can afford the heart a cure,
But what is pleasing to the eyes. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Enter YOUNG MEADOWS.

Y. Mea. Let me see—on the fifteenth of June, at half an hour past five in the morning, [*Taking out a pocket-book.*] I left my father's house, unknown to any one, having made free with a coat and jacket of our gardener's, which fitted me, by way of a disguise: so says my pocket-book; and, chance directing me to this village, on the twentieth of the same month I procured a recommendation to the worshipful Justice Woodcock, to be the superintendant of his pumpkins and cabbages, because I would let my father see, I chose to run any lengths, rather than submit to what his obstinacy would have forced me, a marriage against my inclination, with a woman I never saw. [*Puts up the book, and takes up a watering-pot.*] Here I have been three weeks, and in that time I am as much altered, as if I had changed my nature with my habit. 'Sdeath, to fall in love with a chambermaid! And yet, if I could forget that I am the son and heir of Sir William Meadows—But that's impossible.

AIR.

O! had I been by fate decreed
Some humble cottage swain;
In fair Rosetta's sight to feed
My sheep upon the plain;

What bliss had I been born to taste
Which now I ne'er must know?

Ye envious powers! why have ye plac'd
My fair one's lot so low?

Ha! who was it I had a glimpse of as I passed by that arbour? Was it not she sat reading there? the trembling of my heart tells me my eyes were not mistaken—Here she comes.

SCENE III.

YOUNG MEADOWS, ROSETTA.

Ros. Lucinda was certainly in the right of it, and yet I blush to own my weakness even to myself——Marry, hang the fellow for not being a gentleman.

Y. Mea. I am determined I wont speak to her—[*Turning to a rose-tree, and plucking the flowers.*] Now or never is the time to conquer myself: besides, I have some reason to believe the girl has no aversion to me; and, as I wish not to do her an injury, it would be cruel to fill her head with notions of what can never happen. [*Hums a tune.*] Pshaw! rot these roses, how they prick one's fingers!

Ros. He takes no notice of me; but so much the better, I'll be as indifferent as he is. I am sure the poor lad likes me; and if I was to give him any encouragement, I suppose the next thing he talked of, would be buying a ring, and being asked in church—Oh, dear pride, I thank you for that thought.

Y. Mea. Hah, going without a word! a look—I can't bear that—Mrs. Rosetta, I am gathering a few roses here, if you please to take them in with you.

Ros. Thank you, Mr. Thomas, but all my lady's flower-pots are full.

Y. Mea. Will you accept of them for yourself, then? [*Catching hold of her.*] What's the matter? you look as if you were angry with me.

Ros. Pray, let go my hand.

Y. Mea. Nay, pr'ythee, why is this? you sha'n't go, I have something to say to you.

Ros. Well, but I must go, I will go; I desire, Mr. Thomas——

AIR.

Gentle youth, ah, tell me why
Still you force me thus to fly?
Cease, oh! cease to persevere;
Speak not what I must not hear;
To my heart its ease restore;
Go, and never see me more.

SCENE IV.

YOUNG MEADOWS.

This girl is a riddle—That she loves me, I think there is no room to doubt; she takes a thousand opportunities to let me see it; and yet, when I speak to her, she will hardly give me an answer; and, if I attempt the smallest familiarity, is gone in an instant—I feel my passion for her grow every day more and more violent—Well, would I marry her? would I make a mistress of her if I could?—Two things called prudence and honour, forbid either.—What am I pursuing, then? A shadow.—Sure my evil genius laid this snare in my way. However, there is one comfort, it is in my power to fly from it: if so, why do I hesitate? I am distracted, unable to determine any thing.

AIR.

Still in hopes to get the better
Of my stubborn flame I try;
Swear this moment to forget her,
And the next my oath deny.
Now prepar'd with scorn to treat her,
Ev'ry charm in thought I brave,
Boast my freedom, fly to meet her,
And confess myself a slave.

SCENE V.—*A Hall in* JUSTICE WOODCOCK'S *House.*

Enter HAWTHORN, *with a fowling-piece in his hands, and a net with birds at his girdle; and afterwards,* JUSTICE WOODCOCK.

AIR.

There was a jolly miller once
Liv'd on the river Dee;
He work'd and sung from morn till night;
No lark more blythe than he.
And this the burden of his song,
For ever us'd to be,——
I care for nobody, not I,
If no one cares for me.

House, here, house! what all gadding, all abroad! house, I say, hilli-ho, ho!

J. Wood. Here's a noise, here's a racket!—William, Robert, Hodge! why does not somebody answer? Odds my life, I believe the fellows have lost their hearing! [*Entering.*] Oh, Master Hawthorn! I guessed it was some such madcap—Are you there?

Haw. Am I here? Yes: and if you had been where I was three hours ago, you would find the good effects of it by this time; but you have got the lazy unwholesome London fashion, of lying a-bed in a morning, and there's gout for you—Why, Sir, I have not been in bed five minutes after sun-rise these thirty years, am generally up before it; and I never took a dose of physic but once in my life, and that was in compliment to a cousin of mine, a apothecary, that had just set up business.

J. Wood. Well but master Hawthorn, let me tell you, you know nothing of the matter; for, I say, sleep is necessary for a man; ay, and I'll maintain it.

Haw. What, when I maintain the contrary? Look you, neighbour Woodcock you are a rich man, a man of worship, a justice of peace, and all that; but learn to know the respect that is due to the sound from the infirm; and allow me that superiority a good constitution gives me over you—Health is the greatest of all possessions; and 'tis a maxim with me, that a hale cobbler is a better man than a sick king.

J. Wood. Well, well, you are a sportsman.

Haw. And so would you too, if you would take my advice. A sportsman! why there is nothing like it: I would not exchange the satisfaction I feel, while I am beating the lawns and thickets about my little farm, for all the entertainments and pageantry in Christendom.

AIR.

Let gay ones and great
Make the most of their fate,
From pleasure to pleasure they run:
Well, who cares a jot,
I envy them not,
While I have my dog and my gun.
For exercise, air,
To the fields I repair,
With spirits unclouded and light
The blisses I find,
No stings leave behind,
But health and diversion unite.

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SCENE VI.

JUSTICE WOODCOCK, HAWTHORN, HODGE.

Hodge. Did your worship call, Sir?

J. Wood. Call, Sir; where have you and the rest of these rascals been? but I suppose, I need not ask—You must know there is a statute, a fair for hiring servants, held upon my green to-day; we have it usually at this season of the year, and it never fails to put all the folks here-about out of their senses.

Hodge. Lord, your honour, look out, and see what a nice show they make yonder; they had got pipers, and fiddlers, and were dancing as I came along, for dear life—I never saw such a mortal throng in our village in all my born days again.

Haw. Why, I like this now, this is as it should be.

J. Wood. No, no, 'tis a very foolish piece of business; good for nothing but to promote idleness and the getting of bastards: but I shall take measures for preventing it another year, and I doubt whether I am not sufficiently authorised already; for by an act passed *Anno undecimo Caroli primi*, which impowers a Justice of peace, who is lord of the manor—

Haw. Come, come, never mind the act; let me tell you this is a very proper, a very useful meeting; I want a servant or two myself, I must go see what your market affords;—and you shall go, and the girls, my little Lucy and the other young rogue, and we'll make a day on't as well as the rest.

J. Wood. I wish master Hawthorn I could teach you to be a little more sedate: why wont you take pattern by me, and consider your dignity?—Odds heart, I don't wonder you are not a rich man; you laugh too much ever to be rich.

Haw. Right, neighbour Woodcock! health, good-humour, and competence, is my motto: and, if my executors have a mind, they are welcome to make it my epitaph.

AIR.

The honest heart, whose thoughts are clear
From fraud, disguise, and guile,
Need, neither fortune's frowning fear,
Nor court the harlot's smile.
The greatness that would make us grave
Is but an empty thing;
What more than mirth would mortals have?
The cheerful man's a king.

SCENE VII.

LUCINDA, HODGE.

Luc. Hist, hist, Hodge!

Hodge. Who calls? here am I.

Luc. Well, have you been?

Hodge. Been, ay, I ha' been far enough, an that be all: you never knew any thing fall out so crossly in your born days.

Luc. Why, what's the matter?

Hodge. Why you know, I dare not take a horse out of his worship's stables this morning, for fear it should be missed, and breed questions; and our old nag at home was so cruelly beat i' th' hoofs, that, poor beast, it had not a foot to set to ground; so I was fain to go to farmer Ploughshare's at the Grange, to borrow the loan of his bald filly: and, would you think it? after walking all that way, de'il from me, if the cross-grained toad did not deny me the favour.

Luc. Unlucky!

Hodge. Well, then I went my way to the King's-head in the village, but all their cattle were at plough: and I was as far to seek below at the turn-pike: so at last, for want of a better, I was forced to take up with dame Quickset's blind mare.

Luc. Oh, then you have been?

Hodge. Yes, yes, I ha' been.

Luc. Psha! Why did not you say so at once?

Hodge. Ay, but I have had a main tiresome jaunt on't, for she is a sorry jade at best.

Luc. Well, well, did you see Mr. Eustace, and what did he say to you?—Come, quick—have you e'er a letter?

Hodge. Yes he gave me a letter, if I ha'na lost it.

Luc. Lost it, man!

Hodge. Nay, nay, have a bit of patience: adwawns, you are always in such a hurry. [*Rumaging his pockets.*] I put it somewhere in this waistcoat pocket. Oh here it is.

Luc. So, give it me.

[*Reads the letter to herself.*

Hodge. Lord-a-mercy! how my arm aches with beating that plaguy beast; I'll be hanged if I won'na rather ha' thrashed half a day, than ha' ridden her.

Luc. Well, Hodge, you have done your business very well.

Hodge. Well, have not I now?

Luc. Yes—Mr. Eustace tells me in this letter, that he will be in the green lane, at the other end of the village, by twelve o'clock—You know where he came before.

Hodge. Ay, ay.

Luc. Well, you must go there: and wait till he arrives, and watch your opportunity to introduce him, across the fields, into the little summer-house, on the left side of the garden.

Hodge. That's enough.

Luc. But take particular care that nobody sees you.

Hodge. I warrant you.

Luc. Nor for your life, drop a word of it to any mortal.

Hodge. Never fear me.

Luc. And Hodge——

AIR.

Hodge. Well, well, say no more,
Sure you told me before;
I see the full length of my teather;
Do you think I'm a fool,
That I need go to school?
I can spell you and put you together.

A word to the wise,
Will always suffice;
Addsniggers go talk to your parrot;
I'm not such an elf,
Though I say it myself,
But I know a sheep's head from a carrot.

SCENE VIII.

LUCINDA.

Luc. How severe is my case! Here I am obliged to carry on a clandestine correspondence with a man in all respects my equal, because the oddity of my father's temper is such, that I dare not tell him I have ever yet seen

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the person I should like to marry—But perhaps he has quality in his eye, and hopes, one day or other, as I am his only child, to match me with a title—vain imagination!

AIR.

Cupid, god of soft persuasion,
Take the helpless lover's part:
Seize, oh seize some kind occasion,
To reward a faithful heart.

Justly those we tyrants call,
Who the body would enthral;
Tyrants of more cruel kind,
Those who would enslave the mind.

What is grandeur? foe to rest,
Childish mummery at best.
Happy I in humble state;
Catch, ye fools, the glittering bait.

SCENE IX.—A Field with a stile.

Enter HODGE, *followed by* MARGERY; *and, sometime after, enter* YOUNG MEADOWS.

Hodge. What does the wench follow me for? Odds flesh, folk may well talk, to see you dangling after me every where, like a tantony pig: find some other road, can't you; and don't keep wherreting me with your nonsense.

Mar. Nay, pray you, Hodge, stay, and let me speak to you a bit.

Hodge. Well; what sayn you?

Mar. Dear heart, how can you be so barbarous? and is this the way you serve me after all; and wont you keep your word, Hodge?

Hodge. Why no I wont, I tell you; I have changed my mind.

Mar. Nay, but surely, surely—Consider Hodge, you are obligated in conscience to make me an honest woman.

Hodge. Obligated in conscience! How am I obligated?

Mar. Because you are; and none but the basest of rogues would bring a poor girl to shame, and afterwards leave her to the wide world.

Hodge. Bring you to shame! Don't make me speak, Madge, don't make me speak.

Mar. Yes do, speak your worst.

Hodge. Why, then, if you go to that, you were fain to leave your own village down in the West, for a bastard you had by the clerk of the parish, and I'll bring the man shall say it to your face.

Mar. No, no, Hodge, 'tis no such thing, 'tis a base lie of farmer Ploughshare's—But I know what makes you false hearted to me, that you may keep company with young Madam's waiting-woman, and I am sure she's no fit body for a poor man's wife.

Hodge. How should you know what she's fit for? She's fit for as much as you, mayhap; don't find fault with your betters, Madge. [*Seeing* YOUNG MEADOWS.] Oh! Master Thomas, I have a word or two to say to you; pray did not you go down the village one day last week with a basket of something upon your shoulder?

Y. Mea. Well, and what then?

Hodge. Nay, not much, only the ostler at the Greenman was saying, as how there was a passenger at their house, as see'd you go by, and said he know'd you; and axt a mort of questions—So I thought I'd tell you.

Y. Mea. The devil! ask questions about me! I know nobody in this part of the country; there must be some mistake in it.—Come hither, Hodge.

Mar. A nasty, ungrateful fellow, to use me at this rate, after being to him as I have.—Well, well, I wish all poor girls would take warning by my mishap, and never have nothing to say to none of them.

AIR.

How happy were my days, till now!
I ne'er did sorrow feel,
I rose with joy to milk my cow,
Or take my spinning-wheel.

My heart was lighter than a fly,
Like any bird I sung,
Till he pretended love, and I
Believ'd his flattering tongue.

Oh the fool, the silly, silly fool,
Who trusts what man may be;
I wish I was a maid again,
And in my own country.

SCENE X.—A Green with the prospect of a village, and the representation of a statute or fair.

Enter JUSTICE WOODCOCK, HAWTHORN, MRS. DEBORAH WOODCOCK, LUCINDA, ROSETTA, YOUNG MEADOWS, HODGE, *and several country people.*

Hodge. This way, your worship, this way. Why don't you stand aside there? Here's his worship a-coming.

Countrymen. His worship!

J. Wood. Fy, fy, what a crowd's this! Odd, I'll put some of them in the stocks. [*Striking a fellow.*] Stand out of the way, sirrah.

Haw. For shame, neighbour. Well, my lad, are you willing to serve the king?

Countryman. Why, can you list ma! Serve the king, master! no, no, I pay the king, that's enough for me. Ho, ho, ho!

Haw. Well said, Sturdy-boots.

J. Wood. Nay, if you talk to them, they'll answer you.

Haw. I would have them do so, I like they should.—Well, Madam, is not this a fine sight? I did not know my neighbour's estate had been so well peopled.—Are all these his own tenants?

Mrs. Deb. More than are good of them, Mr. Hawthorn. I don't like to see such a parcel of young hussies fleering with the fellows.

Haw. There's a lass. [*Beckoning to a country girl.*] Come hither, my pretty maid. What brings you here? [*Chucking her under the chin.*] Do you come to look for a service?

C. Girl. Yes, an't please you.

Haw. Well, and what place are you for?

C. Girl. All work, an't please you.

J. Wood. Ay ay, I don't doubt it: any work you'll put her to.

Mrs. Deb. She looks like a brazen one—Go hussy.

Haw. Here's another. [*Catching a girl that goes by.*] What health, what bloom!—this is Nature's work; no art, no daubing. Don't be ashamed, child; those cheeks of thine are enough to put a whole drawing-room out of countenance.

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SCENE XI.

JUSTICE WOODCOCK, HAWTHORN, MRS. DEBORAH WOODCOCK, LUCINDA, ROSETTA, YOUNG MEADOWS, HODGE, *and Men and Women Servants.*

Hodge. Now, your honour, now the sport will come. The gut-scrapers are here, and some among them are going to sing and dance. Why there's not the like of our statute, mun, in five counties; others are but fools to it.

Servant-man. Come, good people, make a ring, and stand out, fellow-servants, as many of you as are willing, and able to bear a bob. We'll let my masters and mistresses see we can do something at least; if they wont hire us, it sha'n't be our fault. Strike up the Servants' Medley.

AIR.

HOUSE-MAID.

I pray, gentles, list to me.
I'm young, and strong, and clean you see;
I'll not turn tail to any she,
For work that's in the country.
Of all your house the charge I take,
I wash, I scrub, I brew, I bake;
And more can do than here I'll speak,
Depending on your bounty.

FOOTMAN.

Behold a blade, who knows his trade
In chamber, hall, and entry:
And what though here I now appear,
I've serv'd the best of gentry.
A footman would you have
I can dress, and comb, and shave;
For I a handy lad am:
On a message I can go,
And slip a billet-doux,
With your humble servant, Madam.

COOK-MAID.

Who wants a good cook, my hand they must cross;
For plain wholesome dishes I'm ne'er at a loss;
And what are your soups, your ragouts, and your sauce,
Compared to old English roast beef?

CARTER.

If you want a young man, with a true honest heart,
Who knows how to manage a plough and a cart,
Here's one for your purpose, come take me and try;
You'll say you ne'er met with a better nor I,
Ge ho Dobin, &c.

CHORUS.

My masters and mistresses hither repair;
What servants you want, you'll find in our fair;
Men and maids, fit for all sorts of stations there be;
And, as for the wages we sha'n't disagree.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Parlour in JUSTICE WOODCOCK'S *House.*

LUCINDA, EUSTACE.

Luc. Well, am not I a bold adventurer, to bring you into my father's house at noon-day? Though, to say the truth, we are safer here than in the garden; for there is not a human creature under the roof besides ourselves.

Eust. Then why not put our scheme into execution this moment? I have a post-chaise ready.

Luc. Fy: how can you talk so lightly? I protest I am afraid to have any thing to do with you; your passion seems too much founded on appetite; and my aunt Deborah says—

Eust. What! by all the rapture my heart now feels—

Luc. Oh to be sure, promise and vow; it sounds prettily, and never fails to impose upon a fond female.

AIR.

We women like weak Indians trade,
Whose judgment tinsel show decoys;
Dupes to our folly are we made,
While artful man the gain enjoys:
We give our treasure to be paid
A paltry, poor return! in toys.

Eust. Well, I see you've a mind to divert yourself with me; but I wish I could prevail on you to be a little serious.

Luc. Seriously then, what would you desire me to say? I have promised to run away with you; which is as great a concession as any reasonable lover can expect from his mistress.

Eust. Yes; but, you dear, provoking angel, you have not told me, when you will run away with me.

Luc. Why that, I confess requires some consideration.

Eust. Yet remember, while you are deliberating, the season, now so favourable to us, may elapse, never to return.

AIR.

Think my fairest, how delay
Danger every moment brings;
Time flies swift, and will away;
Time that's ever on its wings;
Doubting and suspense at best,
Lovers late repentance cost;
Let us, eager to be blest,
Seize occasion ere 'tis lost.

SCENE II.

LUCINDA, EUSTACE, JUSTICE WOODCOCK, MRS. DEBORAH WOODCOCK.

J. Wood. Why, here is nothing in the world in this house but cater-wauling from morning till night, nothing but cater-wauling. Hoity toity; who have we here?

Luc. My father, and my aunt!

Eust. The devil! What shall we do?

Luc. Take no notice of them, only observe me. [*Speaks aloud to* EUSTACE.] Upon my word, Sir, I don't know what to say to it, unless the Justice was at home; he is just stepped into the village with some company; but, if you'll sit down a moment, I dare swear he will return—[*Pretends to see the Justice.*]—O! Sir, here is my papa!

J. Wood. Here is your papa, hussy! Who's this you have got with you? Hark you, sirrah, who are you, ye dog? and what's your business here?

Eust. Sir, this is a language I am not used to.

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J. Wood. Don't answer me, you rascal—I am a Justice of the peace; and if I hear a word out of your mouth, I'll send you to jail, for all your laced hat.

Mrs. Deb. Send him to jail, brother, that's right.

J. Wood. And how do you know it's right? How should you know any thing's right?—Sister Deborah, you are never in the right.

Mrs. Deb. Brother, this is the man I have been telling you about so long.

J. Wood. What man, goody Wise-acre?

Mrs. Deb. Why, the man your daughter has an intrigue with: but I hope you will not believe it now, though you see it with your own eyes—Come, hussy, confess, and don't let your father make a fool of himself any longer.

Luc. Confess what, aunt? This gentleman is a music-master: he goes about the country, teaching ladies to play and sing; and has been recommended to instruct me: I could not turn him out when he came to offer his service; and did not know what answer to give him till I saw my papa.

J. Wood. A music-master!

Eust. Yes, Sir, that's my profession.

Mrs. Deb. It's a lie, young man; it's a lie. Brother, he is no more a music-master, than I am a music-master.

J. Wood. What then, you know better than the fellow himself, do you? and you will be wiser than all the world?

Mrs. Deb. Brother, he does not look like a music-master.

J. Wood. He does not look! ha, ha, ha! Was ever such a poor stupe! Well, and what does he look like then? But I suppose you mean he is not dressed like a music-master, because of his ruffles, and this bit of garnishing about his coat—which seems to be copper too—Why, you silly wretch, these whipper-snappers set up for gentlemen now a-days, and give themselves as many airs as if they were people of quality.—Hark you, friend, I suppose you don't come within the vagrant act? You have some settled habitation—Where do you live?

Mrs. Deb. It's an easy matter for him to tell you a wrong place.

J. Wood. Sister Deborah, don't provoke me.

Mrs. Deb. I wish, brother, you would let me examine him a little.

J. Wood. You sha'n't say a word to him, you sha'n't say a word to him.

Mrs. Deb. She says he was recommended here, brother; ask him by whom.

J. Wood. No, I wont now, because you desire it.

Luc. If my papa did ask the question, aunt, it would be very readily resolved.

Mrs. Deb. Who bid you speak, Mrs. Nimble Chops? I suppose the man has a tongue in his head to answer for himself.

J. Wood. Will nobody stop that prating old woman's mouth for me? Get out of the room.

Mrs. Deb. Well, so I can, brother; I don't want to stay; but, remember, I tell you, you will make yourself ridiculous in this affair; for, through your own obstinacy, you will have your daughter run away with before your face.

J. Wood. My daughter! Who will run away with my daughter?

Mrs. Deb. That fellow will.

J. Wood. Go, go, you are a wicked, censorious woman.

Luc. Why, sure, Madam, you must think me very coming, indeed.

J. Wood. Ay, she judges of others by herself; I remember when she was a girl: her mother dared not trust her the length of her apron string; she was clambering upon every fellow's back.

Mrs. Deb. I was not.

J. Wood. You were.

Luc. Well, but why so violent?

AIR.

Believe me, dear aunt,
If you thus rave and rant,
You'll never a lover persuade;
The men will all fly,
And leave you to die,
Oh, terrible chance! an old maid.

How happy the lass,
Must she come to this pass,
Who ancient virginity 'scapes!
'Twere better on earth
Have five brats at a birth,
Than in hell be a leader of apes.

SCENE III.

JUSTICE WOODCOCK, LUCINDA, EUSTACE.

J. Wood. Well done, Lucy, send her about her business; a troublesome, foolish creature, does she think I want to be directed by her—Come hither, my lad, you look tolerable honest.

Eust. I hope, Sir, I shall never give you cause to alter your opinion.

J. Wood. No, no, I am not easily deceived, I am generally pretty right in my conjectures.—You must know, I had once a little notion of music myself, and learned upon the fiddle; I could play the Trumpet Minuet, and Buttered Peas, and two or three tunes. I remember, when I was in London, about thirty years ago, there was a song, a great favourite at our club at Nando's coffee-house; Jack Pickle used to sing it for us, a droll fish; but 'tis an old thing, I dare swear you have heard of it often.

AIR.

When I followed a lass that was froward and shy,
Oh! I stuck to her stuff, till I made her comply;
Oh! I took her so lovingly round the waist,
And I smack'd her lips and I held her fast:
When hugged and haul'd,
She squeal'd and squall'd;
But, though she vow'd all I did was in vain,
Yet I pleas'd her so well that she bore it again:
Then holty, toity,
Whisking, and frisking,
Green was her gown upon the grass;
Oh! such were the joys of our dancing days.

Eust. Very well, upon my word.

J. Wood. No, no, I forget all those things now; but I could do a little at them once;—Well, stay and eat your dinner, and we'll talk about your teaching the girl—Lucy, take your master to your spinnet, and show him what

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you can do—I must go and give some orders; Then hoity, toity, &c.

SCENE IV.

LUCINDA, EUSTACE.

Luc. My sweet, pretty papa, your most obedient, humble servant; ha, ha, ha! was ever so whimsical an accident? Well, Sir, what do you think of this?

Eust. Think of it! I am in a maze.

Luc. O your ankwardness? I was frightened out of my wits, lest you should not take the hint; and, if I had not turned matters so cleverly, we should have been utterly undone.

Eust. 'Sdeath! why would you bring me into the house? we could expect nothing else: besides, since they did surprise us, it would have been better to have discovered the truth.

Luc. Yes, and never have seen one another afterwards. I know my father better than you do; he has taken it into his head, I have no inclination for a husband; and let me tell you, that is our best security; for if once he has said a thing, he will not be easily persuaded to the contrary.

Eust. And pray, what am I to do now?

Luc. Why, as I think all danger is pretty well over since he hath invited you to dinner with him, stay; only be cautious of your behaviour; and, in the mean time, I will consider what is next to be done.

Eust. Had not I better go to your father?

Luc. Do so, while I endeavour to recover myself a little out of the flurry this affair has put me in.

Eust. Well but what sort of a parting is this, without so much as your servant, or good bye to you? No ceremony at all? Can you afford me no token to keep up my spirits till I see you again?

Luc. Ah, childish!

Eust. My angel!

AIR.

Eust. Let rakes and libertines, resign'd
To sensual pleasures, range!
Here all the sex's charms I find,
And ne'er can cool or change.

Luc. Let vain coquets and prudes conceal
What most their hearts desire;
With pride my passion I reveal,
Oh! may it ne'er expire.

Both. The sun shall cease to spread its light,
The stars their orbits leave,
And fair creation sink in night,
When I my dear deceive.

SCENE V.—A Garden.

Enter ROSETTA, *musing.*

Ros. If ever poor creature was in a pitiable condition, surely I am. The devil take this fellow, I cannot get him out of my head, and yet I would fain persuade myself I don't care for him: well but surely I am not in love: let me examine my heart a little: I saw him kissing one of the maids the other day; I could have boxed his ears for it, and have done nothing but find fault and quarrel with the girl ever since. Why was I uneasy at his toying with another woman? what was it to me?—Then I dream of him almost every night—but that may proceed from his being generally uppermost in my thoughts all day: Oh! worse and worse!—Well, he is certainly a pretty lad; he has something uncommon about him, considering his rank:—And now, let me only put the case, if he was not a servant, would I, or would I not, prefer him to all the men I ever saw? Why, to be sure, if he was not a servant—In short, I'll ask myself no more questions, for the further I examine, the less reason I shall have to be satisfied.

AIR.

How bless'd the maid, whose bosom
No head-strong passion knows;
Her days in joy she passes,
Her nights in calm repose.
Where'er her fancy leads her,
No pain, no fear invades her;
But pleasure,
Without measure,
From every object flows.

SCENE VI.

YOUNG MEADOWS, ROSETTA.

Y. Mea. Do you come into the garden, Mrs. Rosetta, to put my lilies and roses out of countenance; or, to save me the trouble of watering my flowers, by reviving them? The sun seems to have hid himself a little, to give you an opportunity of supplying his place.

Ros. Where could he get that now? he never read it in the Academy of Compliments.

Y. Mea. Come, don't affect to treat me with contempt; I can suffer any thing better than that; in short, I love you; there is no more to be said: I am angry with myself for it, and strive all I can against it; but, in spite of myself, I love you.

AIR.

In vain, I every art essay,
To pluck the venom'd shaft away,
That rankles in my heart;
Deep in the centre fix'd and bound—
My efforts but enlarge the wound,
And fiercer make the smart.

Ros. Really, Mr. Thomas, this is very improper language; it is what I don't understand; I can't suffer it, and, in short, I don't like it.

Y. Mea. Perhaps you don't like me.

Ros. Well, perhaps I don't.

Y. Mea. Nay, but 'tis not so; come, confess you love me.

Ros. Confess! Indeed I shall confess no such thing: besides, to what purpose should I confess it?

Y. Mea. Why, as you say, I don't know to what purpose; only, it would be a satisfaction to me to hear you say so; that's all.

Ros. Why, if I did love you, I can assure you, you would never be the better for it—Women are apt enough to be weak; we cannot always answer for our inclinations, but it is in our power not to give way to them; and, if I was so silly, I say, if I was so indiscreet, which I hope I am not, as to entertain an improper regard, when people's circumstances are quite unsuitable, and there are obstacles in the way that cannot be surmounted—

Y. Mea. Oh! to be sure, Mrs. Rosetta, to be sure; you are entirely in the right of it—I—know very well, you and I can never come together.

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Ros. Well then, since that is the case, as I assure you it is, I think we had better behave accordingly.

Y. Mea. Suppose we make a bargain, then, never to speak to one another any more?

Ros. With all my heart.

Y. Mea. Nor look at, nor, if possible, think of one another?

Ros. I am very willing.

Y. Mea. And, as long as we stay in the house together, never to take any notice?

Ros. It is the best way.

Y. Mea. Why I believe it is— Well, Mrs. Rosetta——

AIR.

Ros. Begone—I agree,
From this moment we're free:
Already the matter I've sworn:
Y. Mea. Yet let me complain
Of the fates that ordain
A trial so hard to be borne.
Ros. When things are not fit,
We should calmly submit;
No cure in reluctance we find:
Y. Mea. Then thus I obey,
Tear your image away,
And banish you quite from my mind.

Ros. Well, now, I think, I am somewhat easier: I am glad I have come to this explanation with him, because it puts an end to things at once.

Y. Mea. Hold, Mrs. Rosetta, pray stay a moment—The airs this girl gives herself are intolerable: I find now the cause of her behaviour; she despises the meanness of my condition, thinking a gardener below the notice of a lady's waiting-woman: 'sdeath, I have a good mind to discover myself to her.

Ros. Poor wretch! he does not know what to make of it: I believe he is heartily mortified, but I must not pity him.

Y. Mea. It shall be so: I will discover myself to her, and leave the house directly.—Mrs. Rosetta—[*Starting back.*]—Pox on it; yonder's the Justice come into the garden!

Ros. O Lord! he will walk round this way; pray go about your business; I would not for the world he should see us together.

Y. Mea. The devil take him: he's gone across the parterre, and can't hobble here this half hour: I must and will have a little conversation with you.

Ros. Some other time.

Y. Mea. This evening, in the green-house, at the lower end of the canal; I have something to communicate to you of importance.—Will you meet me there?

Ros. Meet you!

Y. Mea. Ay; I have a secret to tell you; and I swear, from that moment, there shall be an end of every thing betwixt us.

Ros. Well, well, pray leave me now.

Y. Mea. You'll come then?

Ros. I don't know, perhaps I may.

Y. Mea. Nay, but promise.

Ros. What signifies promising; I may break my promise—but, I tell you, I will.

Y. Mea. Enough—Yet before I leave you, let me desire you to believe I love you more than ever man loved woman; and that when I relinquish you, I give up all that can make my life supportable.

AIR.

O! how shall I, in language weak,
My ardent passion tell;
Or form my falt'ring tongue to speak,
The cruel word, Farewell?
Farewell!—but know, tho' thus we part,
My thoughts can never stray:
Go where I will, my constant heart
Must with my charmer stay.

SCENE VII.

ROSETTA, JUSTICE WOODCOCK.

Ros. What can this be that he wants to tell me? I have a strange curiosity to hear it, methinks—well—

J. Wood. Hem! hem! Rosetta!

Ros. So, I thought the devil would throw him in my way; now for a courtship of a different kind; but I'll give him a surfeit—Did you call me, Sir?

J. Wood. Ay, where are you running so fast?

Ros. I was only going into the house, Sir.

J. Wood. Well, but come here: come here, I say. [*Looking about.*] How do you do, Rosetta.

Ros. Thank you, Sir, pretty well.

J. Wood. Why you look as fresh and blooming to-day—Adad, you little slut, I believe you are painted.

Ros. O Sir! you are pleased to compliment.

J. Wood. Adad, I believe you are—let me try—

Ros. Lord, Sir!

J. Wood. What brings you into this garden so often, Rosetta? I hope you don't get eating green fruit and trash; or have you a hankering after some lover in dowlas, who spoils my trees by engraving true-lover's knots upon them, with your horn and buck-handled knives? I see your name written upon the ceiling of the servants' hall, with the smoke of a candle; and I suspect——

Ros. Not me, I hope, Sir—No, Sir; I am of another guess mind, I assure you; for I have heard say, men are false and fickle——

J. Wood. Ay, that's your flaunting, idle, young fellows; so they are: and they are so damned impudent, I wonder a woman will have any thing to say to them, besides, all that they want is something to brag of, and tell again.

Ros. Why, I own, Sir, if ever I was to make a slip, it should be with an elderly gentleman—about seventy, or seventy-five years of age.

J. Wood. No, child, that's out of reason; though I have known many a man turned of three-score with a hale constitution.

Ros. Then, Sir, he should be troubled with the gout, have a good, strong, substantial, winter cough—and I should not like him the worse if he had a small touch of the rheumatism.

J. Wood. Pho, pho, Rosetta, this is jesting.

Ros. No, Sir, every body has a taste, and I have mine.

J. Wood. Well, but Rosetta, have you thought of what I was saying to you?

Ros. What was it, Sir?

J. Wood. Ah! you know, you know well enough, hussy.

Ros. Dear Sir, consider, my soul, would you have me endanger my soul?

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J. Wood. No, no—Repent.

Ros. Besides, Sir, consider, what has a poor servant to depend on but her character? And, I have heard, you gentlemen will talk one thing before, and another after.

J. Wood. I tell you again these are the idle, flashy young dogs: but when you have to do with a staid, sober man——

Ros. And a magistrate, Sir!

J. Wood. Right; it's quite a different thing.—Well, shall we, Rosetta, shall we?

Ros. Really, Sir, I don't know what to say to it.

AIR.

Young I am, and sore afraid:
Would you hurt a harmless maid!
Lead an innocent astray?
Tempt me not, kind Sir, I pray.
Men too often we believe:
And, should you my faith deceive,
Ruin first and then forsake,
Sure my tender heart would break.

J. Wood. Why, you silly girl, I wont do you any harm.

Ros. Wont you, Sir?

J. Wood. Not I.

Ros. But wont you, indeed, Sir?

J. Wood. Why I tell you I wont.

Ros. Ha, ha, ha!

J. Wood. Hussy, hussy!

Ros. Ha, ha, ha!—Your servant, Sir, your servant.

J. Wood. Why, you impudent, audacious—

SCENE VIII.

JUSTICE WOODCOCK, HAWTHORN.

Haw. So, so, Justice at odds with gravity! his worship playing at romps!—Your servant, Sir.

J. Wood. Haw! friend Hawthorn!

Haw. I hope I don't spoil sport, neighbour: I thought I had the glimpse of a petticoat as I came in here.

J. Wood. Oh! the maid. Ay, she has been gathering a salad—But come hither, Master Hawthorn, and I'll show you some alterations I intend to make in my garden.

Haw. No, no, I am no judge of it; besides, I want to talk to you a little more about this—Tell me, Sir Justice, were you helping your maid to gather a salad here, or consulting her taste in your improvements, eh? Ha, ha, ha! Let me see, all among the roses; egad, I like your notion: but you look a little blank upon it: you are ashamed of the business, then, are you?

AIR.

Oons! neighbour, ne'er blush for a trifle like this;
What harm with a fair one to toy and to kiss?
The greatest and gravest—a truce with grimace—
Would do the same thing, were they in the same place.

No age, no profession, no station is free;
To sovereign beauty mankind bends the knee:
That power, resistless, no strength can oppose,
We all love a pretty girl—under the rose.

J. Wood. I profess, Master Hawthorn, this is all Indian, all Cherokee language to me; I don't understand a word of it.

Haw. No, may be not: well, Sir, will you read this letter, and try whether you can understand that? it is just brought by a servant, who stays for an answer.

J. Wood. A letter, and to me? [*Taking the letter.*] Yes, it is to me; and yet I am sure it comes from no correspondent, that I know of. Where are my spectacles? not but I can see very well without them, Master Hawthorn; but this seems to be a sort of a crabbed hand.

Sir,

I am ashamed of giving you this trouble; but, I am informed there is an unthinking boy, a son of mine, now disguised and in your service, in the capacity of a gardener: Tom is a little wild, but an honest lad, and no fool either, though I am his father that say it. Tom—oh, this is Thomas, our gardener; I always thought that he was a better man's child than he appeared to be, though I never mentioned it.

Haw. Well, well, Sir, pray let's hear the rest of the letter.

J. Wood. Stay, where is the place? Oh, here:—*I am come in quest of my run-away, and write this at an inn in your village, while I am swallowing a morsel of dinner: because, not having the pleasure of your acquaintance, I did not care to intrude, without giving you notice.* Whoever this person is, he understands good manners. *I beg leave to wait upon you, Sir; but desire you would keep my arrival a secret, particularly from the young man.*

WILLIAM MEADOWS.

I'll assure you, a very well worded, civil letter. Do you know any thing of the person who writes it neighbour?

Haw. Let me consider—Meadows—by dad I believe it is Sir William Meadows of Northamptonshire; and, now I remember, I heard, sometime ago, that the heir of that family had absconded on account of a marriage that was disagreeable to him. It is a good many years since I have seen Sir William, but we were once well acquainted: and, if you please, Sir, I will go and conduct him to the house.

J. Wood. Do so, Master Hawthorn, do so—But, pray what sort of a man is this Sir William Meadows? Is he a wise man?

Haw. There is no occasion for a man that has five thousand pounds a-year, to be a conjurer; but I suppose you ask that question because of this story about his son; taking it for granted that wise parents make wise children.

J. Wood. No doubt of it, Master Hawthorn, no doubt of it—I warrant we shall find now, that this young rascal has fallen in love with some minx, against his father's consent—Why, Sir, if I had as many children as king Priam had, that we read of at school, in the destruction of Troy, not one of them should serve me so.

Haw. Well, well, neighbour, perhaps not; but we should remember when we were young ourselves; and I was as likely to play an old don such a trick in my day, as e'er a spark in the hundred; nay, between you and me, I had done it once, had the wench been as willing as I.

AIR.

My Dolly was the fairest thing!
Her breath disclos'd the sweets of spring;

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And if for summer you would seek,
'Twas painted in her eye, her cheek;
Her swelling bosom, tempting ripe,
Of fruitful autumn was the type:
But, when my tender tale I told,
I found her heart was winter cold.

J. Wood. Ah, you were always a scapegrace rattle-cap.

Haw. Odds heart, neighbour Woodcock, don't tell me; young fellows will be young fellows, though we preach till we're hoarse again; and so there's an end on't.

SCENE IX.—Justice Woodcock's *Hall.*

Hodge, Margery.

Hodge. So, mistress, who let you in?

Mar. Why, I let myself in.

Hodge. Indeed! Marry come up! why, then pray let yourself out again. Times are come to a pretty pass; I think you might have had the manners to knock at the door first—What does the wench stand for?

Mar. I want to know if his worship's at home.

Hodge. Well, what's your business with his worship?

Mar. Perhaps you will hear that—Look ye, Hodge, it does not signify talking, I am come, once for all, to know what you intends to do; for I wont be made a fool of any longer.

Hodge. You wont.

Mar. No, that's what I wont, by the best man that ever wore a head; I am the makegame of the whole village upon your account; and I'll try whether your master gives you toleration in your doings.

Hodge. You will?

Mar. Yes, that's what I will; his worship shall be acquainted with all your pranks, and see how you will like to be sent for a soldier.

Hodge. There's the door, take a friend's advice and go about your business.

Mar. My business is with his worship; and I wont go till I sees him.

Hodge. Look you, Madge, if you make any of your orations here, never stir if I don't set the dogs at you—Will you be gone?

Mar. I wont.

Hodge. Here, Towser, [*Whistling.*] whu, whu, whu!

Air.

Was ever poor fellow so plagu'd with a vixen?
Zawns! Madge don't provoke me, but mind what I say;
You've chose a wrong parson for playing your tricks on,
So pack up your alls and be trudging away:
You'd better be quiet,
And not breed a riot;
'Sblood, must I stand prating with you here all day?
I've got other matters to mind;
May hap you may think me an ass;
But to the contrary you'll find.
A fine piece of work by the mass!

SCENE X.

Rosetta, Hodge, Margery.

Ros. Sure I heard the voice of discord here—as I live, an admirer of mine, and, if I mistake not, a rival—I'll have some sport with them.—How now, fellow-servant, what's the matter?

Hodge. Nothing, Mrs. Rosetta, only this young woman wants to speak with his worship—Madge follow me.

Mar. No, Hodge, this is your fine Madam; but I am as good flesh and blood as she, and have as clear a skin too, tho'f I may'nt go so gay; and now she's here, I'll tell her a piece of my mind.

Hodge. Hold your tongue, will you.

Mar. No, I'll speak if I die for it.

Ros. What's the matter, I say?

Hodge. Why, nothing I tell you;—Madge—

Mar. Yes, but it is something, it's all along of she, and she may be ashamed of herself.

Ros. Bless me, child, do you direct your discourse to me?

Mar. Yes, I do, and to nobody else; there was not a kinder soul breathing than he was till of late; I had never a cross word from him till he kept you company; but all the girls about say, there is no such thing as keeping a sweet-heart for you.

Ros. Do you hear this, friend Hodge?

Hodge. Why, you don't mind she, I hope; but if that vexes her, I do like you, I do; my mind runs upon nothing else; and if so be as you was agreeable to it, I would marry you tonight, before to-morrow.

Mar. You're a nasty monkey, you are parjured, you know you are, and you deserve to have your eyes tore out.

Hodge. Let me come at her—I'll teach you to call names, and abuse folk.

Mar. Do; strike me; you a man!

Ros. Hold, hold—we shall have a battle here presently, and I may chance to get my cap tore off——Never exasperate a jealous woman, 'tis taking a mad bull by the horns—Leave me to manage her.

Hodge. You manage her! I'll kick her.

Ros. No, no, it will be more for my credit, to get the better of her by fair means—I warrant I'll bring her to reason.

Hodge. Well, do so then—But may I depend upon you? when shall I speak to the parson?

Ros. We'll talk of that another time—Go.

Hodge. Madge, good bye.

Ros. The brutality of this fellow shocks me! Oh man, man—you are all alike—A bumpkin here, bred at the barn door! had he been brought up in a court, could he have been more fashionably vicious; show me the lord, 'squire, colonel, or captain of them all, can out do him.

Air.

Cease, gay seducer, pride to take
In triumph o'er the fair;
Since clowns as well can act the rake,
As those in higher sphere.

Where then to shun a shameful fate
Shall helpless beauty go?
In every rank, in every state,
Poor woman finds a foe.

SCENE XI.

Rosetta, Margery.

Mar. I am ready to burst, I can't stay in the place any longer.

Ros. Hold, child come hither.

Mar. Don't speak to me, don't you

Ros. Well, but I have something to say to

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you of consequence, and that will be for your good; I suppose this fellow promised you marriage.

Mar. Ay, or he should never have prevailed upon me.

Ros. Well, now you see the ill consequence of trusting to such promises: when once a man hath cheated a woman of her virtue, she has no longer hold of him; he despises her for wanting that which he has robbed her of; and, like a lawless conqueror, triumphs in the ruin he hath occasioned.

Mar. Nan!

Ros. However, I hope the experience you have got, though somewhat dearly purchased, will be of use to you for the future; and, as to any designs I have upon the heart of your lover, you may make yourself easy, for I assure you, I shall be no dangerous rival; so go your ways and be a good girl.

Mar. Yes—I don't very well understand her talk, but I suppose that's as much as to say she'll keep him herself; well let her, who cares? I don't fear getting a better nor he is any day of the year, for the matter of that; and I have a thought come into my head that, may be, will be more to my advantage.

AIR.

Since Hodge proves ungrateful, no further I'll seek,
But go up to the town in the waggon next week:
A service in London is no such disgrace,
And Register's office will get me a place;
Bet Blossom went there, and soon met with a friend,
Folks say in her silks she's now standing an end!
Then why should not I the same maxim pursue,
And better my fortune as other girls do?

SCENE XII.

Enter ROSETTA *and* LUCINDA.

Ros. Ha, ha, ha! Oh admirable, most delectably ridiculous. And so your father is content he should be a music-master, and will have him such, in spite of all your aunt can say to the contrary?

Luc. My father and he, child, are the best companions you ever saw: and have been singing together the most hideous duets! Bobbing Joan, and Old Sir Simon the King: Heaven knows where Eustace could pick them up; but he has gone through half the contents of Pills to purge Melancholy with him.

Ros. And have you resolved to take wing to-night.

Luc. This very night, my dear: my swain will go from hence this evening, but no farther than the inn, where he has left his horses; and, at twelve precisely, he will be with a post-chaise at the little gate that opens from the lawn into the road, where I have promised to meet him.

Ros. Then depend upon it, I'll bear you company.

Luc. We shall slip out when the family are asleep, and I have prepared Hodge already. Well, I hope we shall be happy.

Ros. Never doubt it.

AIR.

In love should there meet a fond pair,
Untutor'd by fashion or art;
Whose wishes are warm and sincere,
Whose words are th' excess of the heart.
If ought of substantial delight,
On this side the stars can be found,
'Tis sure when that couple unite,
And Cupid by Hymen is crown'd.

SCENE XIII.

ROSETTA, LUCINDA, HAWTHORN.

Haw. Lucy, where are you?

Luc. Your pleasure, Sir.

Ros. Mr. Hawthorn, your servant.

Haw. What, my little water-wagtail!—The very couple I wished to meet: come hither, both of you.

Ros. Now, Sir, what would you say to both of us?

Haw. Why, let me look at you a little—have you got on your best gowns, and your best faces? If not, go and trick yourselves out directly, for I'll tell you a secret—there will be a young bachelor in the house, within these three hours, that may fall to the share of one of you, if you look sharp—but whether mistress or maid—

Ros. Ay, marry, this is something; but how do you know whether either mistress or maid will think him worth acceptance?

Haw. Follow me, follow me; I warrant you.

Luc. I can assure you, Mr. Hawthorn, I am very difficult to please.

Ros. And so am I, Sir.

Haw. Indeed!

AIR.

Well come, let us hear what the swain must possess
Who may hope at your feet to implore with success?

Ros. He must be first of all
Straight, comely, and tall:

Luc. Neither awkward,

Ros. Nor foolish,

Luc. Nor apish,

Ros. Nor mulish;

Luc. } *Ros.* } Nor yet should his fortune be small.

Haw. What think'st of a captain?

Luc. All bluster and wounds!

Haw. What think'st of a squire?

Ros. To be left for his hounds.

Luc. The youth that is form'd to my mind,
Must be gentle, obliging and kind;
Of all things in nature love me;

Ros. Have sense both to speak and to see—
Yet sometimes be silent and blind.

Haw. 'Fore George, a most rare matrimonial receipt;

Ros. Observe it, ye fair, in the choice of a mate;

Luc. Remember, 'tis wedlock determines your fate.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Parlour in* JUSTICE WOODCOCK'S *House.*

Enter SIR WILLIAM MEADOWS, *followed by* HAWTHORN.

Sir W. Well, this is excellent, this is mighty good, this is mighty merry, faith; ha, ha, ha! was ever the like heard of? that my boy, Tom, should run away from me, for fear

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of being forced to marry a girl he never saw; that she should scamper from her father, for fear of being forced to marry him; and that they should run into one another's arms this way in disguise, by mere accident; against their consents, and without knowing it, as a body may say! May I never do an ill turn, Master Hawthorn, if it is not one of the oddest adventures partly—

Haw. Why, Sir William, it is a romance; a novel; a pleasanter history by half, than the loves of Dorastus and Faunia: we shall have ballads made of it within these two months, setting forth, how a young squire became a serving man of low degree; and it will be stuck up with Margaret's Ghost, and the Spanish Lady, against the walls of every cottage in the country.

Sir. W. But what pleases me best of all, Master Hawthorn, is the ingenuity of the girl. May I never do an ill turn, when I was called out of the room, and the servant said she wanted to speak to me, if I knew what to make on't: but when the little gipsy took me aside, and told me her name, and how matters stood, I was quite astonished, as a body may say; and could not believe it partly; 'till her young friend that she is with here, assured me of the truth on't: Indeed, at last, I began to recollect her face, though I have not set eyes on her before, since she was the height of a full-grown grey-hound.

Haw. Well, Sir William, your son as yet knows nothing of what has happened, nor of your being come hither; and, if you'll follow my counsel, we'll have some sport with him.—He and his mistress were to meet in the garden this evening by appointment, she's gone to dress herself in all her airs: will you let me direct your proceedings in this affair?

Sir W. With all my heart, Master Hawthorn, with all my heart, do what you will with me, say what you please for me; I am so overjoyed, and so happy—And, may I never do an ill turn, but I am very glad to see you too; ay, and partly as much pleased at that as any thing else, for we have been merry together before now, when we were some years younger: well, and how has the world gone with you, Master Hawthorn, since we saw one another last?

Haw. Why, pretty well, Sir William; I have no reason to complain: every one has a mixture of sour with his sweets; but, in the main, I believe, I have done in a degree as tolerably as my neighbours.

AIR.

The world is a well furnish'd table,
  Where guests are promisc'ously set:
We all fare as well as we're able,
  And scramble for what we can get;
My simile holds to a tittle,
  Some gorge, while some scarce have a taste;
But if I'm content with a little,
  Enough is as good as a feast.

SCENE II.

SIR WILLIAM MEADOWS, HAWTHORN, ROSETTA.

Ros. Sir William, I beg pardon for detaining you, but I have had so much difficulty in adjusting my borrowed plumes—

Sir W. May I never do an ill turn but they fit you to a T, and you look very well, so you do: Cocksbones, how your father will chuckle when he comes to hear this!—Her father, Master Hawthorn, is as worthy a man as lives by bread, and has been almost out of his senses for the loss of her—But tell me, hussy, has not this been all a scheme, a piece of conjuration between you and my son? Faith, I am half persuaded it has, it looks so like hocus-pocus as a body may say.

Ros. Upon my honour, Sir William, what has happened, has been the mere effect of chance; I came hither unknown to your son, and he unknown to me: I never in the least suspected that Thomas the gardener was other than his appearance spoke him; and least of all, that he was a person with whom I had so close a connection. Mr. Hawthorn can testify the astonishment I was in when he first informed me of it; but I thought it was my duty to come to an immediate explanation with you.

Sir W. Is not she a neat wench, Master Hawthorn? May I never do an ill turn but she is—But you little plaguy devil, how came this love affair between you?

Ros. I have told you the whole truth very ingenuously, Sir: since your son and I have been fellow-servants, as I may call it, in this house, I have had more than reason to suspect he had taken a liking to me; and I will own with equal frankness, had I not looked upon him as a person so much below me, I should have had no objection to receiving his courtship.

Haw. Well said, by the lord Harry, all above board, fair and open.

Ros. Perhaps I may be censured by some for this candid declaration; but I love to speak my sentiments; and I assure you, Sir William, in my opinion, I should prefer a gardener with your son's good qualities, to a knight of the shire without them.

AIR.

'Tis not wealth, it is not birth,
  Can value to the soul convey;
Minds possess superior worth,
  Which chance nor gives, nor takes away.
Like the sun true merit shows;
  By nature warm, by nature bright;
With inbred flames he nobly glows,
  Nor needs the aid of borrow'd light.

Haw. Well, but, Sir, we lose time—is not this about the hour appointed to meet in the garden?

Ros. Pretty near it.

Haw. Oons then, what do we stay for?—Come, my old friend, come along, and by the way we will consult how to manage your interview.

Sir W. Ay, but I must speak a word or two to my man about the horses first.

SCENE III.

ROSETTA, HODGE.

Ros. Well—What's the business?

Hodge. Madam—Mercy on us, I crave pardon!

Ros. Why, Hodge, don't you know me?

Hodge. Mrs. Rosetta!

Ros. Ay.

Hodge. Know you! ecod I don't know whether I do or not: never stir, if I did not think it was some lady belonging to the strange gentlefolks: why, you be'nt dizen'd this way to go to the statute dance, presently be you?

Ros. Have patience and you'll see: but is there any thing amiss that you came in so abruptly?

Hodge. Amiss! why there's ruination.

Ros. How?—where?

Hodge. Why, with Miss Lucinda: her aunt has catched she and the gentleman above stairs, and overheard all their love discourse.

Ros. You don't say so!

Hodge. Ecod, I had like to have popped in among them this instant; but, by good luck, I heard Mrs. Deborah's voice, and run down again, as fast as ever my legs could carry me.

Ros. Is your master in the house?

Hodge. What, his worship! no, no, he is gone into the fields to talk with the reapers and people.

Ros. Poor Lucinda, I wish I could go up to her, but I am so engaged with my own affairs—

Hodge. Mrs. Rosetta.

Ros. Well.

Hodge. Odds bobs, I must have one smack of your sweet lips.

Ros. Oh stand off, you know I never allow liberties.

Hodge. Nay, but why so coy, there's reason in roasting of eggs; I would not deny you such a thing.

Ros. That's kind: ha, ha, ha—But what will become of Lucinda? Sir William waits for me, I must be gone. Friendship, a moment by your leave; yet as our sufferings have been mutual, so shall our joys; I already lose the remembrance of all former pains and anxieties.

AIR.

The traveller, benighted,
And led through weary ways,
The lamp of day new lighted,
With joy the dawn surveys.

The rising prospects viewing,
Each look is forward cast;
He smiles, his course pursuing,
Nor thinks of what is past.

SCENE IV.

HODGE, MRS. DEBORAH WOODCOCK, LUCINDA.

Hodge. Hist, stay! don't I hear a noise?

Luc. [*Within.*] Well, but dear, dear aunt—

Mrs. Deb. [*Within.*] You need not speak to me, for it does not signify.

Hodge. Adwawns, they are coming here! ecod I'll get out of the way—Murrian take it, this door is bolted now—So, so.

Mrs. Deb. Get along, get along; [*Driving in* LUCINDA *before her.*] you are a scandal to the name of Woodcock; but I was resolved to find you out, for I have suspected you a great while, though your father, silly man, will have you such a poor innocent.

Luc. What shall I do?

Mrs. Deb. I was determined to discover what you and your pretended music-master were about, and lay in wait on purpose: I believe he thought to escape me, by slipping into the closet when I knocked at the door; but I was even with him, for now I have him under lock and key, and please the fates there he shall remain till your father comes in: I will convince him of his error whether he will or not.

Luc. You wont be so cruel, I am sure you wont: I thought I had made you my friend by telling you the truth.

Mrs. Deb. Telling me the truth, quotha! did I not overhear your scheme of running away to-night, through the partition? did not I find the very bundles packed up in the room with you ready for going off? No, brazenface, I found out the truth by my own sagacity, though your father says I am a fool, but now we'll be judged who is the greatest.—And you, Mr. Rascal, my brother shall know what an honest servant he has got.

Hodge. Madam!

Mrs. Deb. You were to have been aiding and assisting them in their escape, and have been the go-between, it seems, the letter-carrier!

Hodge. Who, me, Madam?

Mrs. Deb. Yes, you, sirrah.

Hodge. Miss Lucinda, did I ever carry a letter for you? I'll make my affidavy before his worship—

Mrs. Deb. Go, go, you are a villain, hold your tongue.

Luc. I own, aunt, I have been very faulty in this affair; I don't pretend to excuse myself; but we are all subject to frailties; consider that, and judge of me by yourself; you were once young and inexperienced as I am.

AIR.

If ever a fond inclination
Rose in your bosom to rob you of rest,
Reflect with a little compassion,
On the soft pangs which prevailed in my breast.
Oh where, where would you fly me?
Can you deny me thus torn and distress'd?
Think, when my lover was by me,
Would I, how could I, refuse his request!
Kneeling before you, let me implore you;
Look on me sighing, crying, dying;
Ah! is there no language can move?
If I have been too complying,
Hard was the conflict 'twixt duty and love.

Mrs. Deb. This is mighty pretty romantic stuff! but you learn it out of your play-books and novels. Girls in my time had other employments, we worked at our needles, and kept ourselves from idle thoughts: before I was your age, I had finished with my own fingers a complete set of chairs, and a fire-screen in tent stitch; four counterpanes in Marseilles quilting; and the creed and ten commandments, in the hair of our family: it was framed and glazed, and hung over the parlour chimney-piece, and your poor, dear grandfather was prouder of it than of e'er a picture in his house. I never looked into a book, but when I said my prayers, except it was the Complete Housewife, or the great family receipt-book: whereas, you are always at your studies! Ah, I never knew a woman come to good, that was fond of reading.

Luc. Well, pray, Madam, let me prevail on you to give me the key to let Mr. Eustace out, and I promise I never will proceed a step farther in this business, without your advice and approbation.

Mrs. Deb. Have not I told you already my resolution?—Where are my clogs and my bonnet? I'll go out to my brother in the fields: I'm a fool, you know, child, now let's see what the wits will think of themselves—don't hold me—

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Lac. I'm not going; I have thought of a way to be even with you, so you may do as you please.

SCENE V.

HODGE.

Well, I thought it would come to this, I'll be shot if I didn't—So here's a fine job—But what can they do to me—They can't send me to jail for carrying a letter, seeing there was no treason in it; and how was I obligated to know my master did not allow of their meetings.—The worst they can do, is to turn me off, and I am sure the place is no such great purchase—indeed, I should be sorry to leave Mrs. Rosetta, seeing as how matters are so near being brought to an end betwixt us; but she and I may keep company all as one; and I find Madge has been speaking with Gaffer Broadwheels, the waggoner, about her carriage up to London: so that I have got rid of she, and I am sure I have reason to be main glad of it, for she led me a wearisome life—But that's the way of them all.

AIR.

A plague on those wenches, they make such a pother,
When once they have let'n a man have his will;
They are always a-whining for something or other,
And cry he's unkind in his carriage.
What tho'f he speaks them ne'er so fairly,
Still they keep teazing, teazing on:
You cannot persuade 'em
'Till promise you've made 'em;
And after they've got it,
They tell you—add rot it,
Their character's blasted, they're ruin'd, undone;
Then to be sure, Sir,
There is but one cure, Sir,
And all their discourse is of marriage.

SCENE IV.—*A Greenhouse.*

Enter YOUNG MEADOWS.

Y. Mea. I am glad I had the precaution to bring this suit of clothes in my bundle, though I hardly know myself in them again, they appear so strange, and feel so unwieldy. However, my gardener's jacket goes on no more.—I wonder this girl does not come: [*Looking at his watch.*] perhaps she wont come—Why then I'll go into the village, take a post-chaise, and depart without any farther ceremony.

AIR.

How much superior beauty awes,
The coldest bosoms find;
But with resistless force it draws,
To sense and sweetness join'd.

The casket, where, to outward show,
The workman's art is seen,
Is doubly valued, when we know
It holds a gem within.

Hark! she comes.

SCENE VII.

Enter SIR WILLIAM MEADOWS, *and* HAWTHORN.

Y. Mea. Confusion! my father! What can this mean?

Sir W. Tom, are you not a sad boy, Tom, to bring me a hundred and forty miles here—May I never do an ill turn, but you deserve to have your head broke; and I have a good mind, partly—What, sirrah, don't you think it worth your while to speak to me?

Y. Mea. Forgive me, Sir; I own I have been in a fault.

Sir W. In a fault! to run away from me because I was going to do you good—May I never do an ill turn, Mr. Hawthorn, if I did not pick out as fine a girl for him, partly, as any in England; and the rascal run away from me, and came here, and turned gardener. And pray, what did you propose to yourself, Tom? I know you were always fond of Botany, as they call it; did you intend to keep the trade going, and advertise fruit-trees and flowering shrubs, to be had at Meadows's nursery?

Haw. No, Sir, William, I apprehend the young gentleman designed to lay by the profession; for he has quitted the habit already.

Y. Mea. I am so astonished to see you here, Sir, that I don't know what to say; but I assure you, if you had not come, I should have returned home to you directly. Pray, Sir, how did you find me out?

Sir W. No matter, Tom, no matter; it was partly by accident, as a body may say, but what does that signify—tell me, boy, how stands your stomach towards matrimony; do you think you could digest a wife now?

Y. Mea. Pray, Sir, don't mention it: I shall always behave myself as a dutiful son ought: I will never marry without your consent, and I hope you wont force me to do it against my own.

Sir W. Is not this mighty provoking, Master Hawthorn? Why, sirrah, did you ever see the lady I designed for you?

Y. Mea. Sir, I don't doubt the lady's merit; but at present, I am not disposed——

Haw. Nay, but young gentleman, fair and softly, you should pay some respect to your father in this matter.

Sir W. Respect, Master Hawthorn! I tell you he shall marry her, or I'll disinherit him! there's once. Look you, Tom, not to make any more words of the matter, I have brought the lady here with me, and I'll see you contracted before we part; or you shall delve and plant cucumbers as long as you live.

Y. Mea. Have you brought the lady here, Sir? I am sorry for it.

Sir W. Why sorry? what then you wont marry her? we'll see that! Pray, Master Hawthorn, conduct the fair one in.—Ay, Sir, you may fret, and dance about, trot at the rate of fifteen miles an hour, if you please, but marry whip me, I'm resolved.

SCENE VIII.

SIR WILLIAM MEADOWS, HAWTHORN, YOUNG MEADOWS, *and* ROSETTA.

Haw. Here is the lady, Sir William.

Sir W. Come in, Madam, but turn your face from him—he would not marry you because he had not seen you: but I'll let him know my choice shall be his, and he shall consent to marry you, before he sees you, or not an acre of estate—Pray, Sir, walk this way.

Y. Mea. Sir, I cannot help thinking your conduct a little extraordinary; but since you urge me so closely, I must tell you my affections are engaged.

Sir W. How, Tom, how!

Y. Mea. I was determined, Sir, to have got the better of my inclination, and never have

done a thing which I knew would be disagreeable to you.

Sir W. And pray, Sir, who are your affections engaged to? Let me know that.

Y. Mea. To a person, Sir, whose rank and fortune may be no recommendations to her: but whose charms and accomplishments entitle her to a monarch. I am sorry, Sir it's impossible for me to comply with your commands, and I hope you will not be offended if I quit your presence.

Sir W. Not I, not in the least: go about your business.

Y. Mea. Sir, I obey.

Haw. Now, Madam is the time.

[ROSETTA *advances*, YOUNG MEADOWS *turns round and sees her.*

AIR.

Ros. When we see a lover languish,
And his truth and honour prove,
Ah! how sweet to heal his anguish,
And repay him love for love.

Sir W. Well, Tom, will you go away from me now.

Haw. Perhaps, Sir William your son does not like the lady; and if so, pray don't put a force upon his inclination.

Y. Mea. You need not have taken this method, Sir, to let me see you are acquainted with my folly, whatever my inclinations are.

Sir W. Well, but Tom, suppose I give my consent to your marrying this young woman.

Y. Mea. Your consent, Sir!

Ros. Come, Sir William, we have carried the jest far enough; I see your son is in a kind of embarrassment, and I don't wonder at it; but this letter which I received from him a few days before I left my father's house, will, I apprehend, expound the riddle. He cannot be surprised that I ran away from a gentleman who expressed so much dislike to me; and what has happened, since chance has brought us together in masquerade, there is no occasion for me to inform him of.

Y. Mea. What is all this? Pray don't make a jest of me.

Sir W. May I never do an ill turn, Tom, if it is not truth; this is my friend's daughter.

Y. Mea. Sir!

Ros. Even so; 'tis very true, indeed. In short, you have not been a more whimsical gentleman than I have a gentlewoman; but you see we are designed for one another 'tis plain.

Y. Mea. I know not, Madam, what I either hear or see; a thousand things are crowding on my imagination; while, like one just awakened from a dream, I doubt which is reality, which delusion.

Sir W. Well then, Tom, come into the air a bit, and recover yourself.

Y. Mea. Nay, dear Sir, have a little patience; do you give her to me?

Sir W. Give her to you! ay, that I do, and my blessing into the bargain.

Y. Mea. Then, Sir, I am the happiest man in the world; I inquire no farther; here I fix the utmost limits of my hopes and happiness.

AIR.

Y. Mea. All I wish in her obtaining,
Fortune can no more impart:
Ros. Let my eyes, my thoughts explaining,
Speak the feelings of my heart.
Y. Mea. Joy and pleasure never ceasing,
Ros. Love with length of years increasing.
Both. Thus my heart and hand surrender.
Here my faith and truth I plight;
Constant still, and kind, and tender,
May our flames burn ever bright.

Haw. Give you joy, Sir, and you. fair lady—And, under favour, I'll salute you too, if there's no fear of jealousy.

Y. Mea. And may I believe this?—Pr'ythee tell me, dear Rosetta.

Ros. Step into the house and I'll tell you every thing—I must entreat the good offices of Sir William and Mr. Hawthorn, immediately; for I am in the utmost uneasiness about my poor friend, Lucinda.

Haw. Why, what's the matter?

Ros. I don't know, but I have reason to fear I left her just now in very disagreeable circumstances; however, I hope, if there's any mischief fallen out between her father and her lover—

Haw. The music-master! I thought so.

Sir W. What, is there a lover in the case? May I never do an ill turn, but I am glad, so I am; for we'll make a double wedding; and, by way of celebrating it, take a trip to London, to show the brides some of the pleasures of the town. And, Master Hawthorn, you shall be of the party—Come children, go before us.

Haw. Thank you, Sir William; I'll go into the house with you, and to church to see the young folks married; but as to London, I beg to be excused.

AIR.

If ever I'm catch'd in those regions of smoke,
That seat of confusion and noise,
May I ne'er know the sweets of a slumber unbroke,
Nor the pleasures the country enjoys,
Nay more, let them take me, to punish my sin,
Where, gaping, the Cockneys they fleece,
Clap me up with the monsters, cry, masters walk in,
And show me for two pence a-piece.

SCENE IX.

JUSTICE WOODCOCK'S *Hall.*

Enter JUSTICE WOODCOCK, MRS. DEBORAH WOODCOCK, LUCINDA, EUSTACE, *and* HODGE.

Mrs. Deb. Why, brother, do you think I can't hear, or see, or make use of my senses? I tell you, I left that fellow locked up in her closet; and, while I have been with you, they have broke open the door, and got him out again.

J. Wood. Well, you hear what they say.

Mrs. Deb. I care not what they say; it's you encourage them in their impudence—Hark'e, hussy, will you face me down that I did not lock the fellow up?

Luc. Really, aunt, I don't know what you mean; when you talk intelligibly I'll answer you.

Eust. Seriously, Madam, this is carrying the jest a little too far.

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Mrs. Deb. What then, I did not catch you together in her chamber, nor overhear your design of going off to-night, nor find the bundles packed up——

Eust. Ha, ha, ha!

Luc. Why, aunt, you rave.

Mrs. Deb. Brother, as I am a Christian woman, she confessed the whole affair to me from first to last; and in this very place was down upon her marrow-bones for half an hour together, to beg I would conceal it from you.

Hodge. Oh lord! Oh lord!

Mrs. Deb. What, sirrah, would you brazen me too! Take that. [*Boxes him.*]

Hodge. I wish you would keep your hands to yourself; you strike me because you have been telling his worship stories.

J. Wood. Why, sister, you are tipsy!

Mrs. Deb. I tipsy, brother!—I—that never touch a drop of any thing strong from year's end to year's end; but now and then a little anies-seed water, when I have got the cholic.

Luc. Well, aunt, you have been complaining of the stomach ache all day; and may have taken too powerful a dose of your cordial.

J. Wood. Come, come, I see well enough how it is; this is a lie of her own invention, to make herself appear wise; but, you simpleton, did you not know I must find you out?

SCENE X.

Enter SIR WILLIAM MEADOWS, HAWTHORN, ROSETTA, YOUNG MEADOWS.

Y. Mea. Bless me, Sir! look who is yonder.

Sir W. Cocksbones, Jack, honest Jack, are you there?

Eust. Plague on't, this rencounter is unlucky——Sir William, your servant.

Sir W. Your servant again, and again, heartily your servant; may I never do an ill turn, but I am glad to meet you.

J. Wood. Pray, Sir William, are you acquainted with this person?

Sir W. What, with Jack Eustace! why he's my kinsman: his mother and I were cousin-germans once removed, and Jack's a very worthy young fellow, may I never do an ill turn if I tell a word of a lie.

J. Wood. Well, but, Sir William, let me tell you, you know nothing of the matter; this man is a music-master; a thrummer of wire, and a scraper of cat-gut, and teaches my daughter to sing.

Sir W. What, Jack Eustace a music-master! no, no, I know him better.

Eust. 'Sdeath, why should I attempt to carry on this absurd farce any longer;—What that gentleman tells you is very true, Sir; I am no music-master indeed.

J. Wood. You are not, you own it then?

Eust. Nay more, Sir, I am, as this lady has represented me, [*Pointing to* MRS. DEBORAH.] your daughter's lover; whom, with her own consent, I did intend to have carried off this night; but now that Sir William Meadows is here, to tell you who, and what I am, I throw myself upon your generosity, from which I expect greater advantages than I could reap from any imposition on your unsuspicious nature.

Mrs. Deb. Well, brother, what have you to say for yourself now? You have made a precious day's work of it! Had my advice been taken! Oh I am ashamed of you, but you are a weak man, and it can't be helped: however, you should let wiser heads direct you.

Luc. Dear papa, pardon me.

Sir W. Ay, do, Sir, forgive her; my cousin Jack will make her a good husband, I'll answer for it.

Ros. Stand out of the way, and let me speak two or three words to his worship.—Come, my dear Sir, though you refuse all the world, I am sure you can deny me nothing: love is a venial fault—You know what I mean.——Be reconciled to your daughter, I conjure you, by the memory of our past affections——What, not a word!

AIR.

Go, naughty man, I can't abide you;
Are then your vows so soon forgot?
Ah! now I see if I had tried you,
What would have been my hopeful lot.

But here I charge you—make them happy;
Bless the fond pair, and crown their bliss:
Come be a dear good natured pappy,
And I'll reward you with a kiss.

Mrs. Deb. Come, turn out of the house, and be thankful my brother does not hang you, for he could do it, he's a Justice of peace;—turn out of the house, I say:—

J. Wood. Who gave you authority to turn him out of the house—he shall stay where he is.

Mrs. Deb. He sha'n't marry my niece.

J. Wood. Sha'n't he? but I'll shew you the difference now, I say he shall marry her, and what will you do about it?

Mrs. Deb. And you will give him your estate too, will you?

J. Wood. Yes, I will.

Mrs. Deb. Why I'm sure he's a vagabond.

J. Wood. I like him the better, I would have him a vagabond.

Mrs. Deb. Brother, brother!

Haw. Come, come, Madam, all's very well, and I see my neighbour is what I always thought him, a man of sense and prudence.

Sir W. May I never do an ill turn, but I say so too.

J. Wood. Here, young fellow, take my daughter, and bless you both together; but hark you, no money till I die; observe that.

Eust. Sir, in giving me your daughter, you bestow upon me more than the whole world would be without her.

Ros. Dear Lucinda, if words could convey the transports of my heart upon this occasion—

Luc. Words are the tools of hypocrites, the pretenders to friendship; only let us resolve to preserve our esteem for each other.

Y. Mea. Dear Jack, I little thought we should ever meet in such odd circumstances—but here has been the strangest business between this lady and me——

Hodge. What then, Mrs. Rosetta, are you turned false-hearted, after all; will you marry Thomas the gardener; and did I forsake Madge for this?

Ros. Oh lord! Hodge, I beg your pardon; I protest I forgot; but I must reconcile you and Madge, I think, and give you a wedding-dinner to make you amends.

Hodge. N—ah.

Haw. Adds me, Sir, here are some of your neighbours come to visit you, and I suppose to

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make up the company of your statute-ball; yonder's music too I see; shall we enjoy ourselves? If so, give me your hand.

J. Wood. Why, here's my hand, and we will enjoy ourselves; Heaven bless you both, children, I say—Sister Deborah, you are a fool.

Mrs. Deb. You are a fool, brother; and mark my words—But I'll give myself no more trouble about you.

Haw. Fiddlers strike up.

AIR.

Hence with cares, complaints, and frowning,
Welcome jollity and joy;
Every grief in pleasure drowning,
Mirth this happy night employ:
Let's to friendship do our duty,
Laugh and sing some good old strain;
Drink a health to love and beauty——
May they long in triumph reign.

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ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE:

A FARCE,

IN TWO ACTS.

BY ISAAC JACKMAN.

REMARKS.

THIS laughable after piece was first refused at Drury Lane; but the applause, bestowed at a benefit, induced the managers to purchase it as a stock-piece, a preference to which its merit fairly entitles it.

Diggery's frenzy for converting his various avocations to the purposes of histrionic action, furnishes much drollery and an instructive lesson. The subordinate characters are well introduced; the testy country knight, angry with the follies of his servants, who are encouraged by his niece; the amorous old maid, his sister, duped by the young officer, whose friend marries Miss Kitty:—all tend to the main purpose of the piece, and to show the extravagancies of a misunderstood dramatic mania.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SIR GILBERT PUMKIN,	*Mr. Blanchard.*	WAITER,	*Mr. Abbott.*
CAPTAIN STANLEY,	*Mr. Brunton.*	WILLIAM,	*Mr. Jefferies.*
CAPTAIN STUKELY,	*Mr. Claremont.*	HOSTLER,	*Mr. Atkins.*
DIGGERY,	*Mr. Liston.*		
CYMON,	*Mr. Simmons.*	MISS BRIDGET PUMKIN,	*Mrs. Davenport.*
WAT,	*Mr. Beverly.*	KITTY SPRIGHTLY,	*Miss Searle.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.—An Inn at Shrewsbury.

CHARLES STANLEY *and* HARRY STUKELY *at breakfast.*

Har. Faith, Charles, I cannot think as you do on this subject.

Cha. I am sorry for it; but when you have served two or three campaigns more, take my word for it, Harry, you will have the same opinion of the army, that I entertain at this moment.

Har. 'Tis impossible; the army is the only profession, where a great soul can be completely gratified; after a glorious and well-fought field, the approbation of my sovereign, with the acclamations of my brave countrymen, are rewards, amply repaying whole years of service.

Cha. True; but the honours we gather, very often adorn the head of a commander, who has been only an ear-witness to this 'well-fought field.'

Har. Ay, but every individual has his share.

Cha. Of the danger I grant you; and when a return is made of the killed, wounded, &c. you see in every newspaper a list of them in the following order:—three captains, seven lieutenants, twelve ensigns, killed: so many wounded; then comes in order, the sergeants, sergeant-majors, drummers, &c. &c. &c. and as to the rank and file, they are given to you in the lump; one hundred, or one thousand, just as it happens.

Har. But their memories live for ever in the hearts of their countrymen.—How comes it, Charles, that with these sentiments you ever wore a cockade?

Cha. I'll tell you:—whenever I receive the pay of my sovereign, and am honoured with the character of his trusty and well-beloved, I will faithfully, and I hope bravely, discharge the confidence he reposes in me. But, Harry, you have no serious objection to matrimony: if you have, we had better proceed no farther; our project has a period.

Har. Not in the least, I assure you: I think myself capable of engaging in both the fields of love and war. I will marry, because it has its conveniences.

"——But when light-wing'd toys
Of feathered Cupid, foil with wanton dulness
My speculative and officed instruments,

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Let all indign and base adversities
Make head against my estimation."

There's a touch of Othello for you, and I think à-propos.

Cha. 'Egad, Harry, that speech puts me in mind of a letter I received from Miss Kitty Sprightly, the fair ward of my uncle, Sir Gilbert Pumkin—you must know, we are to have a play acted at the old family mansion for our entertainment, or rather for the entertainment of Miss Kitty; who is so mad after every thing that has the appearance of a theatre, that I should not be surprised, if she eloped with the first strolling company that visited this part of the country.

Har. Let us have the letter by all means.

Cha. [Reads.] "*Miss Kitty Sprightly sends her compliments to Captain Charles, and as she is informed Sir Gilbert has invited him to Strawberry-hall, she thinks it necessary to acquaint Captain Charles, that he must shortly perfect himself in the character of Captain Macheath, as the ladies expect him to perform that character at the mansion-house. If he has a good Filch in the circle of his acquaintance, she desires the Captain will not fail to bring him down.*"

Har. Why, what the devil! I'll lay my life you have brought me down to play this curious character in this very curious family.

Cha. You are right, Harry; and if you can filch away the old sister, you will play the part to some advantage—you will have fifty thousand pounds to your benefit, my boy.

Har. You mean this as an introduction to the family—oh, then have at you—but, damn it, I can't sing; I can act tolerably.

Cha. I'll warrant you. But come, we will repair to the mansion; we are only two miles from it; they expect us to dinner. William, desire the hostler to put the horses too. Waiter, a bill.

Enter WAITER.

Upon my word, Waiter, your charges are intolerable: what, five shillings for a boiled fowl!

Wait. We know your honour isn't on half-pay: we always charge to the pocket of our customers, your honour.

Har. Well; but good Mr. Waiter, take back your bill, and in your charge consider us on half-pay.

Wait. Lord bless your honour! you are in too good flesh for that: why, your honour looks as fat and as well as myself.

Cha. Ha, ha, ha! [*Both laugh.*] There is half-a-crown above your bill, which you may dispose of as you please. Get you gone.

Wait. Your honours, I hope, will remember honest Will Snap, at the Antelope, when you come next to Shrewsbury. [*Exit.*

Cha. Mr. Honesty, your servant. Travelling, Harry, is now become so chargeable, that few gentlemen of our cloth can afford to breathe the fresh air for a day.

Enter HOSTLER.

But what's your business?

Host. The hostler, your honour. There is not such a pair of bays, your honour, in the country; they'll take you to Sir Gilbert's in ten minutes without turning a hair. I hope I shall drink your honour's health.

Har. Get out of my sight this moment, ye set of scoundrels, or I will knock you down with this chair. [*Takes up one.*] Landlord, hollo! why the devil don't you send in all the poor in the parish? this is highway robbery, without the credit of being robbed. Let us get away, Charles, while we have money to pay the turnpikes.

Cha. Allons! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—A Hall at the Mansion House.

Enter DIGGERY, *with a play-book in his hand;* WAT, CYMON, *and a* SERVANT *to the Family, making a noise.*

Dig. Hold your damned tongues! how is it possible I can tell you how to act, when you all open like a kennel of hounds? listen, but don't say a word. I am to be Alexander, and Wat, you are to be my friend, Clintus, and—

Wat. Ah, Master Diggery, you shall see what I'll say.

Dig Damme, hold your tongue, I say once more—you'll say! what can you say? say only what is in the book, and don't be cramming in your own nonsense. But listen all of you and mind—you must know the man who wrote this play was mad—

Wat. Lord, I should like to play mad.

Dig. Will nobody stop this fellow's mouth? why, you blockhead, you have not sense enough to be mad; you'd play the fool well enough, but how can you extort that damned pudding face of yours to madness? why, Wat, your features are as fixed as the man in the moon's.

All. Go on, Master Diggery, go on.

Dig. Well, let me see. [*Turns over the leaves of the play.*] You, Wat, I say, is to be Clintus; and I am to say, before all of you, that great Almon gave me birth: then, Wat, you are to say, you lie!

Wat. Ah, but then you'll stick me.

Dig. Never mind that; button your waistcoat over one of our trenchers.—Lord, I forget to begin right; I am first to come out of a tim-whiskey, which you are to draw; and when I come down, you are all to fall upon your marrow-bones. And, as to you, Wat, if you even look at me, I'll come up and give you such a douse of the chops, as you never had in your life.

Wat. Let us try: now you shall see, Master Diggery.

Dig. Then do as I bid you; down every mother's skin of you. [*They all kneel down;* DIGGERY *draws back.*] Don't stir if Miss Bridget was ringing every bell in the house. When I say, rise all, my friends, then do you all get up.

Wat. Is that right, Master Diggery?

Dig. Very well, now—[*A bell rings.*]—zounds, here's Miss Bridget!

Enter MISS BRIDGET.

Miss B. Where, in the name of mischief, have you been, rascal? your master has been looking for you this hour, and no tidings, high nor low.

Dig. I'm going.

[*Exit, leaving the rest kneeling.*

Miss B. Mercy upon us! what's all this?—Cymon! Wat! are you all mad? why don't you answer?

Cymon. Hush, hush! Diggery is to play mad; I must not stir.

Miss B. Mercy upon me! these fellows may be struck mad for ought I know. I'll raise the house—brother, brother! Kitty Sprightly! where are you all?

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Enter SIR GILBERT.

Sir G. What the devil's the matter?

Miss B. Look at those fellows, brother; they are all out of their senses; they are all mad.

Sir G. Mad, are they!—why, then, run and bring me the short blunderbuss that's hanging in the hall, and I'll take a pop at the whole covey.

Enter DIGGERY.

Diggery, what's the matter with those fellows?

Dig. Nothing, Sir.

Sir G. Nothing! why, what the devil keeps them in that posture, then?

Dig. Lord, Sir, I'll soon make them get upon their legs.

Sir G. Do then, I desire you; and send them all to the mad-house.

Dig. [*Goes up to them all.*] Rise, all my friends. [*They all rise.*] Lord, Sir, we were only acting a play.

Sir G. You son of a whore! get out of my sight this moment. [*They all run away.*] Was ever man so plagued with such a set of scoundrels? Morning, noon, and night, is this fellow, Diggery, taking these wretches from their labours, and making Cæsars, Alexanders, and Blackamoors of them.

Miss B. Brother, brother, if you had routed that nest of vagabonds who were mumming in our barn about two months ago, none of this would have happened.

Sir G. True, true, sister Bridget. It was but a few days ago, I went to take a walk about my fields; when I came back, the first thing I saw, was a large piece of paper pasted on the street-door, and on it were wrote, in large characters:—

"This evening will be presented here,

The Great Alexander.

Alexander, by MR. DIGGERY DUCKLIN,

Roxana, by MISS TIPPET BUSKY,

And the part of Statira by a YOUNG LADY

(Being her first appearance on any Stage.")

Damme, if I knew my own house.

Miss B. That's not all, brother; Diggery had nearly smothered that silly hussy, Tippet, in the oven a few days ago.

Sir G. The oven! what the devil brought her there?

Miss B. Why, Diggery, prevailed upon her to go in, and he said he would break open the door of it with the kitchen poker, and that would be playing Romo.

Sir G. Romo! Romeo, you mean; why, sister Bridget, you can't speak English—surely some demon has bewitched our family! [*Aside.*] But pray what became of Juliet in the oven?

Miss B. Hearing a noise, I went down stairs, and the moment he saw me, he dropped the poker and ran away: but I had no sooner opened the door of the oven, than I saw her gasping for breath; and it was as much as I could do to drag her out, and save her from being suffocated.

Sir G. Why the devil did you not leave her there? she would have been a good example to the whole family. As to that fellow, Diggery, he will be hanged for the murder of some of these creatures, as sure as he is now alive. I overheard him the other day desiring Cymon to fall on the carving knife, and he would then die like Cato.

Miss B. If they continue these pranks, we shall never be able to receive Captain Charles and his friend; they will certainly imagine we are all run mad in good earnest.

Sir G. How can it be otherwise? Miss Kitty Sprightly, forsooth, extorted a promise from me the other day, that when Charles and his friend came down, I would permit the Beggar's Opera to be got up, as she phrased it, in order to entertain them.

Miss B. Brother, that girl is worse than the whole gang of them.

Sir G. Leave me to manage her; I will endeavour to release myself from the promise I made her, and instead of this play, a ball may answer the purpose. I hope, sister, you have prepared a good dinner for my nephew and his friend. He informs me in his letter, that the gentleman he brings down with him is a man of family, and a soldier that does honour to his profession.

Miss B. I must desire, brother, you will mind your ward, and leave the house to me: let him be related to the first dutchess in the land, he shall say, after he leaves Strawberry-hall, he never feasted until he came there.

Enter DIGGERY.

Dig. Lord, Sir, Captain Macheath is just arrived.

Sir G. Captain Macheath! my nephew, rascal; desire him to walk up immediately.

Dig. Yes, Sir—oh, Sir, here he is.

Enter CHARLES *and* HARRY.

Sir G. Ah, nephew! I am glad to see you! how have you been these two years? I have not seen you since your last campaign.

Cha. In very good health, Sir; and am sincerely happy to see you so. Permit me, Sir, to introduce to your acquaintance, the companion of my dangers and my friendship.

Sir G. Sir, you are welcome to Strawberry-hall. I love a soldier; and I am informed you support the character in all its relations.

Har. You do me great honour, Sir Gilbert; I shall study to deserve your good opinion.

Dig. He's a better figure than me—and better action too. [*Imitates him.*

Cha. I was in great hopes, my dear aunt, that when next I visited Strawberry-hall, I should have found you happy in the possession of your old lover, parson Dosey. I hope you have not banished him?

Miss B. Don't talk of the wretch; you know he was always my aversion.

[DIGGERY, *at the side, is stabbing himself with a large key.*

Sir G. What are you about, Diggery?

Dig. Sir! [*Puts the key into his pocket.*

Sir G. Come, come, I'll tell you the fact, and spare her blushes. Parson Dosey, you must know, some time ago, was playing a pool of quadrille with my sister, and three of her elderly maiden acquaintances, who live in the neighbourhood; when, behold ye, to the astonishment of all the ladies, the parson's right eye dropped into the fish tray! egad, I was as much astonished as the rest; for none of us had ever discovered the defect, although he has been in the parish for so many years; but in a twinkling, he whipped it into the socket; and when I looked him in the face, damme, if I did not think there was as much meaning in it, as in any eye about the table.

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Dig. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

[SIR G. *interrupts him in the middle of his laugh.*

Sir G. For shame, Diggery! [*Drives him off.*]—Bless me, I forgot!—give me leave, Sir, to introduce you to my sister.

Har. [*Kisses her, and bows very politely.*] Upon my word, Madam, such an imposition deserved a very severe chastisement. I hope, Madam, you never permitted this made-up gentleman to indulge the eye he had left, with another view of your fair self?

Miss B. Dear Sir, I hope you don't mind my brother; he is always upon his fagaries; he puts me to the blush a hundred times a day—faith, a very pretty young fellow! I'll take a more particular view of him presently.

[*Aside.*

Sir G. No, no; my sister's observation was a just one; 'that when a woman marries she ought to have a man naturally complete.'

Miss B. So, brother, you will go on with your vile conceptions.

Sir G. I have no vile conceptions. Why do you suppose them vile, sister Bridget?

Miss B. Gentlemen, I cannot stay in the room.

Har. Dear Madam, I beg——pray Madam—

[*Takes her by the hand.*

Miss B. I must go, Sir, I am in such a tremble; I shall certainly drop with confusion, if I stay any longer. [*Exit.*

Har. Indeed, Sir Gilbert, this canonical gentleman, presuming to address a lady of Miss Pumkin's qualifications—

Sir G. Ha, ha, ha! Miss Pumkin's qualifications! stick to that, captain, and you will soon have a regiment. I find the soldier has not spoiled the courtier.

Har. I really think what I say, Sir;—the deception was unpardonable.

Sir G. Not at all: the parson was very poor, and he knew she was very rich; and if the fellow was blind with one eye, and squinted with the other, I could not blame him to marry her, if she was fool enough to consent to the union; indeed, it was my business to prevent it, but the discovery of the glass eye did the business more effectually than I could do, had I the eloquence of a Cicero.

Cha. But pray, uncle, where is your fair charge, Miss Kitty Sprightly? she's grown, I suppose, a fine girl by this time.

Sir G. A fine girl, quotha! I do not like that warm inquiry; a red coat may spoil my project of marrying her myself. [*Considers.*] I have it! I'll tell him she's a little crack-brained. [*Aside.*] Nephew, a word in your ear; the poor girl has got a touch.

Cha. A touch! you don't say so.

Sir G. As sure as you are in your senses; she's always imagining herself to be either Helen, Cleopatra, Polly Peachum, or some other female of antiquity, that made a noise in the world.

Cha. Oh, ho! I smell a rat here; but I'll humour it. [*Aside.*] 'Tis a strange species of madness, uncle; she's probably play-mad.

Sir G. You have it; and the contagion has run through the house—there's Diggery, Wat, Cymon, Tippet, and the whole family, except my sister, have got the bite. Why, sometimes you would imagine, from the wooden sceptres, straw crowns, and such like trumpery, that Bedlam was transported from Moor-fields to the spot you now stand upon. I give you this hint, that your friend may not be surprised; you will explain the unhappy situation of the poor girl to him. An excellent thought! it will keep her at a distance from him.

Aside.

Cha. Harry, my uncle informs me, [*Winking at him.*] that his fair ward, the young lady I mentioned to you, has lately had a touch.

Har. A touch! I am heartily sorry for it; how came the unlucky accident? I hope no faithless one-eyed lover in the case.

Sir G. Zounds! no, no, no! why, nephew, you described the girl's disorder abominably—she lately had a touch here, here, Sir.

[*Points to his forehead.*

Har. Oh, is that all? I hope, Sir, with a little attention, she will be soon restored.

Cha. I am very sorry to hear this account of my dear little Kitty; let us visit her; where is she, uncle?

Sir G. Dear little Kitty! oh, ho! but I'll have all my senses about me. [*Aside.*] In her own chamber, I suppose: but follow me, and you shall see her; she's quite another thing to what she was two years ago, when you saw her—but come, gentlemen, dinner will be shortly on the table, and I long to have a bumper with you. [*Exit.*

Har. So, Charles! this is the fair lady you brought me down to run away with?

Cha. Even so.

Har. Why, what the devil would the world say of me for being such a scoundrel?

Cha. Marry the lady, Harry, and when you have fifty thousand pounds in your pocket, the world will be very glad to shake hands and be friends with you.

Har. I would as soon marry Hecate——

Cha. As my aunt; very polite, truly! but keep her out of my way, and you may do with her as you please. This girl, who my uncle says is mad, I believe I shall be able to restore in a short time; and it will go hard with me, if you will assist in the project, but I will put her into a post-chaise, and set out for London this very night.

Har. Command me, dear Charles, in any thing that can be of service to you. Have you instructed William! He's a trusty, shrewd fellow.

Cha. He has got his lesson; he will soon get into Diggery's good graces, if he can only give him a speech out of a play; however, I hope William will be able to manage him—oh, here is Diggery.

Enter DIGGERY, *with a napkin in his hand.*

Diggery, my honest fellow, I am glad to see you; why you are grown out of knowledge: it is some years since I was first favoured with your acquaintance, Diggery.

Dig. So it is your honour; let me see, [*Considers.*] you was first favoured with my acquaintance four years come next Lammas: but I knew nothing then; I was quite a thing, your honour.

Cha. You have improved, Diggery, since that time, I see, considerably.

Dig. How do you see that, your honour?

Cha. Why, your face shows it; there are the lines of good sense, wit, and humour, in every feature: not that insipid face you used to have, no more expression in it than a toasted muffin.

Dig. I got all, your honour, by larning to

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read; you'll see me, when I play, look in a way that will frighten the whole family—no muffin faces; all mispression, your honour.

[HARRY *hums a tune out of the Beggar's Opera and acts.*] [*Looks at him.*

Master Charles, who is that gentleman? he's acting, isn't he? has he a muffin face?

Cha. No, no, Diggery, don't disturb him; he is one of the first actors of the age, and has a face that would frighten the devil when he pleases; he'll put us all to rights; I brought him down for the purpose.

Dig. Suppose your honour desires him to kill himself for a minute or two before dinner. I have tried a thousand times, and never could kill myself to my own satisfaction in all my life—I'll lend him my key. [*Bell rings.*] Coming,—oh, Master Charles, I was desired to bid you and the gentleman come to dinner, but I quite forgot it; run as hard as you can.

Cha. Come, Harry, the family waits dinner. [*Exeunt singing.*

Dig. The family waits dinner. [*Imitates him.*] I can't do it like him—lord! how he'll do Captain Macheath in the play! I'm glad he is not to be hanged. [*Sings.*

Let us take the road—Hark!
I hear the sound of coaches, [Bell rings.
The hour of attack approaches.

[Bell rings till DIGGERY is off.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Dining Parlour.

SIR GILBERT, MISS BRIDGET, MISS KITTY, CHARLES, *and* HARRY, *at dinner,* DIGGERY *attending at the side-board.*

Sir G. I hope, gentlemen, you like your dinner. As to my wine, there is not better in the country, I'll lay a hogshead of claret.

Har. Your entertainment is so good, Sir Gilbert, that I shall beg leave to prolong my visit. What shall we do Charles, when we reach London, that cursed seat of noise and bustle?

Cha. Endeavour to reconcile ourselves to it; a soldier must not always expect good quarters. Pray, Miss Kitty, how does your fair friend, Miss Sally Cockle?

Kit. Oh, she has been married a long time, and was lately brought to bed of two thumping boys.

Miss B. Child, you must not tell that.

Kit. What, mustn't I tell the truth? why then I do say, she was brought to bed of two boys not six months ago; but she will be at our play to-night.

Sir G. I told you how it was; but she's not mischievous. [*Aside to* CHARLES.

Cha. She has not the appearance of it—

Sir G. Come, my young soldiers, let us have a bumper to his majesty; what say you, my boys?

Har. A hundred, Sir Gilbert; and I say done first.

Sir G. Why, that's rather too many; but while I can stand or sit, have at you. Come, Diggery, let us have three bumpers in a minute here. Diggery! what is the fellow about there?

[DIGGERY *is kneeling at the foot of the side-board, and as if lamenting the death of Statira; they all rise and look at him.*

Sir G. I say, Diggery—

[DIGGERY *turns his head about, but continues kneeling.*

Dig. Sir.

Sir G. What are you about? acting again I suppose?

Dig. Lord, Sir, I was only striving to cry over Statira. [*Rises.*

Sir G. To cry over Statira! and what have you to do with Statira? let Statira go to the devil; and give us three bumpers to his majesty, and then you may go and follow Statira if you will.

Dig. Yes, Sir. [*Brings the wine.*

Sir G. Come, boys, here is his majesty's health, and a long, glorious, and happy reign to him.

Kit. Indeed, guardie, you frighten poor Diggery so, that he forgets his part almost as soon as he gets it.

Sir G. Kitty Sprightly, hold your tongue, I bid you. I have surely a right to correct my own servants; but rest satisfied, for after this night, if ever I hear the name of that sheep-stealing scoundrel, Willy, as you call him, I will—there now, that fellow's at the devil's trade again. [DIGGERY *is fencing with a large knife.*] Call Cymon here, thou imp of the devil; we shall be able to do something with him—oh lord, oh lord!—

Dig. Cymon—Cymon— [*The last very loud.*

Enter CYMON.

Cy. Here.

Sir G. Cymon, do thou attend table; that fellow is among the incurables.

Cha. After we have performed this play to-night, I fancy, Sir, the family will have quite enough of it.

Miss B. Then I wish it was over with all my heart.

Cha. Miss Kitty, will you drink a glass of wine with me? shall I have the honour to touch your glass?

Kit. If you please, Sir.

Har. Suppose, Miss Pumkin, we make it a quartetto.

Sir G. A quartetto! why not a quintetto? Cymon, five glasses of wine; be quick—I suppose you are not engaged with Statira.

Cy. Yes—no your honour.

[*Gives five glasses of wine.*

Sir G. We could not get any fish for you, although we sent far and near for some.

Cha. Give me good roast beef, uncle, the properest diet for a Briton and a soldier.

[CYMON *fills a glass;* DIGGERY *takes it up, and gives it to him; he appears to instruct* CYMON *what to do with it;* CYMON *drinks it, throws the glass over his head, and sings.*

Cy. *And my comrades shall see that I die.*

[DIGGERY and CYMON run off. All rise.

Sir G. I wish with all my heart, the devil had the whole pack.—Was ever man so plagued?

Har. Dear Sir Gilbert, do not be uneasy; they will be all tired of playing before to-morrow night, or I am very much mistaken.

Kit. Now, guardie, for my part, I think the best way will be, to let them have their belly full of playing.

Miss B. For shame, Kitty; you must not say belly full before company, that's naughty.

Kit. Well, I do say, that if guardie would only let us play as much as we please, it is very probable we should as soon be tired of it as he is.

Har. 'Egad, Mrs. Kitty, an excellent thought.

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[*Aside to* CHARLES.] Suppose, Sir Gilbert, we adopt it.

Cha. Do, uncle; my friend and I will engage in one week to make them hate the sight of a theatre.

Sir G. Do you say so! if I thought that could be done—

Miss B. Indeed, indeed, brother, it will make them all as mad as March hares—

Har. Believe me, Madam, it will not; I know a gentleman, who every night of his life was at one or other of the play-houses, until he purchased a share in each of them, and afterwards he no more troubled himself about the theatre, than you do about learning to ride in the great saddle.

Miss B. No!—Well, that's amazing.

Sir G. Well, well, I leave the management of this matter to you both; do with them as you please. If we can provide a remedy for this disorder, let us spare no pains to find it out. Sister, show your nephew and his friend the garden, and do you, Kitty, go too. You will find me in my study.—Take care of that poor girl, Charles; she is very sensible at some moments. [*Exit.*

Cha. Fear not my government.

Kit. That's what the black man says in the play. This is to my own taste exactly.

Cha. Oh, my Statira, thou relentless fair!
Turn thine eyes on me—I would talk to them.

Kit. Not the soft breezes of the genial spring,
The fragrant violet, or opening rose,
Are half so sweet as Alexander's breath.
Then he will talk—good gods! how he will talk!

[*He leads her out, looking at each other languishingly.*

SCENE II.—The Garden.

Enter MISS BRIDGET *and* HARRY.

Har. These improvements, Madam, are the very extreme of elegance. I take for granted, they were laid out agreeably to your design.

Miss B. Partly, Sir. My brother wanted to have the garden crammed full of naked figures, in a most indecent way, but I said not; and if you observe, they are clothed from head to foot; you can't see the ancle of one of them.

Har. There, Madam, you blended decency with elegance, which is little attended to in these days. Besides the artist has the same opportunity to show his skill on the drapery of a lady's petticoat, as in finishing a Venus de Medicis.

Miss B. And so I told my brother. Says I, the Venus de Med-med—but wont you please to sit down, Sir? you have walked a great deal; I am afraid you are fatigued—sit down, Sir, and dispose yourself. [*He brings two garden chairs to the front of the stage; they look at each other languishingly.*] And are you certain, Sir, that this kind of play-business will not be attended with any bad consequences to the family?

Har. Indeed, I think not, Madam. A play, certainly, is one of the most rational amusements we have. The Greek and Roman stages contributed very much to civilize those nations, and in a great measure rescued them from their original barbarity.

Miss B. So I told my brother—says I, the Greeks, the Romans, the Irish, and a great number of other barbarous nations had plays.

Har. True, Madam.

Miss B. But he said they were all Jacobites.

Har. The justice of that remark, I confess, strikes me—but, Madam, you, you, you—damme, if I know what to say to this old fool—where is Charles? [*Aside.*

Miss B. I have touched him with my observations. What a delicate insensibility he discovers. [*Aside.*] I find, Sir, from your conversation, you have read a monstrous deal. You have taken a degree, I suppose, Sir, at our principal adversity?

Har. There's no standing this. [*Aside.*] Oh, yes, Madam; and it cost me many an uneasy moment before I could obtain it: the only thing that made my time pass away even tolerably, was, that during my probation, I sometimes had the honour of a visit from the muses.

Miss B. Pray, Sir, is that the family which lives at Oxford?

Har. No faith, Madam, they very seldom even sojourn there; they are a very whimsical family; and although of the highest extraction, very often condescend to visit a cottage instead of a palace.

Miss B. I shall be very glad to see them at Strawberry-Hall, or any of yours, Sir.

Har. Dear Madam, your goodness overwhelms me. I'll try this old Tabby with a love scene: she grows amorous. [*Aside.*] I cannot but think, Madam, of the unaccountable vanity of the parson, whom Sir Gilbert so humorously described to-day. From the enterprising genius of this spiritual gentleman, and from his wanting an eye, one may, with great propriety, I think, give him the name of the canonical Hannibal.

Miss B. Ha, ha! a very good summily indeed, Sir: he was indeed quite a Canibal, and so I told my brother: but don't mention his name, Sir, it affects me like the hydrophica.

Har. His presumption, Madam, deserved death. Monstrous! to think of obtaining such a hand as this, [*Kisses it.*] without the requisites even to gaze upon it—Oh! it's intolerable. [*She rises and he kneels.*

Miss B. Dear, Sir! Lord, Sir! with what a warmth he kisses my hand. Oh! he's a dear deluder. [*Aside.*] Sir, captain, what do you call 'um, if we are seen, I am undone.

Har. Be under no apprehensions, my angel. [*Kisses her hand again.*

Miss B. My angel! there's a word for you.—I shall certainly give way in a few moments. [*Aside.*

Enter DIGGERY, *peeping at the side-scene.*

Dig. What are these two cajoling about? acting, I suppose. I'll try if I can't act the same way.

Har. Ah, Miss Pumkin, Miss Pumkin!

[*Kneels; takes out his handkerchief, and weeps.*

Dig. Ah, Miss Pumkin, Miss Pumkin!

[*Kneels by the side-scene, and pulls the napkin out of his pocket; part of which must be seen when he enters.*

Enter SIR GILBERT.

Sir G. Where are you, sister? zounds! what's the matter now? what are you acting? have you got the touch?

Har. Humour the thought, Madam. [*Aside.*

Sir G. If Diggery had not been one of

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dramatis personæ, I should have imagined, sister Bridget, that a red coat and a handsome young fellow were things not very disagreeable to you.

Dig. Yes, Sir; I'm here; I'm always your honour's personæ.

Sir G. Get out of my sight this moment, thou— [*Exit* DIGGERY.

Miss B. Indeed, brother, I do not think, that acting is so foolish a thing as I thought for.—The captain here has repeated so many pretty speeches, that I could listen to them for an hour longer. However, I will go and prepare tea for you—good bye. [*Exit.*

Har. Miss Bridget has very kindly undertaken, Sir, to perform the part of Mrs. Peachum, in this evening's entertainment; and as she takes the part at a short notice, we must indulge her with the book. I shall make a proper apology to the audience upon that occasion, before the opera begins.

Sir G. Mrs. Peachum! what, has my sister undertaken to play Mother Peachum?

Har. Most kindly, Sir.

Sir G. She has! then I shall not be surprised, if I see my she goat and all her family dancing the hays to-morrow morning—in short, after that, I shall not be surprised at any thing. But, tell me, my dear Stukely, tell me truly, do you think that you will be able to give them enough of it? do you think our plan will succeed?

Har. I'll be bound for it, Sir. If there are any more plays acted in your house after this, I will consent to lose my head.

Sir G. Then give them as much of it to-night as you can—do not spare them, Stukely. But, come, let us go in to tea. Diggery is hard at work, fixing the scenes in the hall, and the whole neighbourhood will be here by and by. Come along. [*Exeunt, talking.*

SCENE III.—A Room in the House.

Enter KITTY, *singing.*

Kit. This Charles, notwithstanding my singing, now and then makes me melancholy. He is so lively, and so tragic, and so comic, and so humoursome, and so every thing like myself, that I am much happier with him than any body else. Heigh-ho! what makes me sigh so, when I choose singing?—"tol, lol, lol, la."—But here he is.

Enter CHARLES.

Cha. Come to my arms, thou loveliest of thy sex.

Kit. Keep off, Charles; I bid you; you must not lay hold of me in such a monstrous way; that's just like Cymon.

Cha. What do I hear? death to my hopes, Cymon! does Cymon lay hold of my dear Kitty?

Kit. To be sure. When I have no other person to rehearse with, I do take Cymon; and he does not perform badly, when I instruct him.

Cha. But don't you think you had better take me? don't you imagine my performance would please you better than his?

Kit. How can I tell, until I try you both. If you will give me a specimen, I'll soon tell you—try now.

Cha. What the devil shall I say? I do not immediately recollect a line of a play. No matter, the first thing that comes into my head. [*Aside.*]—Come then, Kitty, you must play with me. Now mind—hear me, thou fairest of the fair—hear me, dear goddess, hear—

Kit. Stop, stop; I do not know where that is.

Cha. Nor I, upon my soul. [*Aside.*]—What, do not you recollect where that is?

Kit. No. Can you repeat a speech out of Romeo, Crooked-back Richard, the Conscious Lovers, Scrub, the Journey to London, the Clandestine Marriage, the School for Wives—

Cha. Stop, stop; yes, yes, Kitty, I have the Journey to London, the Clandestine Marriage, and the School for Wives, strong at this moment in my recollection. I think I can do—

Kit. What then, you only think, you're not certain? Lord, lord! I do not belive you can do any thing—why, Cymon could say them all without missing a word. I only desired him, after supper, a few nights ago, to go into the barn, and get by heart the speech where the Blackamore smothers his wife, and I had not been in bed ten minutes, when he came into the room, and repeated every word of it.

Cha. The devil he did!

Kit. Ay, and more than that.

Cha. What more, in the devil's name?

Kit. Why to be sure, he was as black as old Harry, that's certain. He had blacked all his face with soot and goose dripping; and he did look so charmingly frightful! but then he did play so well—he laid down the candle, and came up to the bed-side, and said—"one kiss and then."

Cha. What then?

Kit. Why then "put out the light." Why Charles, you know no more how to act this scene than Tippet.

Cha. And pray, my dear Kitty, what does Sir Gilbert say to all this?

Kit. Why, he'd never have known a word of it, if it was not that it discovered itself.

Cha. How came that? you tell me it was but a few nights ago, and I do not think it could discover itself so soon.

Kit. Why, you must know, that when Cymon kissed me in bed, he blacked my left cheek so abominably, that when I came down to breakfast in the morning, the family were all frightened out of their wits. Mrs. Bridget bid me go to the glass; and when I looked at myself—lord, lord, how I did laugh! I told them the whole story. And, do you know, that I am locked into my room every night since.

Cha. So much the better. This is simplicity without vice. [*Aside.*]—Well, Kitty, you shall see this evening, how I'll play Captain Macheath. I am quite perfect in the captain.

Kit. And I have Polly, every morsel of her.—Lord, how all the country folks will stare! Miss Fanny Blubber, the rich farmer's daughter, in the next village, is to play Lucy; she will do it charmingly.

Cha. Really! was ever any thing so lucky?

Kit. Are you sure now, that you will not be out?

Cha. You shall see now—come, lean on my shoulder—look fond—quite languishing—that will do—what do you say now? have you forgot?

Kit. That I haven't—"and are you as fond as ever, my dear?"

Cha. Suspect my honour, my courage, suspect any thing but my love. May my pistols want charging, and my mare slip her shoes—no, I'm wrong—zounds!—oh! I have it—"may my pistols miss fire, and my mare slip

her shoulder while I am pursued, if ever I forsake thee!"

Kit. Oh, thou charming, charming, creature! [*Kisses him.*

Cha. Damme, but this girl has given me the touch, I believe. She has set me all in a flame. [*Aside.*]—But tell me Kitty, have you thought upon what I said to you in the garden?

Kit. 'Egad I have; but I don't know what's the matter with me; something comes across me, and frightens all my inclination away.

Cha. Be resolute, my dear Kitty, and take to your arms the man who can only live when he is in your presence. Heavens! is it possible, that such a girl as you—a creature formed——

Kit. Lord! am I a creature?

Cha. Ay, and a lovely creature; formed for the delight of our sex, and the envy of yours. To be caged up in such a damned old barn as this! seeing no company but Cymon, Wat, Diggery Ducklin, and such cannibals.

Kit. Oh, monstrous!

Cha. It's more than monstrous; it's shocking.

Kit. Is it, indeed?

Cha. To be sure.

Kit. Then I will do as you bid me from this moment.

Cha. Come to my arms, and let me hold thee to my heart for ever. [*Embraces her.*] "If I were now to die, 'twere now to be most happy; for I fear my soul hath her content so absolute, that not another comfort like this, succeeds in unknown fate."

Enter SIR GILBERT.

Sir G. Hollo! what the devil, are you two at it already? why, Charles, are you not afraid she will bite you?

Cha. Not in the least, Sir. If I don't make her out of humour with this kind of mumming, before she is twenty-four hours older, I will forfeit my commission.

Sir G. If you do, I promise you a better.—What noise is that?

[*A board is heard sawing without.*

Kit. It is only Diggery sawing a trap-hole in the floor of the hall. You know we can't play tragedy without it.

Sir G. Death and hell! we shall have the house about our ears presently—mercy on us!—Diggery, thou imp of the devil, give over.—Charles, do you stop him. [*Exit* CHARLES.] Who could have thought of such an infernal scheme?

Re-enter CHARLES.

Oh, Charles, Charles! cure the family of this madness, and I will make your fortune for you.

Cha. He had only begun his work, there can be no mischief done, Sir.

Sir G. Thank you, thank you, Charles. As for you, Miss Kitty, do you come with me; the folks will be all here presently.

[SIR GILBERT *puts her arm under his; she seizes* CHARLES'S *hand, and imitates the scene in the Beggar's Opera, where* PEACHUM *drags his daughter from* MACHEATH.

Kit. "Do not tear him from me." Isn't that right, Charles?

Cha. Astonishing!

Sir G. What the devil's the matter now?

Kit. [*Sings.*] Oh, oh, ray! oh, Ambora! oh, oh! [*Exeunt* SIR GILBERT *and* KITTY.

Cha. Well, certainly there does not exist such an unaccountable family as this. As to the girl, she is a composition of shrewdness and simplicity; and, if properly treated, would make an excellent wife. She has thirty thousand pounds to her fortune, and every shilling at her own disposal. What an old curmudgeon is my uncle, who might provide for his nephew, without putting a shilling out of his own pocket, by bestowing this girl upon him; and never once to hint at such a union—no matter—I'll take this little charming girl to my arms, and make a *coup de main* of it.—"Then, farewell the neighing steed, and the shrill trump; the spirit-stirring drum, the ear-piercing fife, the royal banner, and all quality, pride, pomp, and circumstance, of glorious war!"

Enter HARRY.

Har. Bravo, bravo, Charles! the touch, I fancy, has gone round the whole family.

Cha. 'Egad, I believe so too, Harry. I have got it, you find.

Har. I have been looking for you this half hour. Such a scene as I have had with old mouser.

Cha. Ay, but such a scene as I have had with the kitten! 'egad, Harry! I have her in spite of all her tricks—but who do you think popped upon us at the critical moment?

Har. Critical moment!

Cha. Just as I had the lovely girl in my arms, repeating to her the first speech that came into my head, in popped old Jowler, my uncle.

Har. Why he caught me much in the same situation in the garden; I was kneeling, kissing Miss Bridget Pumkin's old withered fist, and swearing by all the goddesses, their friends and relations, when plump he came upon us; no mischief ensued; for he thought I was giving her a specimen of my abilities in acting. She humoured the idea as completely as if she had but just come from a London boarding-school; and the good old knight desired me to surfeit her, to give her a little more of it.

Cha. "This night makes me, or undoes me quite."

Har. Good again, Charles—damme, but I think you would make a tolerable actor in good earnest.

Cha. I think I should; and you will shortly have a specimen of my abilities, in the character of a good husband.

Enter WILLIAM, *with a letter.*

Will. I received this letter, Sir, from an hostler, who belongs to an inn in the next village; he waits for an answer, Sir.

Cha. What can this mean? I know no person hereabouts, except my uncle's family; let us see. [*Reads.*

I this moment heard you was in the country, upon a visit to your uncle's; and as I propose staying here to-night, (being heartily fatigued with my journey,) will be much obliged if you will favour me with your company to supper; I am alone, but if the family cannot spare you, I must insist you will use no ceremony with your old and sincere friend,

JOE TACKUM.

Angels catch the sounds!

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Har. With all my heart—but what's the matter?

Cha. Who do you think is by accident arrived at the next village?

Har. Who, who?—you put me in a fever.

Cha. Joe Tackum, my old fellow collegian, who took orders not a month ago, and who, I suppose, is now going to his father's—fly, William; get me pen, ink, and paper: he must not stir from the place he now is at, to get a bishopric. [*Exeunt* CHA. *and* WILL.

SCENE IV.—The Hall, with seats to see the Play.

SIR GILBERT, DIGGERY, *&c. bustling to receive company.*

Sir G. Welcome, my good friends; welcome, ladies and gentlemen. Diggery, don't be mumbling your nonsense, but seat the company—you are all most heartily welcome. The actors will be here shortly. Diggery, where's my nephew, and his friend? where's Kitty too?

Dig. She is just stepped out with Charles.

Sir G. Ay, ay, to rehearse their parts together, so much the better. Now, neighbours, you shall see the Beggar's Opera in taste.

Dig. Here they are, here they are.

Enter CHARLES, KITTY, *and* HARRY.

Har. Are you sure none of the family know you are married?

Cha. Not a soul; but they shall all know it now—[CHARLES *and* KITTY *go up to* SIR GILBERT, *and kneel.*] Sir, this young lady, who is now my wife, joins with me in requesting your blessing and forgiveness.

Dig. No, no, no: you are all wrong; you are to confess the marriage at the end of the third act—we begin at the wrong end.

[CHARLES *and* KITTY *rise.*

Enter MISS BRIDGET, *in a rage.*

Miss B. Brother, brother, we are all undone—oh, Kitty! you are a sad slut—the wench is married, brother!

Dig. Why, Mrs. Bridget, you are wrong too; you are to say that by and by.

Sir G. You came in too soon, sister Bridget; you have forgot.

Miss B. I tell you, brother, the wench is married; are you stupid?

Sir G. I tell you again, sister Bridget, you are too soon; that rage will do well enough presently—Diggery shall tell you when to come. This foolish woman spoils all. I have seen the Beggar's Opera a thousand times.

Miss B. Was ever any thing to equal this? I'll raise the neighbourhood! murder! robbery! ravishment!—bless me, how my head turns round——

[*They all arise and assist* MISS BRIDGET, *who faints.*

Dig. I never saw any thing better acted in all my life.

Sir G. Very well, sister, indeed! bounce away—I did not think it was in you. Very well, indeed! ha, ha, ha!

[BRIDGET *shows great agitation.*

Dig. It's very fine, indeed! I wish I may do my part half as well.

Miss B. I shall go mad! you crazy fool you, hold your tongue, or I will—[*Runs at* DIGGERY.] As for you, brother——

Sir G. No, no; now you are out.

Dig. You should not meddle with me.

Miss B. I tell you, dolt, fool, that your niece there, that impudent baggage, is married to that more impudent fellow, your nephew.

Sir G. It can't be; it's all a lie. Parson Dosey would not have done such a thing for his other eye, and there's no other in the neighbourhood.

Har. It was not Parson Dosey that did the kind office, but honest Joe Tackum.

Sir G. And pray, who the devil is honest Joe Tackum?

Cha. A friend of mine, Sir, whom I detained for the purpose.

Kit. Dear guardie, forgive me for this time, and I'll never do it again. [*Kneeling.*

Miss B. Did you ever hear any thing so profligate and destitute? oh, you'll turn out finely, miss!—to deceive us all—what, guilty of such an abomination, in so short a time, and at your age!

Kit. Pray, Madam, excuse me; is it not quite as bad to do it in so short a time, and at your age?

Miss B. What do you mean, you impertinent slut?

Sir G. Ay, what do you mean, Miss Hot-upon't?

Kit. Ask this gentleman, pray.

Sir G. Why, what the devil, sister!

[*Looks ashamed.*

Har. Since I am subpœnaed into court, I must speak the truth. That lady, in so short a time, and at her age, offered her hand for the same trip to matrimony; but I was not in a humour for travelling.

Miss B. You are all a parcel of knaves, fools, and impertinent hussies—I'll never see your faces again. [*Exit.*

Sir G. Well, as my sister, who ought to be wiser, would have done the same, I will forgive the less offence. [*Kisses her.*] Make her a good husband, Charles: and permit me to recommend one thing to you; let her never read a play, or go within the doors of a theatre, if you do, I would not underwrite her.

Cha. My life upon her faith. I am afraid, Sir, you judge severely of the drama: it is the business of the stage, to reflect the manners of the world; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure.

We point just satire to corect the age,
And give to truth a beauty from the stage.

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ALEXANDER THE GREAT,

OR,

THE RIVAL QUEENS:

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY NATHANIEL LEE.

REMARKS.

A GREAT and glorious flight of a bold, but frenzied imagination; having as much absurdity as sublimity, and as much extravagance as passion——The Poet, the genius, and the scholar, are every where visible. This Play acts well, and is still frequently performed.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	COVENT-GARDEN.
ALEXANDER THE GREAT,	*Mr. Clinch.*
HEPHESTION, Alexander's favourite,	*Mr. Wroughton.*
LYSIMACHUS, prince of the blood,	*Mr. Hull.*
CASSANDER, (Conspirators.)	*Mr. Fearon.*
POLYPERCHON, (Conspirators.)	*Mr. Booth.*
PHILIP, (Conspirators.)	
CLYTUS, Master of the horse,	*Mr. Clarke.*
THESSALUS, the Median.	*Mr. Thompson.*
PERDICCAS, a Commander,	*Mr. Whitfield.*
EUMENES,	*Mr. Fox.*
ARISTANDER, a Soothsayer,	*Mr. L'Estrange.*
SLAVE.	
ROXANA, first Wife of Alexander,	*Mrs. Hunter.*
SYSIGAMBIS, Mother of the Royal Family,	*Mrs. Booth.*
PARISATIS, in love with Lysimachus,	*Miss Dayes.*
STATIRA, married to Alexander,	*Mrs. Hartley.*

SCENE.—Babylon.

PROLOGUE.

WRITTEN BY SIR CAR SCROOP, BART.

How hard the fate is of the scribbling drudge
Who writes to all when yet so few can judge!
Wit, like religion, once divine was thought,
And the dull crowd believed as they were taught;
Now each fanatic fool presumes t' explain
The text, and does the sacred writ profane;
For while your wits each other's fall pursue,
The fops usurp the power belongs to you.
Ye think y'are challeng'd in each new playbill,
And here you come for trial of your skill,
Where, fencer-like, you one another hurt,
While with your wounds you make the rabble sport.
Others there are that have the brutal will
To murder a poor play, but want the skill;
They love to fight, but seldom have the wit
To spy the place where they may thrust and hit;
And therefore, like some bully of the town,
Ne'er stand to draw, but knock the poet down.
With these, like hogs in gardens, it succeeds,
They root up all, and know not flowers from weeds.
As for you, sparks, that hither come each day
To act your own and not to mind our play,
Rehearse your usual follies to the pit,
And with loud nonsense, crown the stage's wit;
Talk of your clothes, your last debauches [tell,
And witty bargains to each other sell;
Glout on the silly she who for your sake
Can vanity and noise for love mistake,
Till the coquet, sung in the next lampoon,
Is by her jealous friends sent out of town;

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For in this duelling, intriguing age,
The love you make is like the war you wage,
Y' are still prevented ere you come t' engage:
But it is not such trifling foes as you
The mighty Alexander deigns to sue;
Ye Persians of the pit he does despise,
But to the men of sense for aid he flies;
On their experienced arms he now depends,
Nor fears he odds if they but prove his friends;
For as he once a little handful chose
The numerous armies of the world t' oppose:
So back'd by you who understand the rules,
He hopes to rout the mighty host of fools.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—The Gardens of Semiramis.

Enter HEPHESTION *and* LYSIMACHUS *fighting*, CLYTUS *parting them.*

Clyt. What! are ye madmen? This a time for quarrel?
Put up, I say—or by the gods that form'd me
He who refuses makes a foe of Clytus.
Lys. I have his sword.
Clyt. But must not have his life.
Lys. Must not, old Clytus!
Clyt. Hair-brain'd boy you must not.
Heph. Lend me thy sword, thou father of the war,
Thou far-famed guard of Alexander's life,
Curse on this weak, unexecuting arm!
Lend it, old Clytus, to redeem my fame;
Lysimachus is brave, and else will scorn me.
Lys. There, take thy sword; and since thou'rt bent on death,
Know 'tis thy glory that thou diest by me.
Clyt. Stay thee, Lysimachus; Hephestion, hold;
I bar you both. My body interposed,
Now let me see which of you dares to strike.
By Jove you 'ave stirr'd the old man!—that rash arm
That first advances moves against the gods
And our great king, whose deputy I stand.
Lys. Some properer time must terminate our quarrel.
Heph. And cure the bleeding wounds my honour bears.
Clyt. Some properer time! 'tis false—no hour is proper;
No time should see a brave man do amiss.—
Say what's the noble cause of all this madness,
What vast ambition blows the dangerous fire?
Why, a vain, smiling, whining, cozening woman!
By all my triumphs in the heat of youth,
When towns were sack'd and beauties prostrate lay,
When my blood boil'd, and nature work'd me high,
Clytus ne'er bow'd his body to such shame;
I knew 'em, and despised their cob-web arts—
The whole sex is not worth a soldier's thought.
Lys. Our cause of quarrel may to thee seem light,
But know a less hath set the world in arms.
Clyt. Yes, Troy, they tell us, by a woman fell;
Curse on the sex, they are the bane of virtue!
Death! I'd rather this right arm were lost,
Than that the king should hear of your imprudence—
What, on a day thus set apart for triumph!
Lys. We were indeed to blame.
Clyt. This memorable day,
When our hot master, whose impatient soul
Outrides the sun, and sighs for other worlds
To spread his conquests and diffuse his glory,
Now bids the trumpet for a while be silent,
And plays with monarchs whom he used to drive;
Shall we by broils awake him into rage,
And rouse the lion that hath ceased to roar?
Lys. Clytus, thou'rt right——put up thy sword, Hephestion:
Had passion not eclipsed the light of reason
Untold we might this consequence have seen.
Heph. Why has not reason power to conquer love?
Why are we thus enslav'd?
Clyt. Because unmann'd,
Because ye follow Alexander's steps.
Heavens! that a face should thus bewitch his soul
And ruin all that's great and godlike is it!
Talk be my bane—yet the old man must talk.
Not so he loved when he at Issus fought,
And join'd in mighty combat with Darius,
Whom from his chariot, flaming all with gems,
He hurl'd to earth and catch'd th' imperial crown.
'Twas not the shaft of love perform'd that feat;
He knew no Cupids then. Now mark the change;
A brace of rival queens embroil the court,
And while each hand is thus employ'd in beauty
Where has he room for glory?
Heph. In his heart.
Clyt. Well said, young Minion! I indeed forgot
To whom I spoke—But Sysigambis comes:
Now is your time, for with her comes an idol
That claims homage.—I'll attend the king.
[*Exit.*

Enter SYSIGAMBIS *with a letter, and* PARISATIS.

Sys. Why will ye wound me with your fond complaints,
And urge a suit that I can never grant?
You know my child, 'tis Alexander's will;
Here he demands you for his loved Hephestion;
To disobey him might inflame his wrath,
And plunge our house in ruins yet unknown.
Par. To soothe this god and charm him into temper
Is there no victim, none but Parisatis?
Must I be doom'd to wretchedness and wo
That others may enjoy the conqueror's smiles?
Oh! if you ever loved my royal father——
And sure you did, your gushing tears proclaim it—
If still his name be dear, have pity on me!
He would not thus have forced me to despair;
Indeed he would not—Had I begg'd him thus
He would have heard me ere my heart was broke.
Sys. When will my sufferings end? oh when ye gods!
For sixty rolling years my soul has stood
The dread vicissitudes of fate unmoved;
I thought 'em your decrees, and therefore yielded:
But this last trial, as it springs from folly,
Exceeds my sufferance, and I must complain.
Lys. When Sysigambis mourns, no common wo
Can be the cause—'tis misery indeed.

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Yet pardon, mighty queen, a wretched prince,
Who thus presumes to plead the cause of love,
Beyond my life, beyond the world, [*Kneeling.*] I prize
Fair Parisatis.—Hear me, I conjure you!
As you have authorized Hephestion's vows
Reject not mine—grant me but equal leave
To serve the princess, and let love decide.

Heph. A blessing like the beauteous Parisatis [empire,
Whole years of service, and the world's wide
With all the blood that circles in our veins,
Can never merit, therefore, in my favour,
I begg'd the king to interpose his interest,
Therefore I begg'd your majesty's assistance;
Your word is past, and all my hopes rest on't.

Lys. [*Rising.*] Perish such hopes! for love's a generous passion,
Which seeks the happiness of her we love
Beyond th' enjoyment of our own desires;
Nor king's nor parents here have ought to do:
Love owns no influence, and disdains control;
Let 'em stand neuter—it is all I ask.

Heph. Such arrogance, did Alexander woo,
Would lose him all the conquests he has won.

Lys. To talk of conquests well becomes the man
Whose life and sword are but his rival's gift!

Sys. It grieves me, brave Lysimachus, to find [you:
My power fall short of my desires to serve
You know Hephestion first declared his love,
And 'tis as true I promised him my aid;
Your glorious king, his mighty advocate,
Became himself an humble suppliant for him.
Forget her, prince, and triumph o'er your passion,
A conquest worthy of a soul like thine.

Lys. Forget her, Madam! sooner shall the sun
Forget to shine and tumble from his sphere.
Alas! the stream that circles through my heart
Is less than love essential to my being! [mands
Farewell, great queen—my honour now de-
That Alexander should himself explain
That wond'rous merit which exalts his favourite,
And casts Lysimachus at such a distance.
[*Exit.*

Sys. In this wild transport of ungovern'd passion
Too far I fear he will incense the king.
Is Alexander yet, my lord, arrived?

Heph. Madam, I know not; but Cassander comes;
He may perhaps informs us.

Sys. I would shun him: [shocks me,
Something there is, I know not why, that
Something my nature shrinks at when I see him.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter CASSANDER.

Cas. The face of day now blushes scarlet deep,
Now blackens into night; the lowering sun,
As if the dreadful business he foreknew,
Drives heavily his sable chariot on. [*Thunder.*
How fierce it lightens! how it thunders round me!
All nature seems alarm'd for Alexander.
Why, be it so: her pangs proclaim my triumph.
My soul's first wishes are to startle fate
And strike amazement through the host of heaven.
A mad Chaldean, with a flaming torch, [me,
Came to my bed last night, and bellowing o'er
"Well had it been," he cried, "for Babylon.
"If curs'd Cassander never had been born."

Enter THESSALUS *with a Packet.*

How now? dear Thessalus! what packet's that?

Thes. From Macedon; a trusty slave just brought it.
Your father chides us for our cold delay;
He says Craterus, by the king's appointment,
Comes in his room to govern Macedon,
Which nothing but the tyrant's death can
Therefore he bids us boldly strike, [hinder;
Or quit our purpose, and confess our fears.

Cas. Is not his fate resolved? this night he dies,
And thus my father but forestalls my purpose.
How am I slow then? If I rode on thunder,
Wing'd as the lightning, it would ask some moments
Ere I could blast the growth of this Colossus.

Thes. Mark where the haughty Polyperchon comes!
Some new affront by Alexander given
Swells in his heart, and stings him into madness.

Cas. Now, now's our time; he must, he shall be ours:
His haughty soul will kindle at his wrongs,
Blaze into rage, and glory in revenge.

Enter POLYPERCHON.

Poly. Still as I pass fresh murmurs fill my ears; [plaints.
All talk of wrongs, and mutter their com-
Poor soulless reptiles!—their revenge expires
In idle threats—the fortitude of cowards!
Their province is to talk, 'tis mine to act,
And show this tyrant when he dared to wrong me, [geance.
He wrong'd a man whose attribute is ven-

Cas. All nations bow their heads with servile homage,
And kiss the feet of this exalted man.
The name, the shout, the blast, from every
Is Alexander! Alexander stuns [mouth
The listening ear, and drowns the voice of Heaven! [spaniels;
The earth's commanders fawn like crouching
And if this hunter of the barbarous world
But wind himself a god, all echo him
With universal cry.

Poly. I fawn or echo him!
Cassander, no; my soul disdains the thought!
Let eastern slaves or prostituted Greeks
Crouch at his feet, or tremble if he frown;
When Polyperchon can descend so low,
False to that honour which through fields of death
I still have courted where the fight was fiercest,
Be scorn my portion, infamy my lot.

Thes. The king may doom me to a thousand tortures,
Ply me with fire, and rack me like Philotas,
Ere I shall stoop to idolize his pride.

Cas. Not Aristadner, had he raised all hell,
Could more have shock'd my soul than thou hast done
By the bare mention of Philotas' murder.
Oh, Polyperchon! how shall I describe it!
Did not your eyes rain blood to see the hero?
Did not your spirits burst with smother'd vengeance
To see thy noble fellow-warrior tortured,
Yet without groaning or a tear endure
The torments of the damn'd? Oh! death to think it!

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We saw him bruised, we saw his bones laid bare, [flesh
His veins wide laced, and the poor quivering
With fiery pincers from his bosom torn,
Till all beheld where the great heart lay panting.
Poly. Yet all like statues stood!—cold, lifeless statues!
As if the sight had froze us into marble,
When with collected rage we should have flown
To instant vengeance on the ruthless cause,
And plunged a thousand daggers in his heart.
Cas. At our last banquet, when the bowl had gone
The giddy round, and wine inflamed my spirits,
I saw Craterus and Hephestion enter
In Persian robes; to Alexander's health
They largely drank, and falling at his feet
With impious adoration thus address'd
Their idol god: hail, son of thundering Jove!
Hail, first of kings! young Ammon, live for ever!
Then kiss'd the ground, on which I laugh'd aloud,
And scoffing ask'd 'em why they kiss'd no harder?
Whereon the tyrant starting from his throne,
Spurn'd me to earth and stamping on my neck,
Learn thou to kiss it, was his fierce reply,
While with his foot he press'd me to the earth
Till I lay weltering in a foam of blood.
Poly. Thus when I mock'd the Persians that adored him,
He struck me on the face,
And bid his guards chastise me like a slave:
But if he 'scape my vengeance may he live
Great as that God whose name he thus profanes,
And like a slave may I again be beaten,
Scoff'd as I pass, and branded for a coward.
Cas. There spoke the spirit of Calisthenes.
Remember he's a man, his flesh as penetrable
As any girl's, and wounded too as soon;
To give him death no thunders are required:
Struck by a stone young Jupiter has fallen,
A sword has pierced him and the blood has follow'd;
Water will drown him, or the fire will burn;
Nay, we have seen a hundred common ailments
Bring this immortal to the gates of death.
Poly. Oh let us not delay the glorious business!
Our wrongs are great, and honour calls for vengeance.
Are your hearts firm?
Thes. As heaven or hell can make them.
Poly. Take then my hand, and if you doubt my truth
Rip up my breast and lay my heart upon it.
Cas. While thus we join our hands and hearts together,
Remember Hermolaüs and be hush'd.
Poly. Hush'd as the eve before a hurricane;
Or baneful planets when they shed their poisons.
Cas. This day exulting Babylon receives
The mighty robber—with him comes Roxana,
Fierce, haughty fair! on his return from India
Artful she met him in the height of triumph;
And by a thousand wiles at Susa kept him
In all the luxury of eastern revels.
Poly. How bore Statira his revolted love?
For if I err not ere the king espoused her
She made him promise to renounce Roxana.
Thes. No words can paint the anguish it occasion'd;
Even Sysigambis wept, while the wrong'd queen,
Struck to the heart, fell lifeless on the ground,
And thus remain'd, spite of her care and cordials,
For an hour.
Cas. When the first tumult of her grief was laid
I sought to fire her into wild revenge,
And to that end with all the art I could
Described his passion for the bright Roxana;
But though I could not to my wish inflame her,
Thus far at least her jealousy will help;
She'll give him troubles that perhaps may end him,
And set the court in universal uproar.
But see, she comes. Our plots begin to ripen;
Now change the vizor, every one disperse,
And with a face of friendship meet the king.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter SYSIGAMBIS, STATIRA, *and* PARISATIS.

Stat. Oh for a dagger, a draught of poison, flames!
Swell heart! break, break, thou wretched, stubborn thing!
Now by the sacred fire I'll not be held!
Why do you wish my life, yet stifle me for
Want of air?——Pray give me leave to walk.
Sys. Is there no reverence to my person due?
Trust me, Statira, had thy father liv'd
Darius would have heard me.
Stat. Oh, he's false!
This glorious man, this wonder of the world,
Is to his love and every god forsworn!
Oh! I have heard him breathe such ardent vows,
Outweep the morning with his dewy eyes,
And sigh and swear the listening stars away!
Sys. Believe not rumour; 'tis impossible:
Thy Alexander is renown'd for truth,
Above deceit——
Stat. Away, and let me die:
'Twas but my fondness, 'twas my easy nature,
Would have excused him.——
Are not his falsehoods and Statira's wrongs
A subject canvass'd in the mouths of millions?
The babbling world can talk of nothing else.
Why, Alexander, why wouldst thou deceive me!
Have I not loved thee, cruel as thou art!
Have I not kiss'd thy wounds with dying fondness, [hair!
Bathed 'em in tears, and bound 'em with my
Whole nights I 'ave sat and watch'd thee as a child, [pose!
Lull'd thy fierce pains, and sung thee to re-
Par. If man can thus renounce the solemn ties
Of sacred love, who would regard his vows!
Stat. Regard his vows! the monster, traitor! Oh!
I will forsake the haunts of men, converse
No more with aught that's human, dwell with darkness;
For since the sight of him is now unwelcome,
What has the world to give Statira joy?
Yet I must tell thee, perjured as he is,
Not the soft breezes of the genial spring,
The fragrant violet, or opening rose,
Are half so sweet as Alexander's breath.

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Then he will talk—good gods! how he will talk!
He speaks the kindest words, and looks such things,
Vows with such passion, and swears with such a grace,
That it is Heaven to be deluded by him!
Sys. Her sorrows must have way.
Stat. Roxana then enjoys my perjured love,
Roxana clasps my monarch in her arms,
Dotes on my conqueror, my dear lord, my king! [it!
Oh, 'tis too much! by Heaven I cannot bear
She clasps him all—she, the cursed, happy she—
I'll die, or rid me of the burning torture!
Hear me bright god of day! hear every god!
Sys. Take heed, Statira, weigh it well, my child,
Ere desperate love enforces you to swear.
Stat. Oh! fear not that, already have I weigh'd it,
And in the presence here of Heaven and you,
Renounce all converse with perfidious man.
Farewell, ye cozeners of our easy sex!
And thou, the falsest of the faithless kind,
Farewell for ever! Oh, farewell! farewell!
If I but mention him the tears will flow!
How couldst thou, cruel! wrong a heart like mine,
Thus fond, thus doting, even to madness on thee!
Sys. Clear up thy griefs, thy Alexander comes,
Triumphant in the spoils of conquer'd India;
This day the hero enters Babylon.
Stat. Why, let him come; all eyes will gaze with rapture,
All hearts will joy to see the victor pass,
All but the wretched, the forlorn Statira.
Sys. Wilt thou not see him then?
Stat. I swear, and Heaven be witness to my vow! [*Kneels.*
Never from this sad hour, never to see
Nor speak, no, nor, if possible, to think
Of Alexander more. This is my vow,
And when I break it——
Sys. Do not ruin all.
Stat. May I again be perjured and deluded!
May furies rend my heart! may lightnings blast me!
Sys. Recall, my child, the dreadful imprecation.
Stat. No, I will publish it through all the court,
Then to the bowers of great Semiramis
Retire for ever from the treacherous world;
There from man's sight will I conceal my woes,
And seek in solitude a calm repose;
Nor prayers, nor tears, shall my resolves control,
Nor love itself, that tyrant of the soul.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Triumphal Arch.

Enter CASSANDER *and* POLYPERCHON.

Cas. He comes, the headlong Alexander comes;
The gods forbid him Babylon in vain;
In vain do prodigies foretell his fall:
Attended by a throng of sceptered slaves,
This rapid conqueror of the ravaged globe
Makes his appearance, and defies the danger.
Poly. Why all this noise—ye partial powers declare—
These starts of nature, at a tyrant's doom?
Is Alexander of such wond'rous moment
That Heaven should feel the wild alarms of fear,
And fate itself become a babbler for him?
Cas. Cased in the very arms we saw him wear
The spirit of his father haunts the court
In all the majesty of solemn sorrow:
The awful spectre fix'd his eyes upon me,
Waved his pale hand—and threatful shook his head,
Groan'd out, forbear——and vanish'd from my view.
A fear till then unknown possess'd my soul,
And sickening nature trembled at the sight!
Poly. Why should you tremble?—Had the yawning earth
Laid all the tortures of the damn'd before me,
My soul, unshaken in her firm resolve,
Would brave those tortures and pursue the tyrant.
Cas. Yes, Polyperchon, he this night shall die;
Our plots in spite of prodigies advance;
Success attends us.—Oh, it joys my soul
To deal destruction like the hand of Heaven,
Felt while unseen!
Poly. The Persians all dissatisfied appear,
Loudly they murmur at Statira's wrongs,
And fiercely censure Alexander's falsehood.
Cas. I know he loves Statira more than life;
And when he hears the solemn vow she made,
The oath that bars her from his sight for ever,
Remorse and horror will at once invade him,
Rend his wreck'd soul and rush him into madness.
Poly. Of that anon—the court begins to thicken;
From every province of the wide-spread earth
Ambassadors in Babylon are met;
As if mankind had previously agreed
To compliment the tyrant's boundless pride,
And hold a solemn synod of the world,
Where Alexander like a god should dictate.
Cas. We must away or mingle with the crowd.
Adore this god till apt occasion calls
To make him what he would be thought—immortal. [*Exeunt.*

A Symphony of Warlike Music. Enter CLYTUS *and* ARISTANDER, *in his Robes.*

Arist. Haste, reverend Clytus, haste and stop the king.
Clyt. Already is he enter'd, and the throng
Of princes that surround him is so great
They kept at distance all that would approach.
Arist. Were he encircled by the gods themselves
I must be heard, for death awaits his stay.
Clyt. Then place yourself within his trumpet's sound;
Shortly he'll appear. [*Exeunt.*

Enter ALEXANDER *in a Triumphal Car drawn by Black Slaves, Trophies and Warlike Ensigns in Procession before him;* CLYTUS, HEPHESTION, LYSIMACHUS, ARISTANDER, *Captives, Guards, and Attendants.*

See the conquering hero comes,
Sound the trumpet, beat the drums;

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Sports prepare, the laurel bring,
Sports of triumph to him sing.

See the godlike youth advance,
Breathe the flute and lead the dance;
Myrtle, wreath, and roses twine,
To deck the hero's brow divine.

Heph. Hail, son of Jove! great Alexander! hail.
Alex. Rise all; and thou, my second self, my friend,
Oh, my Hephestion! raise thee from the earth!
Come to my arms, and hide thee in my heart;
Nearer, yet nearer, else thou lov'st me not.
Heph. Not love my king! bear witness all ye powers,
And let your thunder nail me to the centre,
If sacred friendship ever burn'd more brightly!
Immortal bosoms can alone admit
A flame more pure, more permanent than mine.
Alex. Thou dearer to me than my groves of laurel,
I know thou lovest thy Alexander more
Than Clytus does the king.
Lys. Now for my fate!
I see that death awaits me—yet I'll on.
Dread Sir! I cast me at your royal feet.
Alex. Rise, my Lysimachus; thy veins and mine
From the same fountain have derived their streams:
Rise to my arms, and let thy king embrace thee.
Is not that Clytus?
Clyt. Your old, faithful soldier.
Alex. Clytus, thy hand—thy hand Lysimachus;
Thus double arm'd, methinks
I stand tremendous as the Lybian god,
Who, while his priests and I quaff'd sacred blood,
Acknowledged me his son: my lightning thou,
And thou my mighty thunder. I have seen
Thy glittering sword outfly celestial fire;
And when I'ave cried begone and execute,
I'ave seen him run swifter than starting hinds,
Nor bent the tender grass beneath his feet.
Lys. When fame invites, and Alexander leads,
Dangers and toils but animate the brave.
Clyt. Perish the soldier inglorious and despised,
Who starts from either when the king cries—On.
Alex. Oh, Clytus! oh, my noble veteran!
'Twas, I remember, when I pass'd the Granicus
His arm preserved me from the unequal force;
When fierce Itanor and the bold Rhesaces
Fell both upon me with two mighty blows,
And clove my temper'd helmet quite asunder,
Then like a god flew Clytus to my aid,
Thy thunder struck Rhesaces to the ground,
And turn'd with ready vengeance on Itanor,
Clyt. To your own deeds that victory you owe;
And sure your arms did never boast a nobler.
Alex. By heaven they never did; they never can;
And I more glory to have pass'd that stream
Than to have drove a million o'er the plain.
Can none remember, yes—I know all must,
When glory like the dazzling eagle stood
Perch'd on my beaver in the Granick flood;
When fortune's self my standard trembling bore,
And the pale fates stood frighted on the shore:
When each immortal on the billows rode,
And I myself appear'd the leading god?
Arist. Haste, first of heroes, from this fatal place;
Far, far from Babylon enjoy your triumph,
Or all the glories which your youth has won
Are blasted in their spring.
Alex. What mean thy fears?
And why that wild distraction on thy brow?
Arist. This morn, great king! I view'd the angry sky,
And frighted at the direful prodigies
To Orosmades for instruction flew;
But as I pray'd deep echoing groans I heard,
And shrieks as of the damn'd that howl for sin;
Shock'd at the omen, while amazed I lay
In prostrate reverence on the trembling floor,
Thus spoke the god:
The brightest glory of imperial man,
The pride of nations, and the boast of fame;
Remorseless fate in Babylon has doom'd
To sudden and irrevocable ruin.
Alex. If Heaven ordains that Babylon must fall,
Can I prevent th' immutable decree?

Enter PERDICCAS.

Per. O horror! horror! dreadful and portentous!
Alex. How now Perdiccas! whence this exclamation?
Per. As Meleager and myself this morn
Led forth the Persian horse to exercise,
We heard a noise as of a rushing wind;
When suddenly a flight of baleful birds,
Like a thick cloud, obscured the face of Heaven;
On sounding wings from different parts they flew,
Encountering met, and battled in the air—
Their talons clash'd, their beaks gave mighty blows,
And showers of blood fell copious from their wounds.
Alex. Tho' all the curtains of the sky were drawn,
And the stars wink, young Ammon shall go on.
While my Statira shines I cannot stray,
Love lifts his torch to light me on my way,
And her bright eyes create another day.
Lys. Vouchsafe, dread Sir! to hear my humble suit;
A prince entreats it. [claim.
Alex. A soldier asks it—that the noblest
Lys. For all the services my word has done
Humbly I beg the princess Parisatis.
Alex. Lysimachus, no more—it is not well—
My word, you know, was to Hephestion given:
How dare you then———
Lys. At your command to scale th' embattled wall,
Or fetch the gore-died standard from the foe,
When has Hephestion flown with warmer zeal?
When did he leave Lysimachus behind?
These I have done, for these were in my power;
But when you charge me to renounce my love,
And from my thoughts to banish Parisatis,
Obedience there becomes impossible,
Nature revolts, and my whole soul rebels.
Alex. It does, brave Sir!—Now hear me and be dumb:
When by my order cursed Calisthenes
Was, as a traitor, doom'd to live in torments,
Your pity sped him in despite of me;
Think not I have forgot your insolence,

No, though I pardon'd it—Yet, if again
Thou dar'st to cross me with another crime,
The bolts of fury shall be doubled on thee.
In the mean time—think not of Parisatis,
For, if thou dost—by the immortal Ammon
I'll not regard the blood of mine thou sharest,
But use thee as the vilest Macedonian.

Lys. I knew you partial ere I moved my suit;
Yet know it shakes not my determined purpose:
While I have life and strength to wield a sword
I never will forego the glorious claim.

Alex. Against my life! ha! traitor, was it so?
'Tis said that I am rash, of hasty humour;
But I appeal to the immortal gods,
If ever petty, poor, provincial lord
Had temper like to mine? My slave, whom I
Could tread to clay, dares utter bloody threats.

Clyt. Forgive, dread Sir! the frantic warmth of love;
The noble prince, I read it in his eyes,
Would die a thousand deaths to serve his king,
And justify his loyalty and truth.

Lys. I meant his minion there should feel my arm:
Love claims his blood, nor shall he live to triumph
In that destruction that awaits his rival.

Alex. I pardon thee for my old Clytus' sake;
But if once more thou mention thy rash love,
Or dar'st attempt Hephestion's precious life,
I'll pour such storms of indignation on thee
Philotas' rack, Calisthenes' disgrace,
Shall be delight to what thou shalt endure.

Clyt. My lord, the aged queen, with Parisatis,
Come to congratulate your safe arrival.

Enter SYSIGAMBIS *and* PARISATIS.

Alex. Oh thou, the best of women, Sysigambis!
Source of my joy, bless'd parent of my love!

Sys. In humble duty to the gods and you
Permit us, Sir, with gratitude to kneel.
Through you the royal house of Persia shines,
Raised from the depth of wretchedness and ruin,
In all the splendour of imperial greatness.

Alex. To meet me thus was generously done;
But still there wants to crown my happiness
That treasure of my soul, the dear Statira!
Had she but come to meet her Alexander
I had been bless'd indeed.

Clyt. Now who shall dare
To tell him of the queen's vow?

Alex. How fares
My love?—Ha! neither answer me! all silent!
A sudden horror, like a bolt of ice,
Shoots to my heart, and 'numbs the seat of life.

Heph. I would relate it, but my courage fails me.

Alex. Why stand you all as you were rooted here?
What! will none answer? my Hephestion silent!
If thou hast any love for Alexander,
If ever I obliged thee by my care,
When through the field of death my eye has watch'd thee,
Resolve my doubts and rescue me from madness.

Heph. Your mourning queen has no disease but grief,
Occasion'd by the jealous pangs of love:
She heard, dread Sir! (for what can 'scape a lover)
That you, regardless of your vows, at Susa,
Had to Roxana's charms resign'd your heart,
And revell'd in the joys you once forswore.

Alex. I own the subtle sorceress in my riot,
My reason gone, seduced me to her bed,
But when I waked I shook the Circe off,
Though the enchantress held me by the arm,
And wept and gazed with all the force of love;
Nor grieved I less for that which I had done
Than when at Thais' suit, enraged with wine,
I set the famed Persepolis on fire.

Heph. Your queen, Statira, in the rage of grief,
And agony of desperate love, has sworn
Never to see your majesty again.

Alex. Oh, Madam! has she? has Statira sworn
Never to see her Alexander more?
Impossible! she could not, would not swear it.
Is she not gentle as the guileless infant;
Mild as the genial breezes of the spring,
And softer than the melting sighs of love?

Par. With sorrow, Sir, I heard the solemn vow,
My mother heard it, and in vain, adjured her
By every tender motive, to recall it.

Sys. But with that fierceness she resen's her wrongs,
Dwells on your fault, and heightens the offence,
That I could wish your majesty forget her.

Alex. Ha! could you wish me to forget Statira!
The star which brightens Alexander's life,
His guide by day and goddess of his nights!
I feel her now, she beats in every pulse,
Throbs at my heart and circles with my blood!

Sys. Have patience, son, and trust to Heaven and me;
If my authority has any influence
I will exert it, and she shall be yours.

Alex. Haste, Madam, haste, if you would have me live;
Fly, ere for ever she abjure the world,
And stop the sad procession: [*Exit* SYS.] and Parisatis,
Hang thou about her, wash her feet with tears—
Nay, haste; the breath of gods, and eloquence
Of angels go along with you. [*Exit* PAR.
Oh my heart!

Lys. Now let your majesty who feels the pangs
Of disappointed love, reflect on mine.

Alex. Ha!

Clyt. What! are you mad? is this a time to plead?

Lys. The properest time; he dares not now be partial,
Lest Heaven in justice should avenge my wrongs,
And double every pang which he feels now.

Alex. Why dost thou tempt me thus to thy undoing?
Death thou shouldst have were it not courted so:
But know, to thy confusion, that my word,
Like destiny, admits of no repeal;
Therefore in chains shalt thou behold the nuptials
Of my Hephestion. Guards, take him prisoner.
[*The Guards seize* LYS.

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Lys. Away, ye slaves! I'll not resign my sword,
'Till first I 'ave drench'd it in my rival's blood.
Alex. I charge you kill him not; take him alive;
The dignity of kings is now concern'd,
And I will find a way to tame this rebel.
Clyt. Kneel—for I see rage light'ning in his eyes.
Lys. I neither hope nor will I sue for pardon.
Had I my sword and liberty again;
Again I would attempt his favourite's heart.
Alex. Hence from my sight, and bear him to a dungeon.
Perdiccas give this lion to a lion:
None speak for him: fly; stop his mouth; away.
[*Exeunt* LYS. PER. *and Guards.*
Clyt. This comes of women—the result of love:
'Tis folly all, 'tis frenzy and distraction;
Yet were I heated now with wine I doubt
I should be preaching in this fool's behalf.
Alex. Come hither, Clytus, and my friend Hephestion;
Lend me your arms:
I fear betwixt Statira's cruel vows
And fond Roxana's arts, your king will fall.
Clyt. Better the race of women were destroy'd,
And Persia sunk in everlasting ruin!
Heph. Look up, my lord, and bend not thus your head,
As if you purposed to forsake the world,
Which you have greatly won.
Alex. Would I had not;
There's no true joy in such unwieldy fortune.
Eternal gazers lasting troubles make;
All find my spots, but few observe my brightness.
Stand from about me all, and give me air.
Yes, I will shake this Cupid from my soul,
I'll fright the feeble god with war's alarms,
Or drown his power in floods of hostile blood.
Grant me, great Mars! once more in arms to shine,
And break like lightning through the embattled line;
Through fields of death to whirl the rapid car,
And blaze amidst the thunder of the war,
Resistless as the bolt that rends the grove;
Or greatly perish like the son of Jove.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—An open Court.

Trumpets sounding a Dead March; LYSIMACHUS *led Prisoner;* EUMENES, PERDICCAS, PARISATIS, *and Guards.*

Par. Stay, my Lysimachus! a moment stay!
Oh, whither art thou going!—hold a moment!
Unkind! thou know'st my life was wrapp'd in thine,
Why wouldst thou then to worse than death expose me?
Lys. Oh, mayst thou live in joys without allay!
Grant it, ye gods! a better fortune waits thee;
Live and enjoy it—'tis my dying wish,
While to the grave the lost Lysimachus
Alone retires, and bids the world adieu.
Par. Even in the grave will Parisatis join thee;
Yes, cruel man! nor death itself shall part us:
A mother's power, a sister's softening tears,
With all the fury of a tyrant's frown,
Shall not compel me to outlive thy loss
Lys. Were I to live till nature's self decay'd
This wond'rous waste of unexampled love
I never could repay—O Parisatis!
Thy charms might fire a coward into courage,
How must they act then on a soul like mine?
Defenceless and unarm'd I'll fight for thee,
And may perhaps compel th' astonish'd world,
And force the king to own that I deserve thee.
Eumenes, take the princess to thy charge.
Away Perdiccas, all my soul's on fire.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—The Palace.

Enter ROXANA *and* CASSANDER.

Rox. Deserted! said'st thou? For a girl abandon'd!
A puny girl made up of watery elements!
Shall she embrace the god of my desires,
And triumph in the heart Roxana claims?
Cas. Oh, princess! had you seen his wild despair,
Had you beheld him when he heard her vow,
Words would but wrong the agonies he felt;
He fainted thrice, and life seem'd fled for ever;
And when by our assiduous care recall'd,
He snatch'd his sword, and aim'd it at his breast;
Then rail'd at you with most unheard of curses.
Rox. If I forget it, mayst thou, Jove, deprive me
Of vengeance, make me the most wretched thing
On earth while living, and when dead the lowest
Of the fiends.
Cas. Oh, nobly said!
Just is the vengeance which inflames your soul;
Your wrongs demand it—but let reason govern;
This wild rage else may disappoint your aims.
Rox. Away, away, and give a whirlwind room!
Pride, indignation, fury and contempt,
War in my breast, and torture me to madness.
Cas. Oh! think not I would check your boldest flights:
No—I approve 'em, and will aid your vengeance;
But, princess, let us choose the safest course;
Or we may give our foes new cause of triumph,
Should they discover and prevent our purpose.
Rox. Fear not, Cassander, nothing shall prevent it,
Roxana dooms him, and her voice is fate.
My soul from childhood has aspired to empire;
In early nonage I was used to reign
Among my she companions; I despised
The trifling arts and little wiles of women,
And taught them with an Amazonian spirit
To win the steed, to chase the foaming boar;
And conquer man, the lawless, charter'd savage.
Cas. Her words, her looks, her every motion fires me.
Rox. But when I heard of Alexander's fame,
How with a handful he had conquer'd millions,
Spoil'd all the east, and captive led our queens,
Unconquer'd by their charms,

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With heavenly pity he assuaged their woes,
Dried up their tears, and soothed them into peace,
I hung attentive on my father's lips,
And wish'd him tell the wond'rous tale again.
No longer pleasing were my former sports,
Love had its turn, and all the woman reign'd:
Involuntary sighs heaved in my breast,
And glowing blushes crimson'd on my cheek;
Even in my slumbers I have often mourn'd
In plaintive sounds, and murmur'd, Alexander.

Cas. Curse on his name—she dotes upon him still.

Rox. At length this conqueror to Zogdia came,
And, cover'd o'er with laurels, storm'd the city:
But oh, Cassander! where shall I find words
To paint th' ecstatic transports of my soul;
When 'midst the circle of unrivall'd beauties
I saw myself distinguish'd by the hero!
With artless rapture I received his vows,
The warmest sure that lover ever breathed,
Of fervent love and everlasting truth.

Cas. And need you then be told those times are past!
Statira now engrosses all his thoughts;
The Persian queen without a rival reigns
Sole mistress of his heart——nor can thy charms,
The brightest sure that ever woman boasted,
Nor all his vows of everlasting love,
Secure Roxana from disdain and insult.

Rox. Oh, thou hast roused the lion in my soul!
Ha! shall the daughter of Darius hold him?
No, 'tis resolved; I will resume my sphere,
Or falling, spread a general ruin round me.
Roxana and Statira! they are names
That must for ever jar;
When they encounter, thunder must ensue.

Cas. Behold she comes in all the pomp of sorrow,
Determined to fulfil her solemn vow.

[*They retire.*

Enter SYSIGAMBIS *and* STATIRA.

Rox. Away, and let us mark th' important scene.

Sys. Oh, my Statira! how has passion changed thee!
Think in the rage of disappointed love,
If treated thus and hurried to extremes,
What Alexander may denounce against us,
Against the poor remains of lost Darius.

Stat. Oh, fear not that! I know he will be kind,
For my sake, kind to you and Parisatis.
Tell him I rail'd not at his falsehood to me,
But with my parting breath spoke kindly of him;
Tell him I wept at our divided loves,
And sighing sent a last forgiveness to him.

Sys. No, I can ne'er again presume to meet him,
Never approach the much-wrong'd Alexander,
If thou refuse to see him——Oh, Statira!
Thy aged mother and thy weeping country
Claim thy regard, and challenge thy compassion:
Hear us, my child, and lift us from despair.

Stat. Thus low I cast me at your royal feet,
To bathe them with my tears; or if you please
I'll let out life and wash 'em with my blood;
But I conjure thee not to rack my soul,
Nor hurry my wild thoughts to perfect madness:
Should now Darius' awful ghost appear,
And you, my mother, stand beseeching by,
I would persist to death and keep my vow.

Rox. This fortitude of soul compels my wonder.

Sys. Hence from my sight! ungrateful wretch begone!
Hence to some desert,
And hide thee where bright virtue never shone;
For in the sight of Heaven I here renounce
And cast thee off, an alien to my blood.

[*Exit.*

Rox. [*Comes forward.*] Forgive, great queen, the intrusion of a stranger;
With grief Roxana sees Statira weep:
I 'ave heard and much applaud your fix'd resolve
To quit the world for Alexander's sake;
And yet I fear, so greatly he adores you,
That he will rather choose to die of sorrow,
Than live for the despised Roxana's charms.

Stat. Spare, Madam, spare your counterfeited fears;
You know your beauty and have proved its power:
Though humbly born, have you not captive held [world!
In love's soft chains the conqueror of the
Away to libertines and boast thy conquest,
A shameful conquest! In his hour of riot,
Then, only then, Roxana could surprise
My Alexander's heart.

Rox. To some romantic grove's sequester'd gloom
Thy sickly virtue would, it seems, retire,
To shun the triumphs of a favour'd rival:
In vain thou fli'st—for there, even there, I'll haunt thee,
Plague thee all day, and torture thee all night:
There thou shalt hear in what ecstatic joys
Roxana revels with the first of men;
And as thou hear'st the rapturous scene recited,
With frantic jealousy thou'lt madly curse
Thy own weak charms that could not fix the rover.

Stat. How weak is woman! at the storm she shrinks,
Dreads the drawn sword, and trembles at the thunder;
Yet when strong jealousy inflames her soul,
The sword may glitter and the tempest roar;
She scorns the danger, and provokes her fate
Rival, I thank thee—thou hast fired my soul,
And raised a storm beyond thy power to lay;
Soon shalt thou tremble at the dire effects,
And curse too late the folly that undid thee.

Rox. Sure the disdain'd Statira dares not mean it.

Stat. By all my hopes of happiness I dare:
And know, proud woman, what a mother's threats,
A sister's sighs, and Alexander's tears,
Could not effect, thy rival rage has done.
My soul, that starts at breach of oaths begun,
Shall to thy ruin violated run;
I'll see the king in spite of all I swore;
Though cursed, that thou mayst never see him more.

Enter ALEXANDER, HEPHESTION, CLYTUS, &c.

Alex. Oh, my Statira, thou relentless fair!
Turn thine eyes on me—I would talk to them.

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What shall I say to work upon thy soul!
What words, what looks, can melt thee to forgiveness?
Stat. Talk of Roxana and the conquer'd Indies,
Thy great adventures and successful love,
And I will listen to the rapturous tale;
But rather shun me, shun a desperate wretch
Resign'd to sorrow and eternal wo.
Alex. Oh, I could die, with transport die before thee!
Wouldst thou but as I lay convulsed in death,
Cast a kind look or drop a tender tear:
Say but 'twas pity one so famed in arms,
One who has 'scaped a thousand deaths in battle,
For the first fault should fall a wretched victim
To jealous anger and offended love.
Rox. Am I then fallen so low in thy esteem,
That for another thou wouldst rather die
Than live for me?—How am I alter'd, tell me,
Since last at Susa with repeated oaths
You swore the conquest of the world afforded
Less joy, less glory, than Roxana's love?
Alex. Take, take that conquer'd world, dispose of crowns,
And canton out the empires of the globe!
But leave me, Madam, with repentant tears
And undissembled sorrows to atone
The wrongs I've offer'd to this injured excellence.
Rox. Yes, I will go, ungrateful as thou art!
Bane to my life, and murderer of my peace,
I will be gone; this last disdain has cured me.
But have a care—I warn you not to trust me;
Or by the gods, that witness to thy perjuries,
I'll raise a fire that shall consume you both,
Though I partake the ruin. [*Exit.*

Enter SYSIGAMBIS.

Stat. Alexander!—Oh, is it possible!
Immortal gods! can guilt appear so lovely?
Yet, yet I pardon, I forgive thee all.
Alex. Forgive me all! oh catch the heavenly sounds!
Catch them, ye winds! and as ye fly, disperse
The rapturous tidings through th' extended world,
That all may share in Alexander's joy!
Stat. Yes, dear deceiver! I forgive thee all,
But longer dare not hear thy charming tongue,
For while I hear thee my resolves give way;
Be therefore quick, and take thy last farewell:
Farewell, my love—eternally farewell!
Alex. Oh, my Hephestion, bear me, or I sink.
Why, why Statira, will you use me thus?
I know the cause, my working brain divines it;
You say you've pardon'd, but with this reserve,
Never again to bless me with your love.
Stat. All-seeing Heaven, support me!
Alex. Speak to me, love; though banishment and death
Hang on thy lips, yet, while thy tongue pronounces,
The music will a while suspend my pains,
And mitigate the horrors of despair.
Oh, could I see you thus?
Stat. His sorrows wound my heart,
Soft pity pleads, and I again must love him;
But, I have sworn, and therefore cannot yield.
Alex. Go, then, inhuman! triumph in my pains,
Feed on the pangs that rend this wretched heart,
For now 'tis plain you never loved. Statira!
Oh, I could sound that charming, cruel name,
'Till the tired echo faint with repetition;
'Till all the breathless groves and quiet myrtles
Shook with my sighs, as if a tempest bow'd 'em.
My tongue could dwell for ever on that name.
Statira! oh, Statira!
Stat. Such were his looks, so melting was his voice,
Such his soft sighs, and his deluding tears,
When, with that pleasing, perjured breath, avowing,
His whispers trembled through my credulous ears,
And told the story of my utter ruin.
Gods! If I stay I shall again believe:
Farewell, thou greatest pleasure, greatest pain!
Alex. I charge ye, stay her;
Oh, turn thee, thou bewitching brightness, turn,
Hear my last words, and see my dying pangs!
Lo! at your feet behold a monarch falls,
A prince who gave the conquer'd world to thee,
And thought thy love bought cheaply with the gift;
Whose glories, laurels, bloom but in thy smiles,
Now shrunk and blasted by thy cruel hate,
Untimely falls. Yet oh! when thou shalt die,
May death be mild, as thou art cruel now,
And may thy beauties gently sink to earth,
While circling angels waft thee to repose!
Sys. Art thou turn'd savage? is thy heart of marble?
But if this posture move thee not to pity,
I never will speak more.
Alex. Oh, my Statira! [ing.
I swear, my queen, I'll not outlive our part-
My soul grows still as death. Say, wilt thou pardon?
'Tis all I ask. Wilt thou forgive the transports
Of a deep wounded heart, and all is well?
Stat. Rise, and may Heaven forgive you like Statira!
Alex. You are too gracious——Clytus, bear me hence.
When I am laid i' th' earth, yield her the world.
There's something here that heaves as cold as ice,
That stops my breath. Farewell, farewell for ever!
Stat. Hold off, and let me run into his arms.
My life, my love, my lord, my Alexander!
If thy Statira's love can give thee joy,
Revive, and be immortal as the gods.
Alex. My fluttering heart, tumultuous with its bliss,
Would leap into thy bosom: 'tis too much.
Oh, let me press thee in my eager arms,
And strain thee hard to my transported breast.
Stat. But shall Roxana——
Alex. Let her not be named.
Oh, Madam! how shall I repay your goodness;
And you, my fellow warriors, who could grieve
For your lost king? But talk of griefs no more;
The banquet waits, and I invite you all.
My equals in the throne as in the grave,
Without distinction come, and share my joy.
Clyt. Excuse me, Sir, if I for once am absent.
Alex. Excuse thee, Clytus! none shall be excused:
All revel out the day, 'tis my command.
Gay as the Persian god ourself will stand
With a crown'd goblet in our lifted hand;

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Young Ammon and Statira shall go round,
While antic measures beat the burthen'd ground,
And to the vaulted skies our trumpets' clangors sound. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

Enter CLYTUS, HEPHESTION, *and* EUMENES.

Clyt. Urge me no more, I hate the Persian dress,
Nor should the king be angry at the reverence
I owe my country—sacred are her customs,
And honest Clytus will to death observe them.
Oh! let me rot in Macedonian rags,
Or, like Calisthenes, be caged for life,
Rather than shine in fashions of the east.
Eum. Let me, brave Clytus, as a friend entreat you.
Heph. What virtue is there that adorns a throne,
Exalts the heart, and dignifies the man,
Which shines not brightly in our royal master?
And yet, perversely you'll oppose his will,
And thwart an innocent, unhurtful humour.
Clyt. Unhurtful! oh, 'tis monstrous affectation!
Pregnant with venom, in its nature black,
And not to be excused!——Shall man, weak man!
Exact the reverence which we pay to Heaven,
And bid his fellow-creatures kneel before him,
And yet be innocent? Hephestion, no;
The pride that lays a claim to adoration
Insults our reason, and provokes the gods.
Eum. Yet what was Jove, the god whom we adore?
Was he not once a man, and raised to heaven
For generous acts and virtues more than human?
Heph. By all his thunder and his sovereign power
I'll not believe the world yet ever felt
An arm like Alexander's.—Not that god
You named, though riding in a car of fire,
Could in a shorter space do greater deeds;
Or more effectually have taught mankind
To bend submissive, and confess his sway.
Clyt. I tell you, boy, that Clytus loves the king
As well as you or any soldier here;
Yet I disdain to soothe his growing pride:
The hero charms me—but the god offends.
Heph. Then go not to the banquet.
Clyt. Why, I was bid,
Young minion—was I not, as well as you?
I'll go, my friend, in this old habit, thus,
And laugh, and drink the king's health heartily;
And while you, blushing, bow your heads to earth,
And hide them in the dust——I'll stand erect,
Straight as a spear, the pillar of my country,
And be by so much nearer to the gods.
Heph. But see, the king appears.

Enter ALEXANDER, STATIRA, SYSIGAMBIS, PARISATIS, *and Attendants.*

Par. Oh, gracious monarch!
Spare him, oh, spare Lysimachus's life!
I know you will——the brave delight in mercy.
Alex. Shield me, Statira, shield me from her sorrows.
Par. Save him, oh save him ere it be too late!
Speak the kind word; let not your soldier perish
For one rash action by despair occasioned.
I'll follow thus, for ever on my knees;
You shall not pass. Statira, oh intreat him!
Alex. Oh, Madam! take her, take her from about me;
Her streaming eyes assail my very soul,
And shake my best resolves.
Stat. Did I not break
Through all for you? Nay, now, my lord, you must:
By all th' obedience I have paid you long,
By all your passion, sighs, and tender looks,
Oh, save a prince whose only crime is love!
Sys. I had not join'd in this bold suit, my son;
But that it adds new lustre to your honours.
Alex. Honour! what's that? Has not Statira said it?
Were I the king of the blue firmament,
And the bold Titans should again make war,
Though my resistless thunders were prepared,
By all the gods, she should arrest my arm
Uplifted to destroy them! Fly, Hephestion,
Fly, Clytus; snatch him from the jaws of death,
And to the royal banquet bring him straight,
Bring him in triumph, fit for loads of honour.
[*Exeunt* HEPH. &c.
Stat. Why are you thus beyond expression kind?
Oh, my lord! my raptured heart,
By gratitude and love at once inflamed,
With wild emotion flutters in my breast;
Oh, teach it then, instruct it how to thank you!
Alex. Excellent woman!
'Tis not in nature to support such joy.
Stat. Go, my best love; unbend you at the banquet;
Indulge in joy, and laugh your cares away;
While in the bowers of great Semiramis
I dress your bed with all the sweets of nature,
And crown it as the altar of our loves,
Where I will lay me down and softly mourn,
But never close my eyes till you return.
[*Exit* STAT.
Alex. Is she not more than mortal can desire,
As Venus lovely, and Diana chaste?
And yet I know not why our parting shocks me;
A ghastly paleness sat upon her brow,
Her voice like dying echoes, fainter grew,
And as I wrung her by the rosy fingers,
Methought the strings of my great heart were crack'd.
What could it mean? Forward, Leomadus.

Enter ROXANA, CASSANDER, *and* POLYPERCHON.

Why, Madam, gaze you thus?
Rox. For a last look,
And to imprint the memory of my wrongs,
Roxana's wrongs, on Alexander's mind.
Alex. On to the banquet. [*Exeunt* ALEX. &c.
Rox. Ha! with such disdain!
So unconcern'd! Oh, I could tear myself,
Him, you, and all the hateful world to atoms.
Cas. Still keep this spirit up, preserve it still,
And know us for your friends: we like your rage:
Here in the sight of Heaven, Cassander swears,
Unawed by death, to second your revenge:
Speak but the word, and swift as thought can fly,
The tyrant falls a victim to your fury.
Rox. Shall he then die? shall I consent to kill him?

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I that have loved him with that eager fondness,
Shall I consent to have him basely murder'd,
And see him clasp'd in the cold arms of death?
No, Cassander! [horror.
Worlds should not tempt me to the deed of
Poly. The weak, fond scruples of your love might pass,
Was not the empire of the world concern'd;
But, Madam, think, when time shall teach his tongue,
How will the glorious infant which you bear
Arraign his partial mother, for refusing
To fix him on the throne which here we offer?
Cas. If Alexander lives, you cannot reign,
Nor will your child: old Sysigambis plans
Your sure destruction; boldly, then, prevent her:
Give but the word, and Alexander dies.
Poly. Not he alone, the Persian race shall bleed:
At your command, one universal ruin
Shall, like a deluge, whelm the eastern world,
'Till gloriously we raise you to the throne.
Rox. But till this mighty ruin be accomplish'd
Where can Roxana fly the avenging arms
Of those who must succeed this godlike man?
Cas. Would you vouchsafe in these expanded arms
To seek a refuge, what could hurt you here?
There you might reign, with undiminish'd lustre,
Queen of the east, and empress of my soul.
Rox. Disgraced Roxana! whither art thou fallen?
'Till this cursed hour I never was unhappy:
There's not one mark of former majesty,
To awe the slave that offers at my honour.
Cas. Impute not, Madam, my unbounded passion
To want of reverence——I have loved you long.
Rox. Peace, villain! peace, and let me hear no more.
Think'st thou I'd leave the bosom of a god
And stoop to thee, thou moving piece of earth!
Hence from my sight, and never more presume
To meet my eyes; for mark me, if thou dar'st,
To Alexander I'll unfold thy treason,
Whose life, in spite of all his wrongs to me,
Shall still be sacred, and above thy malice.
Cas. By your own life, the greatest oath, I swear,
Cassander's passion from this hour is dumb;
And as the best atonement I can make,
Statira dies, the victim of your vengeance.
Rox. Cassander, rise; 'tis ample expiation.
Yes, rival, yes——this night shall be thy last;
This night I know is destined for thy triumph,
And gives my Alexander to thy arms.
Oh, murderous thought!
Poly. The bowers of great Semiramis are made
The scene of love; Perdiccas holds the guard.
Cas. Now is your time, while Alexander revels,
And the whole court re-echoes with his riot,
To end her, and with her to end your fears.
Give me but half the Zogdian slaves that wait you,
And deem her dead; nor shall a soul escape,
That serves your rival, to disperse the news.
Rox. By me they die, Perdiccas and Statira;
Hence with thy aid, I neither ask nor want it,
But will myself conduct the slaves to battle.
Were she to fall by any arm but mine,
Well might she murmur and arraign her stars;
'Tis life well lost to die by my command.
Rival, rejoice, and pleased resign thy breath;
Roxana's vengeance grants thee noble death.
[*Exit.*
Cas. All but her Jove this Semelè disdains.
We must be quick—she may perhaps betray
The great design, and frustrate our revenge.
Poly. Has Philip got instructions how to act?
Cas. He has, my friend, and, faithful to our cause,
Resolves to execute the fatal order.
Bear him this vial—it contains a poison
Of that exalted force, that deadly nature,
Should Æsculapius drink it, in five hours,
(For then it works) the god himself were mortal:
I drew it from Nonacris' horrid spring;
Mix'd with his wine, a single drop gives death,
And sends him howling to the shades below.
Poly. I know its power, for I have seen it tried; [artery
Pains of all sorts through every nerve and
At once it scatters—burns at once, and freezes,
Till, by extremity of torture forced,
The soul consents to leave her joyless home,
And seeks for ease in worlds unknown to this.
Cas. Now let us part: with Thessalus and Philip
Haste to the banquet——At his second call,
Let this be given him, and it crowns our hopes.
Now, Alexander, now, we'll soon be quits;
Death for a blow is interest indeed. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—The Palace.

ALEXANDER, PERDICCAS, CASSANDER, POLYPERCHON, EUMENES, *discovered at a Banquet, &c.* [*A flourish of Trumpets.*

Alex. To our immortal health and our fair queen's;
All drink it deep; and while the bowl goes round,
Mars and Bellona join to make us music;
A thousand bulls be offer'd to the sun,
White as his beams; speak the big voice of war;
Beat all our drums, and sound our silver trumpets;
Provoke the gods to follow our example
In bowls of nectar, and replying thunder
[*Flourish of Trumpets.*

Enter CLYTUS, HEPHESTION, *and* LYSIMACHUS *bloody.*

Clyt. Long live the king! long live great Alexander!
And conquest crown his arms with deathless laurels,
Propitious to his friends, and all he favours.
Alex. Did I not give command you should preserve
Lysimachus?
Heph. Dread Sir! you did.
Alex. What then
Portend these bloody marks?
Heph. Ere we arrived
Perdiccas had already placed the prince
In a lone court, all but his hands unarm'd.
Clyt. On them were gauntlets; such was his desire,
In death to show the difference betwixt
The blood of Æacus and common men.
Forth issuing from his den amazed we saw
The horrid savage, with whose hideous roar

The palace shook: his angry eye-balls glaring
With triple fury, menaced death and ruin.
Heph. With unconcern the gallant prince advanced,
Now, Parisatis, be the glory thine,
But mine the danger, were his only words;
For as he spoke the furious beast descried him,
And rush'd outrageous to devour his prey.
Clyt. Agile and vigorous, he avoids the shock
With a slight wound, and as the lion turn'd,
Thrust gauntlet, arm and all, into his throat,
And with Herculean strength tears forth the tongue:
Foaming and bloody, the disabled savage
Sunk to the earth, and plough'd it with his teeth; [soldier
While with an active bound your conquering
Leap'd on his back, and dash'd his scull in pieces.
Alex. By all my laurels 'twas a godlike act!
And 'tis my glory as it shall be thine,
That Alexander could not pardon thee.
Oh, my brave soldier! think not all the prayers
And tears of the lamenting queens could move me,
Like what thou hast perform'd: grow to my breast.
Lys. Thus, self-condemn'd, and conscious of my guilt,
How shall I stand such unexampled goodness?
Oh, pardon, Sir, the transports of despair,
The frantic outrage of ungovern'd love!
Even when I show'd the greatest want of reverence
I could have died with rapture in your service.
Alex. Lysimachus, we both have been transported:
But from this hour be certain of my heart.
A lion be the impress of thy shield;
And that gold armour we from Porus won
Thy king presents thee——But thy wounds ask rest.
Lys. I have no wounds, dread Sir! or if I had,
Were they all mortal, they should stream unminded
When Alexander was the glorious health.
Alex. Thy hand, Hephestion: clasp him to thy heart,
And wear him ever near thee. Parisatis
Shall now be his who serves me best in war.
Neither reply, but mark the charge I give;
Live, live as friends—you will, you must, you shall:
'Tis a god gives you life.
Clyt. Oh, monstrous vanity!
Alex. Ha! what says Clytus? who am I?
Clyt. The son of good king Philip.
Alex. By my kindred gods
'Tis false. Great Ammon gave me birth.
Clyt. I've done.
Alex. Clytus, what means that dress? Give him a robe, there.
Take it and wear it.
Clyt. Sir, the wine, the weather,
Has heated me: besides, you know my humour.
Alex. Oh, 'tis not well! I'd rather perish, burn,
Than be so singular and froward.
Clyt. So would I——
Burn, hang, drown, but in a better cause.
I'll drink or fight for sacred majesty
With any here. Fill me another bowl.
Will you excuse me?
Alex. You will be excused:
But let him have his humour; he is old.
Clyt. So was your father, Sir; this to his memory:
Sound all the trumpets there.
Alex. They shall not sound
'Till the king drinks. Sure I was born to wage
Eternal war. All are my enemies,
Whom I could tame—But let the sports go on.
Lys. Nay, Clytus, you that could advise so well—
Alex. Let him persist, be positive, and proud,
Envious and sullen, 'mongst the nobler souls,
Like an infernal spirit that hath stole
From hell, and mingled with the mirth of gods.
Clyt. When gods grow hot, no difference I know,
'Twixt them and devils—Fill me Greek wine—yet—
Yet fuller—I want spirits.
Alex. Let me have music.
Clyt. Music for boys—Clytus would hear the groans
Of dying soldiers and the neigh of steeds;
Or, if I must be pester'd with shrill sounds,
Give me the cries of matrons in sack'd towns.
Heph. Let us, Lysimachus, awake the king;
A heavy gloom is gathering on his brow.
Kneel all, with humblest adoration, kneel,
And let a health to Jove's great son go round.
Alex. Sound, sound, that all the universe may hear.
[*A loud flourish of trumpets.*
Oh, for the voice of Jove! the world should know
The kindness of my people—Rise! oh rise!
My hands, my arms, my heart, are ever yours.
Clyt. I did not kiss the earth, nor must your hand—
I am unworthy, Sir.
Alex. I know thou art:
Thou enviest the great honour of thy master.
Sit all my friends. Now let us talk of war,
The noblest subject for a soldier's mouth,
And speak, speak freely, else you love me not.
Who, think you, was the greatest general
That ever led an army to the field?
Heph. A chief so great, so fortunately brave,
And justly so renown'd as Alexander,
The radiant sun, since first his beams gave light,
Never yet saw.
Lys. Such was not Cyrus, or the famed Alcides,
Nor great Achilles, whose tempestuous sword
Laid Troy in ashes, though the warring gods
Opposed him.
Alex. Oh, you flatter me!
Clyt. They do, indeed, and yet you love them for't,
But hate old Clytus for his hardy virtue.
Come, shall I speak a man with equal bravery,
A better general, and experter soldier?
Alex. I should be glad to learn: instruct me, Sir.
Clyt. Your father, Philip—I have seen him march,
And fought beneath his dreadful banner, where
The boldest at this table would have trembled.
Nay, frown not, Sir, you cannot look me dead.
When Greeks join'd Greeks, then was the tug of war!

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The labour'd battle sweat, and conquest bled.
Why should I fear to speak a bolder truth
Than e'er the lying priests of Ammon told you?
Philip fought men—but Alexander women.
Alex. All envy, spite and envy, by the gods!
Is then my glory come to this at last,
To conquer women! Nay, he said the stoutest,
The stoutest here, would tremble at his dangers.
In all the sickness, all the wounds, I bore,
When from my reins the javelin's head was cut,
Lysimachus, Hephestion, speak, Perdiccas,
Did I once tremble? Oh, the cursed falsehood!
Did I once shake or groan, or act beneath
The dauntless resolution of a king?
Lys. Wine has transported him.
Alex. No, 'tis mere malice.
I was a woman too, at Oxydrace,
When planting on the walls a scaling ladder
I mounted, spite of showers of stones, bars, arrows,
And all the lumber which they thunder'd down.
When you beneath cry'd out, and spread your arms,
That I should leap among you—did I so?
Lys. Dread Sir! the old man knows not what he says.
Alex. Was I a woman, when, like Mercury,
I leap'd the walls and flew amidst the foe,
And, like a baited lion, died myself
All over in the blood of those bold hunters;
Till spent with toil I battled on my knees,
Pluck'd forth the darts that made my shield a forest,
And hurl'd 'em back with most unconquered fury,
Then shining in my arms I sunn'd the field,
Moved, spoke, and fought, and was myself a war.
Clyt. 'Twas all bravado; for, before you leap'd,
You saw that I had burst the gates asunder.
Alex. Oh, that thou wert but once more young and vigorous!
That I might strike thee prostrate to the earth,
For this audacious lie, thou feebled dotard!
Clyt. I know the reason why you use me thus:
I saved you from the sword of bold Rhesaces,
Else had your godship slumbered in the dust,
And most ungratefully you hate me for it.
Alex. Hence from the banquet: thus far I forgive thee.
Clyt. First try (for none can want forgiveness more)
To have your own bold blasphemies forgiven,
The shameful riots of a vicious life,
Philotas' murder——
Alex. Ha! what said the traitor?
Heph. Clytus, withdraw; Eumenes, force him hence:
He must not tarry: drag him to the door.
Clyt. No, let him send me, if I must be gone,
To Philip, Atalaus, Calisthenes,
To great Parmenio, and his slaughter'd sons.
Alex. Give me a javelin.
Heph. Hold, mighty Sir!
Alex. Sirrah! off,
Lest I at once strike thro' his heart and thine.
Lys. Oh, sacred Sir! have but a moment's patience.
Alex. What! hold my arms! I shall be murder'd here,
Like poor Darius, by my barbarous subjects.
Perdiccas, sound our trumpets to the camp;
Call all my soldiers to the court: nay, haste,
For there is treason plotting 'gainst my life,
And I shall perish ere they come to save me.
Where is the traitor?
Clyt. Sure there is none amongst us,
But here I stand—honest Clytus,
Whom the king invited to the banquet.
Alex. Begone to Philip, Atalaus, Calisthenes— [*Stabs him.*
And let bold subjects learn, by thy example,
Not to provoke the patience of their prince.
Clyt. The rage of wine is drown'd in gushing blood.
Oh, Alexander! I have been to blame:
Hate me not after death; for I repent
That I so far have urged your noble nature.
Alex. What's this I hear! say on, my dying soldier
Clyt. I should have kill'd myself had I but lived
To be once sober—Now I fall with honour;
My own hands would have brought foul death.
Oh, pardon! [*Dies.*
Alex. Then I am lost: what has my vengeance done! [he?
Who is it thou hast slain? Clytus! what was
The faithfullest subject, worthiest counsellor,
The bravest soldier, he who saved thy life,
Fighting bareheaded at the river Granick,
And now he has a noble recompense;
For a rash word, spoke in the heat of wine,
The poor, the honest Clytus thou hast slain,
Clytus, thy friend, thy guardian, thy preserver!
Heph. Remove the body, it inflames his sorrow.
Alex. None dare to touch him: we must never part.
Cruel Hephestion and Lysimachus,
That had the power, yet would not hold me.
Oh!
Lys. Dear Sir, we did.
Alex. I know ye did; yet held me
Like a wild beast, to let me go again
With greater violence.—Oh, ye have undone me!
Excuse it not: you that could stop a lion,
Could not turn me! ye should have drawn your swords,
And barr'd my rage with their advancing points,
Made reason glitter in my dazzled eyes
Till I had seen the precipice before me:
That had been noble, that had shown the friend;
Clytus would so have done to save your lives.
Lys. When men shall hear how highly you were urged——
Alex. No; you have let me stain my rising glory,
Which else had ended brighter than the sun.
Oh! I am all a blot, which seas of tears
And my heart's blood can never wash away!
Yet 'tis but just I try, and on the point
Still reeking, hurl my black polluted breast.
Heph. Oh, sacred Sir!—it shall not—must not be.
Lys. Forgive, dread Sir!—forgive my pious hands,
That dare in duty to disarm my master.
Alex. Yes, cruel men! ye now can show your strength:
Here's not a slave but dares oppose my justice,
Yet none had courage to prevent this murder;
But I will render all endeavours vain
That tend to save my life—here will I lie,
[*Falls on* CLYTUS.
Close to my murder'd soldier's bleeding side;
Thus clasping his cold body in my arms,

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'Till death, like his, has closed my eyes for ever.

Enter PERDICCAS.

Per. Treason! foul treason! Hephestion, where's the king?
Heph. There, by old Clytus' side, whom he hath slain.
Per. Rise, sacred Sir! and haste to save the queen.
Roxana, fill'd with furious jealousy,
Came with a guard unmark'd; she gain'd the bower,
And broke upon me with such sudden fury,
That all have perish'd who opposed her rage.
Alex. What says Perdiccas? is the queen in danger?
Per. Haste, Sir, or she dies.
Alex. Thus from the grave I rise to save my love:
All draw your swords, on wings of lightning move,
Young Ammon leads you, and the cause is love.
When I rush on, sure none will dare to stay;
'Tis beauty calls, and glory leads the way.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—The Bower of Semiramis.

STATIRA *discovered.*

Stat. Bless me, ye powers above, and guard my virtue!
Where are you fled, dear shades? where are you fled!
'Twas but a dream, and yet I saw and heard
My royal parents, who, while pious care
Sat on my faded cheeks, pronounced with tears,
Tears such as angels weep, this hour my last,
But hence with fear—my Alexander comes,
And fear and danger ever fled from him.
Would that he were here!
For oh, I tremble, and a thousand terrors
Rush in upon me, and alarm my heart!
But hark! 'tis he, and all my fears are fled:
My life, my joy, my Alexander, comes!
Rox. [*Within.*] Make fast the gate with all its massy bars:
At length we 'ave conquer'd this stupendous height,
And reach'd the grove.
Stat. Ye guardian gods, defend me!
Roxana's voice! then all the vision's true,
And die I must.

Enter ROXANA.

Rox. Secure the brazen gate.
Where is my rival? 'tis Roxana calls.
Stat. And what is she who with such towering pride
Would awe a princess that is born above her?
Rox. Behold this dagger!—'tis thy fate Statira!
Behold, and meet it as becomes a queen.
Fain would I find thee worthy of my vengeance;
Here, take my weapon then, and if thou dar'st—
Stat. How little know'st thou what Statira dares!
Yes, cruel woman! yes, I dare meet death
With a resolve at which thy coward heart
Would shrink; for terror haunts the guilty mind;
While conscious innocence, that knows no fear,
Can smiling pass, and scorn thy idle threats.
Rox. Return, fair insolent! return, I say:
Dar'st thou, presumptuous, to invade my rights!
Restore him quickly to my longing arms,
And with him give me back his broken vows,
For perjured as he is, he still is mine,
Or I will rend them from thy bleeding heart.
Stat. Alas, Roxana! 'tis not in my power;
I cannot if I would—and oh, ye gods!
What were the world to Alexander's loss!
Rox. Oh, sorceress! to thy accursed charms
I owe the frenzy that distracts my soul;
To them I owe my Alexander's loss:
Too late thou tremblest at my just revenge,
My wrongs cry out, and vengeance will have way.
Stat. Yet think, Roxana, ere you plunge in murder,
Think on the horrors that must ever haunt you;
Think on the furies, those avenging ministers
Of Heaven's high wrath, how they will tear your soul,
All day distract you with a thousand fears;
And when by night thou vainly seek'st repose,
They'll gather round and interrupt your slumbers,
With horrid dreams and terrifying visions.
Rox. Add still, if possible, superior horrors.
Rather than leave my great revenge unfinish'd,
I'll dare 'em all, and triumph in the deed;
Therefore—— [*Holds up the dagger.*
Stat. Hold, hold thy hand advanced in air:
I read my sentence written in thine eyes;
Yet oh, Roxana! on thy black revenge
One kindly ray of female pity beam;
And give me death in Alexander's presence.
Rox. Not for the world's wide empire shouldst thou see him.
Fool! but for him thou mightst unheeded live;
For his sake only art thou doom'd to die,
The sole remaining joy that glads my soul,
Is to deprive thee of the heart I'ave lost.

Enter SLAVE.

Slave. Madam, the king and all his guards are come,
With frantic rage they thunder at the gate,
And must ere this have gain'd admittance.
Rox. Ha!
Too long I've trifled. Let me then redeem
The time mispent, and make great vengeance sure.
Stat. Is Alexander, oh ye gods! so nigh,
And can he not preserve me from her fury?
Rox. Nor he, nor Heaven, shall shield thee from my justice.
Die, sorceress, die, and all my wrongs die with thee! [*Stabs her.*
Alex. [*Without.*] Away, ye slaves! stand off—quick let me fly
With lightning's wings! nor Heaven nor earth, shall stop me.

Enter ALEXANDER.

Ha! oh my soul! my queen, my love, Statira!
These wounds! are these my promised joys?
Stat. Alas!
My only love, my best and dearest blessing!
Would I had died before you enter'd here;

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For thus delighted, while I gaze upon thee
Death grows more horrid, and I'm loath to leave thee.
Alex. Thou shalt not leave me—Cruel cruel stars!
Oh, where's the monster, where's the horrid fiend,
That struck at innocence, and murder'd thee!
Rox. Behold the wretch, who, desperate of thy love,
In jealous madness gave the fatal blow;
A wretch that, to possess once more thy love,
Would with the blood of millions stain her soul.
Alex. To dungeons, tortures, drag her from my sight.
Stat. My soul is on the wing: oh come, my lord,
Haste to my arms, and take a last farewell.
Thus let me die. Oh! oh!
Alex. Look up, my love.
Oh Heaven! and will you, will you, take her from me!
Stat. Farewell, my most loved lord: ah me! farewell!
Yet ere I die grant this request.
Alex. Oh speak,
That I may execute before I follow thee!
Stat. Leave not the world till Heaven demands you—Spare
Roxana's life—'Twas love of you that caused
The death she gave me. And oh! sometimes think,
Amidst your revels, think on your poor queen:
And ere the cheerful bowl salutes your lips,
Enrich it with a tear, and I am happy. [*Dies.*
Alex. Yet ere thou tak'st thy flight—She's gone, she's gone!
All, all is hush'd, no music now is heard;
The roses wither, and the fragrant breath
That waked their sweets shall never wake 'em more!
Rox. Weep not, my lord! no sorrow can recall her.
Oh turn your eyes, and in Roxana's arms
You'll find fond love, and everlasting truth.
Alex. Hence from my sight, and thank my dear Statira
That yet thou art alive.
Rox. Oh, take me to your arms:
In spite of all your cruelty I love you;
Yes, thus I'll fasten on your sacred robe,
Thus on my knees for ever cling around thee,
'Till you forgive me, or 'till death divide us.
Alex. Hence, fury, hence: there's not a glance of thine
But like a basilisk comes wing'd with death.
Rox. Oh speak not thus to one who kneels for mercy!
Think for whose sake it was I madly plunged
Into a crime abhorrent to my nature.
Alex. Off, murderess, off! for ever shun my sight;
My eyes detest thee, for thy soul is ruin.
Rox. Barbarian! yes, I will for ever shun thee.
Repeated injuries have steel'd my heart,
And I could curse myself for being kind.
If there is any majesty above
That has revenge in store for perjured love,
Send, Heaven, the swiftest ruin on his head!
Strike the destroyer! lay the victor dead!
Kill the——
But what are curses? curses will not kill,
Nor ease the tortures I am doom'd to feel.
Alex. Oh, my fair star, I shall be shortly with thee!
What means this deadly dew upon my fore head?
My heart, too, heaves——
Cas. The poison works.

Enter EUMENES.

Eum. Pardon, dread Sir! a fatal messenger:
The royal Sysigambis is no more.
Struck with the horror of Statira's fate,
She soon expired, and with her latest breath,
Left Parisatis to Lysimachus.
But what I fear most deeply will affect you,
Your loved Hephestion's——
Alex. Dead! then he is bless'd!
But here, here lies my fate. Hephestion, Clytus!
My victories all for ever folded up
In this dear body. Here my banner's lost.
My standard's triumphs gone.
Oh when shall I be mad! Give orders to
The army that they break their shields, swords, spears,
Pound their bright armour into dust——Away.
Is there not cause to put the world in mourning?
Burn all the spires that seem to meet the sky,
Beat down the battlements of every city,
And for the monument of this loved creature,
Root up these bowers, and pave 'em all with gold;
Draw dry the Ganges, make the Indies poor,
To deck her tomb; no shrine nor altar spare,
But strip the pomp from gods to place it there.
[*Exit.*

Enter THESSALUS.

Cas. He's gone—but whither—follow, Thessalus,
Attend his steps, and let me know what passes. [*Exit* THESSALUS.
Vengeance, lie still, thy craving shall be sated:
Death roams at large, the furies are unchain'd,
And murder plays her mighty master-piece.

Enter POLYPERCHON, THESSALUS, *and* PHILIP.

Phil. Saw you the king?
Poly. Yes; with disorder'd wildness in his looks,
He rush'd along, till with a casual glance
He saw me where I stood, then stepping short,
Draw near, he cried—and grasp'd my hand in his,
Where more than fevers raged in every vein.
Oh, Polyperchon! I have lost my queen!
Statira's dead!—and as he spoke, the tears
Gush'd from his eyes—I more than felt his pains.
Thes. Hence, hence, away!
Cas. Where is he, Thessalus?
Thes. I left him circled by a crowd of princes.
The poison tears him with that height of horror
Even I could pity him—He call'd his chiefs,
Embraced 'em round—then starting from amidst 'em,
Cried out, I come—'twas Ammon's voice;—I know it—
Father, I come; but let me, ere I go,
Despatch the business of a kneeling world!
Poly. No more; I hear him—we must meet anon.
Cas. In Saturn's field—there give a loose to rapture,

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Enjoy the tempest we ourselves have raised,
And triumph in the wreck which crowns our vengeance. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—The Palace.

ALEXANDER *with his hair dishevelled*, LYSIMACHUS, EUMENES, PERDICCAS, *and Attendants discovered.*

Alex. Search there; nay, probe me, search my wounded reins——
Pull, draw it out.
Lys. We have search'd, but find no nurt.
Alex. Oh, I am shot! a forked, burning arrow
Sticks cross my shoulders: the sad venom flies
Like lightning through my flesh, my blood, my marrow.
Lys. How fierce his fever!
Alex. Ha! what a change of torments I endure!
A bolt of ice runs hissing through my bowels;
'Tis sure the arm of death; give me a chair;
Cover me, for I freeze, and my teeth chatter,
And my knees knock together.
Eum. Have mercy, Heaven!
Alex. I burn, I burn again!
The war grows wond'rous hot: hey for the Tigris!
Bear me, Bucephalus, amongst the billows.
[*Jumps into the chair.*
Oh, 'tis a noble beast! I would not change him
For the best horse the sun has in his stable,
For they are hot, their mangers full of coals,
Their manes are flakes of lightning, curls of fire,
And their red tails like meteors whisk about.
Lys. Help all; Eumenes, help.
Alex. Ha, ha, ha! I shall die with laughter.
Parmenio, Clytus, do you see yon fellow,
That ragged soldier, that poor tatter'd Greek?
See how he puts to flight the gaudy Persians,
With nothing but a rusty helmet on, through which,
The grisly bristles of his pushing beard
Drive 'em like pikes—Ha, ha, ha!
Per. How wild he talks
Lys. Yet warring in his wildness.
Alex. Sound, sound! keep your ranks close. Ay, now they come;
Oh, the brave din, the noble clang of arms!
Charge, charge apace, and let the phalanx move.
Darius comes—ay, 'tis Darius,
I see, I know him by the sparkling plumes,
And his gold chariot drawn by ten white horses;
But like a tempest thus I pour upon him——
He bleeds! with that last blow I brought him down:
He tumbles; take him, snatch th' imperial crown.
They fly, they fly!—Follow, follow—Victoria!
Victoria! Victoria!——
[*Leaps into the soldiers' arms.*
Per. Let's bear him softly to his bed.
Alex. Hold, the least motion gives me instant death;
My vital spirits are quite parch'd, burnt up,
And all my smoky entrails turn'd to ashes.
Lys. When you, the brightest star that ever shone,
Shall set, it must be night with us for ever.
Alex. Let me embrace you all before I die.
[*All kneel and weep.*
Weep not, my dear companions! the good gods
Shall send you in my stead a nobler prince,
One that shall lead you forth with matchless conduct.
Lys. Break not our hearts with such unkind expressions.
Per. We will not part with you, nor change for Mars.
Alex. Perdiccas, take this ring,
And see me laid in the temple of Jupiter Ammon.
Lys. To whom does your dread majesty bequeath
The empire of the world?
Alex. To him that is most worthy.
Per. When will you, sacred Sir, that we should give
To your great memory those divine honours
Which such exalted virtue does deserve?
Alex. When you are all most happy and in peace.
Your hands—On, father! if I have discharged
The duty of a man to empire born;
If by unwearied toils I have deserved
The vast renown of thy adopted son,
Accept this soul which thou didst first inspire,
And which this sign thus gives thee back again! [*Dies.*
Lys. There fell the pride and glory of the war.
If there be treason let us find it out,
Lysimachus stands forth to lead you on,
And swears, by these most honour'd, dear remains,
He will not taste those joys which beauty brings
Until he has revenged the best of kings.
[*Exeunt.*

EPILOGUE.

Whate'er they mean, yet ought they to be cursed,
Who this censorious age did polish first,
Who the best play for one poor error blame,
As priests against our ladies' arts declaim,
And for one patch both soul and body damn.
But what does more provoke the actor's rage
(For we must show the grievance of the stage)
Is that our women which adorn each play,
Bred at our cost, become at length your prey:
While green and sour like trees we bear them all, [fall;
But when they're mellow straight to you they
You watch them bare and squab, and let them rest, [nest.
But with the first young down you snatch the
Pray leave those poaching tricks if you are wise,
Ere we take out our letters of reprise;
For we have vow'd to find a sort of toys
Known to black friars, a tribe of chopping boys;
If once they come they'll quickly spoil your sport;
There's not one lady will receive your court:
But for the youth in petticoats run wild,
With, oh! the archest wag, the sweetest child,
The panting breast, white hands, and lily feet!
No more shall your pall'd thoughts with pleasure meet:
The woman in boy's clothes all boy shall be,
And never raise your thoughts above the knee.

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Well, if our women knew how false you are,
They would stay here, and this new trouble spare:
Poor souls! they think all gospel you relate,
Charm'd with the noise of settling an estate!
But when at last your appetites are full,
And the tired Cupid grows with action dull,
You'll find some tricks to cut off the entail,
And send them back to us all worn and stale.
Perhaps they'll find our stage, while they have ranged
To some vile, canting conventicle, changed;
Where, for the sparks who once resorted there,
With their curl'd wigs that scented all the air,
They'll see grave blockheads with short, greasy hair,
Green aprons, steeple-hats, and collar-bands,
Dull, snivelling rogues, that ring—not clap their hands,
Where, for gay punks that drew the shining crowd,
And misses, that in vizards laugh'd aloud,
They'll hear young sisters sigh, see matrons old,
To their chopp'd cheeks their pickled kerchers hold,
Whose zeal too, might persuade, in spite to you,
Our flying angels to augment their crew,
While Farringdon, their hero, struts about 'em.
And ne'er a damning critic dares to flout 'em.

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THE WAY TO KEEP HIM:

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY ARTHUR MURPHY, Esq.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LOVEMORE.
SIR BASHFUL CONSTANT.
SIR BRILLIANT FASHION.
WILLIAM, Servant to Lovemore.
SIDEBOARD, Servant to Sir Bashful.
POMPEY, a black Servant.
JOHN.

MRS. LOVEMORE.
The WIDOW BELLMOUR.
LADY CONSTANT.
MUSLIN, Maid to Mrs. Lovemore.
MIGNIONET, Maid to Mrs. Bellmour.
FURNISH, Maid to Lady Constant.

SCENE.—London.

PROLOGUE.

WHEN first the haughty critic's dreadful rage,
With Gothic fury, over-ran the stage,
Then Prologues rose, and strove with varied art,
To gain the soft accesses to the heart.
Through all the tuneful tribe th' infection flew,
And each *Great Genius*—his petition drew;
In *forma pauperis* address'd the Pit,
With all the gay antithesis of wit.
Their sacred art poor poets own'd a crime;
They sigh'd in *simile*, they bow'd in *rhyme*.
For charity, they all were forced to beg;
And every Prologue was "*a wooden leg*."
Next these, a hardy, manly race appear'd,
Who knew no dullness, and no critics fear'd.
From Nature's store, each curious tint they drew,
Then boldly held the piece to public view:
"Lo! here, exact proportion! just design!
The bold relief! and the unerring line!
Mark in soft union how the colours strike!
This, Sirs, you will, or this you ought to like."
They bid defiance to the foes of wit,
"Scatter'd like ratsbane up and down the Pit."
Such Prologues were of yore;—our bard to-night
Disdains a false compassion to excite:
Nor too secure, your judgment would oppose;
He packs no jury, AND HE DREADS NO FOES.
To govern here *no party* can expect;
An audience will preserve its own respect.
To catch the foibles that misguide the fair
From trifles spring, and end in lasting care,
Our author aims; nor this alone, he tries,
But as fresh objects, and new manners rise,
He bids his canvass glow with various dyes;
Where sense and folly mix in dubious strife,
Alternate rise, and struggle into life,
Judge, if with art, the mimic strokes he blend;
If amicably, light and shade contend;
The mental features if he trace with skill
See the Piece first, then *damn* it if you will.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—An Apartment in LOVEMORE'S *House.*

WILLIAM *and* SIDEBOARD *discovered at a Game of Cards.*

Will. A plague go with it! I have turned out my game: Is forty-seven good?

Side. Equal.

Will. Confound the cards! tierce, to a queen?

Side. Equal.

Will. There again! ruined, stock and block: nothing can save me. I don't believe there is a footman in England plays with worse luck than myself. Four aces are fourteen.

Side. That's hard, cruel by Jupiter! Aces against me every time.

Will. Four aces are fourteen: fifteen. [*Plays.*

Side. There's your equality.

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Will. Very well: I turned out my point. Sixteen; [*Plays.*] seventeen. [*Plays.*

Enter MUSLIN.

Mus. There's a couple of you, indeed! You are so fond of the vices of your betters, that you are scarce out of your beds, but you must imitate them and their profligate ways. Set you up forsooth!

Will. Pr'ythee be quiet, woman, do. Eighteen. [*Plays.*

Mus. Upon my word!—With your usual ease, Mr. Coxcomb.

Will. Manners, Mrs. Muslin: you see Mr. Sideboard here: he is just come on a message from Sir Bashful Constant. Have some respect for a stranger. Nineteen, clubs. [*Plays.*

Mus. It would become Mr. Sideboard to go back with his answer, and it would become you to send my lady word——

Will. Command your tongue, Mrs. Muslin: you'll put me out. What shall I play?—He will go back with his answer in good time. Let his master wait till it suits our convenience. Nineteen, clubs: where shall I go now?

Mus. Have done with your folly, Mr. Impertinent. My lady desires to know——

Will. I tell you, woman, my master and I desire to have nothing to do with you and your lady. Twenty, diamonds. [*Plays.*

Mus. But I tell you, Mr. Brazen, that my lady desires to know at what hour your master came home last night, and how he does this morning.

Will. Ridiculous! Don't disturb us with that nonsense now; you see I am not at leisure. I and my master are resolved to be teased no more by you; and so, Mrs. Go-between, you may return as you came.—What the devil shall I play?—We will have nothing to do with you, I tell you.

Mus. You'll have nothing to do with us! But you shall have to do with us, or I'll know the reason why. [*She snatches the cards from him, and throws them about.*]

Will. Death and fury! this meddling woman has destroyed my whole game. A man might as well be married, as be treated in this fashion.

Side. I shall score you for this, Mr. William: I was sure of the cards, and that would have made me up.

Will. No, you'll score nothing for this. You win too much of me. I am a very pretty annuity to you.

Side. Annuity, say you? I lose a fortune to you in the course of the year. How could you, Mrs. Muslin, behave in this sort to persons of our dignity?

Mus. Decamp with your dignity; take your answer to your master: turn upon your rogue's heel, and rid the house.

Side. I sha'n't dispute with you. I hate wrangling: I leave that to lawyers and married people; they have nothing else to do. Mr. William, I shall let Sir Bashful know that Mr. Lovemore will be at home for him. When you come to our house, I'll give you your revenge. We can have a snug party there, and I promise you a glass of choice champaign: it happens to be a good batch; Sir Bashful gets none of it: I keep it for my own friends. *Au revoir.* [*Exit.*

Will. [*To* MUSLIN.] You see what mischief you have made.

Mus. Truce with your foolery; and now, Sir, be so obliging as to send my lady an answer to her questions: How and when your rakehelly master came home last night?

Will. I'll tell you one thing, Mrs. Muslin; you and my master will be the death of me at last. In the name of charity what do you both take me for? Whatever appearances may be, I am but of mortal mould; nothing supernatural about me.

Mus. Upon my word, Mr. Powder-Puff!

Will. I have not, indeed; and flesh and blood, let me tell you, can't hold it always at this rate. I can't be for ever a slave to Mr. Lovemore's eternal frolics, and to your second-hand airs.

Mus. Second-hand airs!

Will. Yes, second-hand airs; you take them at your ladies' toilets with their cast gowns, and so you descend to us with them.—And then on the other hand, there's my master. Because he chooses to live upon the principal of his health, and so run out his whole stock as fast as he can, he must have my company with him in his devil's dance to the other world! Never at home till three, four, five, six in the morning.

Mus. Ay, a vile ungrateful man! always ranging abroad, and no regard for a wife that dotes upon him. And your love for me is all of a piece. I have no patience with you both; a couple of false, perfidious, abandoned profligates!

Will. Hey! where is your tongue running? My master, as the world goes, is a good sort of a civil kind of a husband; and I, Heaven help me! a poor simpleton of a constant, amorous puppy, who bears with all the whims of my little tyrant here. Come and kiss me, you jade, come and kiss me.

Mus. Paws off, Cæsar. Don't think to make me your dupe. I know when you go with him to this new lady, this Bath acquaintance; and I know you are as false as my master, and give all my dues to your Mrs. Mignionet there.

Will. Hush; not a word of that. I am ruined, pressed, and sent on board a tender directly, if you blab that I trusted you with that secret ——But to charge me with falsehood!—injustice and ingratitude!——My master, to be sure, does drink an agreeable dish of tea with the widow. He has been there every evening this month past. How long things are to be in this train, Heaven only knows. But he does visit there, and I attend him. I ask my master, Sir, says I, what time will you please to want me? He fixes the hour, and I strut by Mrs. Mignionet, without so much as tipping her a single glance. She stands watering at the mouth, and 'a pretty fellow that,' says she: Ay, gaze on, says I, gaze on: I know what you would be at: you would be glad to have me: but sour grapes, my dear; and so home I come to cherish my own lovely little wanton: you know I do: and after toying with thee, I fly back to my master, later indeed than he appoints, but always too soon for him. He is loath to part; he lingers and dangles, and I stand cooling my heel. Oh! to the devil I pitch such a life.

Mus. Why don't you strive to reclaim the vile man?

Will. Softly; not so fast. I have my talent, to be sure; yes, I must acknowledge some talent. But can you suppose that I have power to turn the drift of his inclinations? Can I give him a new taste, and lead him as I please? And to

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whom? To his wife? Ridiculous! A wife has no attraction now; the spring of the passions flies back; it wont do.

Mus. Fine talking! and you admire yourself for it, don't you? Can you proceed, Sir?

Will. I tell you a wife is out of date: the time was, but that's all over; a wife is a drug now; mere tar-water, with every virtue under heaven, but nobody takes it.

Mus. Have done, or I'll print these ten nails upon your rogue's face.

Will. Come and kiss me, I say.

Mus. A fiddlestick for your kisses, while you encourage your master to open rebellion against the best of wives.

Will. I tell you 'tis all her own fault. Why does she not study to please him as you do me. Come and throw your arms about my neck.

Mus. As I used to do, Mr. Impudence?

Will. Then I must force you to your own good. [*Kisses her.*] Pregnant with delight! egad, if my master was not in the next room— [*Bell rings.*

Mus. Hush! my lady's bell: how long has he been up?

Will. He has been up—[*Kisses her.*] 'Sdeath! you have set me all on fire. [*Kisses her.*

Mus. There, there; have done now? the bell rings again. What must I say? When did he come home?

Will. He came home—[*Kisses her,*]—he came home at five this morning; damned himself for a blockhead; [*Kisses.*] went to bed in a surly humour; was tired of himself and every body else. [*Bell rings, he kisses her.*] And he is now in tip-toe spirits with Sir Brilliant Fashion in that room yonder.

Mus. Sir Brilliant Fashion? I wish my lady would mind what he says to her—You great bear! you have given me such a flush in my face! [*Takes a pocket looking-glass.*] I look pretty well, I think. There, [*Kisses him.*] have done, and let me be gone. [*Exit.*

Will. There goes high and low life contrasted in one person. She has not dived at the bottom of my master's secrets; that's one good thing. What she knows, she'll blab. We shall hear of this widow from Bath: but the plot lies deeper than they are aware of. Inquire they will; and let 'em, say I; their answer will do 'em no good. 'Mr. Lovemore visit the widow Bellmour?' We know 'no such person.' That's what they'll get for their pains. Their puzzle will be greater than ever; and they may sit down to chew the cud of disappointed malice——Hush! my master and Sir Brilliant: I'll take care of a single rogue, and get me out of their way. [*Exit.*

Enter LOVEMORE *and* SIR BRILLIANT.

Love. My dear Sir Brilliant, I must both pity and laugh at you. Thou art metamorphosed into the most whimsical being!

Sir Bril. If your raillery diverts you, go on with it. This is always the case: apply for sober advice, and your friend plays you off with a joke.

Love. Sober advice! very far gone indeed. There is no such thing as talking soberly to the tribe of lovers. That eternal absence of mind that possesses you all! There is no society with you. I was damnable company myself, when I was one of the pining herd: but a dose of matrimony has cooled me pretty handsomely; and here comes *repetatur haustus.*

Enter MUSLIN.

Mus. My lady sends her compliments, and begs to know how you do this morning.

Love. [*Aside to* SIR BRIL.] The novelty of the compliment is enlivening—It is the devil to be teased in this manner——What did you say, child?

Mus. My lady hopes you find yourself well this morning.

Love. Ay, your lady—give her my compliments, and tell her—and tell her I hope she is well, and—— [*Yawns.*

Mus. She begs you wont think of going out without seeing her.

Love. To be sure, she has such variety every time one sees her—my head aches wofully—tell your lady—I shall be glad to see her; I'll wait on her—[*Yawns.*] tell her what you will.

Mus. A brute!—I shall let my lady know, Sir. [*Exit.*

Love. My dear Sir Brilliant, you see me an example before your eyes. Put the widow Bellmour out of your head, and let my lord Etheridge be the victim for you.

Sir Bril. Positively no; my pride is picqued. My lord Etheridge shall find me a more formidable rival than he imagines. By the way, how long has the noble peer been in England?

Love. His motions are unknown to me.—[*Aside.*] I don't like that question.—His lordship is in France, is not he?

Sir Bril. No; he is certainly returned. The match is to be concluded privately.—He visits her *incog.*

Love. [*Forcing a laugh.*] Oh! no; that can't be; my lord Etheridge loves parade. I cannot help laughing. The jealousy of you lovers is for ever conjuring up phantoms to torment yourselves. My dear Sir Brilliant, wait for realities; there are enough in life, and you may teach your fancy to be at rest, and give you no farther trouble.

Sir Bril. Nay, don't let your fancy run away with you. What I tell you, is the real truth.

Love. Well, if it be true, and if lord Etheridge is come to England to marry, do you go to France not to marry, and you will have the best of the bargain.

Enter WILLIAM.

Will. Sir Bashful Constant is in his chariot at the upper end of the street, and if your honour is at leisure he will wait upon you.

Love. Have not I sent him word I should be at home? Let him come as soon as he will.—[*Exit* WILLIAM.] Another instance, Sir Brilliant, to deter you from all thoughts of matrimony.

Sir Bril. Po! hang him! he is no precedent for me. A younger brother, who lived in middling life, comes to a title and an estate on the death of a consumptive baronet; marries a woman of quality, and now carries the primitive ideas of his narrow education into high life. Don't you remember when he had chambers in Fig-tree court, and used to saunter and lounge away his time in Temple coffee-houses? The fellow is as dull as a bill in Chancery.

Love. But he is improved since that time.

Sir Bril. Impossible; don't you see how he goes on? He knows nothing of the world; if his eyes meet yours, he blushes up to his ears, and looks suspicious, as if he imagined you have a design upon him.

Love. I can explain that part of his charac-

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ter. He has a mortal aversion to wit and raillery, and dreads nothing so much as being laughed at for being particular.

Sir Bril. And so, fearing to be ridiculous, he becomes substantially so every moment.

Love. Even so, and if you look at him, he shrinks back from your observation, casting a sly, slow, jealous eye, all round him, like Miss Bumpkin in a country village, awkwardly endeavouring to conceal what the increase of her shape discovers to the whole parish.

Sir Bril. And then his behaviour to his lady.

Love. Why, as to that point, I don't think he hates her. His fear of ridicule may be at the bottom. He has strange notions about the dignity of a husband. There is a secret, which he would fain tell me, and yet he is shy, and he hints, and he hesitates, and then he retreats back into himself, and ends just where he began. But with all his faults, he has fits of good nature.—There;—his chariot's at the door.

Sir Bril. Lady Constant, you mean, has fits of good nature. Have you made any progress there?

Love. That's well from you, who are the formidable man in that quarter.

Sir Bril. Oh! no; positively, no pretence, no colour for it.

Love. Don't I know that you have made advances?

Sir Bril. Advances! I pity my Lady Constant, and——

Love. Well, that's generous—hush! I hear him coming. Sir Brilliant, I admire your amorous charity of all things!

Enter SIR BASHFUL CONSTANT.

Sir Bash. Mr. Lovemore, I have taken the liberty—but you seem to be busy, and I intrude, perhaps.

Love. Oh, by no means: walk in, Sir Bashful.

Sir Bash. Sir Brilliant, I am glad to see you. [*Bows awkwardly.*

Sir Bril. You do me honour, Sir. I hope you left my lady well. [*Aside.*] An absurd brute!—Lovemore, I'll just step and pay a short visit to our friend over the way.

Love. Why in such a hurry?

Sir Bril. I shall return immediately. I'll be with you before you are dressed. Sir Bashful, I kiss your hand. [*Exit.*

Sir Bash. I am glad he is gone. I have something, Mr. Lovemore, that I want to advise with you about.

Love. Have you?

Sir Bash. I have had another brush with my wife.

Love. I am sorry for it, Sir Bashful—[*Aside.*] I am perfectly glad of it.

Sir Bash. Pretty warm the quarrel was. She took it in a high tone. Sir Bashful, says she, I wonder you will disgrace yourself at this rate. You know my pin-money is not sufficient. The mercer and every body dunning me! I can't go on after this fashion, says she, and then something about her quality.——You know, Mr. Lovemore, [*Smiling.*] she is a woman of high quality.

Love. Yes, and a very fine woman.

Sir Bash. No, no, no; not much of that—and yet—[*Looks at him and smiles.*] Do you think her a fine woman?

Love. Undoubtedly; where do you see any body that outshines her?

Sir Bash. Why, to be sure—[*Smiling.*] one does not often see her eclipsed. I think she is what you may call a fine woman. She keeps good company.

Love. The very best.

Sir Bash. Yes, yes; your tip-top, none else. And yet to encourage her too far were dangerous. Too complying a husband makes but a sorry figure in the eyes of the world.

Love. The world will talk, Sir Bashful.

Sir Bash. Too fast, Mr. Lovemore. Their tongues will run on, and one does not like to give them a subject. I answered her stoutly: Madam, says I, a fig for your quality: I am master in my own house, and who do you think—[*Winks at* LOVEMORE.] putting myself in a passion, you know—Who do you think is to pay for your cats, and your dogs, and your monkeys, and your squirrels, and your gaming debts?

Love. How could you? That was sharply said.

Sir Bash. Yes; I gave it her. But for all that, I am main good-natured at the bottom.

Love. You was not is earnest then?

Sir Bash. No, no; that's the point: a man must keep up his own dignity. I'll tell you what I did.

Love. Well;—you did what's proper, I dare say.

Sir Bash. I hope you'll think so.—Don't laugh at me.——Come, I will tell you. I went to her mercer slily and paid him the money. [*Smiling.*

Love. Did you?

Sir Bash. [*Looki g alarmed.*] Was not it right?

Love. It was elegant.

Sir Bash. I am glad you approve. I took care to save appearances. One would not have the world know it.

Love. By no means.

Sir Bash. It would make them think me too uxorious.

Love. So it would—[*Aside.*] I must encourage that notion.—While you live, guard against being too uxorious. Though our wives deserve "our fondness," the world will laugh at us;—and hark ye, if our wives don't deserve it, they'll laugh at us the more.

Sir Bash. I know it. And so, says I, Mr. Lute-string, there's your money, but tell nobody that I paid it slily.

Love. Why, that's doing a genteel thing by stratagem.—Admirably contrived!

Sir Bash. I think it was. But I have a deeper secret for you.

Love. Have you?

Sir Bash. I have.—May I trust you?

Love. Now there you hurt me. I feel that, Sir Bashful.

Sir Bash. I beg your pardon. I know you are my friend. I have great confidence in you. You must know—look ye, Mr. Lovemore—you must know—

Enter MUSLIN.

Mus. My lady desires to know if you choose a dish of tea this morning.

Love. Po! ridiculous!—tell your mistress—go about your business. [*Turns her out.*

Sir Bash. I see how it is. He does not care a cherry-stone for his wife.

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Love. Such impertinence!——Well, Sir Bashful.

Sir Bash. He does not value her a pinch of snuff. [*Aside.*

Love. Well, I am all attention.

Sir Bash. It does not signify. A foolish affair; I wont trouble you.

Love. Nay, that's unkind. It will be no trouble.

Sir Bash. Well, well, I—I—Do you think Muslin did not overhear us?

Love. Not a syllable. Come, we are safe.

Sir Bash. I don't know, but—let me ask you a question first——Have you any regard for your lady?

Love. The highest value for her. But then, you know, appearances——

Sir Bash. Right!—I repose it with you.—You must know, Mr. Lovemore, as I told you, I am at the bottom very good natured, and, though it may be thought——we are interrupted again.

Enter SIR BRILLIANT.

Sir Bril. Lovemore, I have paid my visit.

Love. Pshaw!—this is unlucky——You are as good as your word, Sir Brilliant.

Sir Bril. Perhaps you have business?

Sir Bash. No, no business—[*Turns to* LOVEMORE.] there's no proceeding now—I was going, [*To* SIR BRILLIANT.] Mr. Lovemore, I wish you a good day.

Love. Po! Pr'ythee, you sha'n't leave me yet.

Sir Bash. I must; I can't stay.—[*Aside to* LOVEMORE.] Another time. Suppose you call at my house at one o'clock.

Love. With all my heart.

Sir Bash. Do so; nobody shall interrupt us. Mr. Lovemore, I take my leave. Sir Brilliant, I kiss your hand. You wont forget, Mr. Lovemore?

Love. Oh, no; depend upon me.

Sir Bash. A good morning. He is the only friend I have. [*Exit.*

Love. Ha, ha! you broke in, in the most critical moment. He was just going to be delivered of his secrets!

Sir Bril. I beg your pardon. How could you let me.

Love. Nay, no matter. I shall worm it out of him.

Enter MUSLIN.

Mus. My lady, Sir, is quite impatient.

Love. Po! for ever teasing! I'll wait upon her presently. [*Exit* MUSLIN.

Sir Bril. I'll step and chat with her while you dress. May I take the liberty?

Love. You know you may: no ceremony. How could you ask me such a question?—*A-propos*, Sir Brilliant, I want a word with you. Step with me into the study for a moment.

Sir Bril. I attend you.

Love. Poor Sir Bashful!——ha, ha!——a ridiculous, unaccountable——What does he mean? [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—Another Apartment.

MRS. LOVEMORE *at her Tea-Table.*

Mrs. Love. This trash of tea! I don't know why I drink so much of it. Heigho!—What keeps Muslin? Surely never was an unhappy woman treated with such cruel indifference; nay, with such open, such undisguised insolence of gallantry.

Enter MUSLIN.

Well, Muslin, have you seen his prime minister?

Mus. Yes, Ma'am, I have seen Mr. William. He says his master is going out, according to the old trade, and he does not expect to see him again till to-morrow morning. Mr. Lovemore is now in the study. Sir Brilliant Fashion is with him: I heard them as I passed by the door, laughing as loud as two actors in a comedy.

Mrs. Love. About some precious mischief, I'll be sworn, and all at my cost. Heigho!

Mus. Dear Ma'am, why chagrin yourself about a vile man, that is not worth——no, as I hope for mercy, not worth a single sigh?

Mrs. Love. What can I do, Muslin?

Mus. Do, Ma'am!—If I was as you, I'd do for him. If I could not cure my grief, I'd find some comfort, that's what I would.

Mrs. Love. Comfort? alas! there is none for me.

Mus. And whose fault then? Would any body but you——It provokes me to think of it——Would any but you—young, handsome, with wit, graces, talents,—would any body, with so many accomplishments, sit at home here, as melancholy as a poor servant out of place?——And all for what? For a husband! and such a husband! What do you think the world will say of you, Ma'am?

Mrs. Love. I care not what they say, I am tired of the world, and the world may be tired of me, if it will. My troubles are to myself only, and I must endeavour to bear them. Who knows what patience may do? If Mr. Lovemore has any feeling left, my conduct and his own heart may one day incline him to do me justice.

Mus. But, dear Ma'am, that's waiting for dead men's shoes. Incline him to do you justice!—What signifies expecting and expecting! Give me a bird in the hand. If all the women in London, who happen to be in your case, were to sit down and die of the spleen, what would become of the public places? They might turn Vauxhall to a hop-garden; make a brew-house of Ranelagh, and let both the play-houses to a methodist-preacher. We should not have the racketting we have now. John, let the horses be put to—John, go to my Lady Trumpabout, and invite her to a small party of twenty or thirty card-tables.——John, run to my Lady Catgut, and let her know I'll wait upon her ladyship to the opera—John, run as fast as ever you can, with my compliments to Mr. Varney, and tell him it will be the death of me, if I have not a box for the new play. Lord bless you, Ma'am, they rantipole it about this town, with as unconcerned looks, and as florid outsides, as if they were treated at home like so many goddesses; though every body knows possession has ungoddessed them all, long ago, and their husbands care no more for them, no, by Jingo, no more than they care for their husbands.

Mrs. Love. At what a rate you run on!

Mus. It is enough to make a body run on. If every body thought like you, Ma'am——

Mrs. Love. If every body loved like me!

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Mus. A brass thimble for love, if it is not returned by love. What the deuce is here to do? Love for love is something; but to love alone, where's the good of that? Shall I go and fix my heart upon a man, who shall despise me for that very reason? And ay, says he, 'Poor fool! I see she adores me. The woman is well enough, only she has one inconvenient circumstance about her; I am married to her, and marriage is the devil.'

Mrs. Love. Will you have done?

Mus. I have not half done, Ma'am. And when the vile man goes a roguing, he smiles impudently in your face, 'and I am going to the chocolate-house, my dear; amuse yourself in the mean time, my love.' Fy upon 'em! I know 'em all. Give me a husband that will enlarge the circle of my innocent pleasures: but a husband now a-days is no such thing. A husband now is nothing but a scare-crow, to show you the fruit, but touch it if you dare. The devil's in 'em, the Lord forgive me for swearing. A husband is a mere bugbear, a snap-dragon, a monster; that is to say, if one make him so, then he is a monster indeed; and if one do not make him so, then he behaves like a monster; and of the two evils, by my troth——But here, Ma'am, here comes one who can tell you all about it. Here comes Sir Brilliant: ask his advice, Ma'am.

Mrs. Love. His advice?——Ask advice of the man who has estranged Mr. Lovemore's affections from me?

Mus. Well, I protest and vow, I think Sir Brilliant a very pretty gentleman. He is the very pink of the fashion. He dresses fashionably, lives fashionably, wins your money fashionably, loses his own fashionably, and does every thing fashionably, and then he looks so lively, and so much to say, and so never at a loss!———but here comes.

Enter Sir BRILLIANT.

Sir Bril. Mrs. Lovemore, my dear Ma'am, always in a *vis-a-vis* party with your *suivante*?—Afford me your pardon, if I say this does a little wear the appearance of being out of humour with the world.

Mrs. Love. Far from it, Sir Brilliant. We were engaged in your panegyric.

Sir Bril. My panegyric! Then am I come most *a-propos* to give the portrait a few finishing touches. Mr. Lovemore, as soon as he is dressed, will wait upon you: in the mean time I can help you to some anecdotes, which will enable you to colour your canvass a little higher.

Mrs. Love. Among these anecdotes, I hope you will not omit the bright exploit of seducing Mr. Lovemore from all domestic happiness.

[*She makes a sign to* MUSLIN *to go.*

Sir Bril. I, Madam?—Let me perish if ever—

Mrs. Love. Oh! Sir, I can make my observations.

Sir Bril. May fortune eternally forsake me, and beauty frown on me, if I am conscious of any plot upon earth.

Mrs. Love. Don't assert too strongly, Sir Brilliant.

Sir Bril. May I never throw a winning cast—

Mrs. Love. It is in vain to deny it, Sir.

Sir Bril. May I lose the next sweepstakes, if I have ever, in thought, word, or deed, been accessary to his infidelity. I alienate the affections of Mr. Lovemore! Consider, Madam, how would this tell in Westminster Hall? Sir Brilliant Fashion, what say you, guilty of this indictment, or not guilty? Not guilty, poss. Thus issue is joined. You enter the court; but, my dear Madam, veil those graces that adorn your person; abate the fire of those charms: so much beauty will corrupt the judges: give me a fair trial.

Mrs. Love. And thus you think to laugh it away.

Sir Bril. Nay, hear me out. You appear in court: you charge the whole upon me, without a syllable as to the how, when, and where. no proof positive; the prosecution ends, and I begin my defence.

Mrs. Love. And by playing these false colours you think I am to be amused?

Sir Bril. Nay, Mrs. Lovemore, I am now upon my defence. Only hear.—You will please to consider, Gentlemen of the Jury, that Mr. Lovemore is not a minor, nor I his guardian: He loves gayety, pleasure, and enjoyment: is it my fault? He is possessed of talents, and a taste for pleasure, which he knows how to gratify: can I restrain him? He knows the world, makes the most of life, and plucks the fruit that grows around him: am I to blame? This is the whole affair.—How say you, Gentlemen of the Jury?—Not guilty. There you see how it is. I have cleared myself.

Mrs. Love. Brisk, lively, and like yourself, Sir Brilliant! But if you can imagine this bantering way—

Sir Bril. Acquitted by my country, Ma'am; fairly acquitted.

Mrs. Love. After the very edifying counsel which you give to Mr. Lovemore, this loose strain is not in the least surprising. And, Sir, your late project—

Sir Bril. My late project?

Mrs. Love. Your late project, Sir. Not content with leading Mr. Lovemore, into a thousand scenes of dissipation, you have introduced him lately to your Mrs. Bellmour. You understand me, Sir.

Sir Bril. Ma'am, he does not so much as know the widow Bellmour.

Mrs. Love. Nay, Sir Brilliant, have a care: justify it if you can, or give it a turn of wit. There is no occasion to hazard yourself too far.

Sir Bril. Falsehood I disdain, Madam; and I, Sir Brilliant Fashion, declare that Mr. Lovemore is not acquainted with the widow Bellmour. And if he was, what then; Do you know the lady?

Mrs. Love. I know her, Sir? A person of that character?

Sir Bril. Oh!—I see you don't know her; but I will let you into her history.—Pray be seated—you shall know her whole history, and then judge for yourself. The widow Bellmour, Madam—

Love. [*Within.*] William, are the horses put to?

Sir Bril. We are interrupted.

Enter LOVEMORE.

Love. Very well: let the carriage be brought round directly.—How do you do, my dear?—Sir Brilliant, I beg your pardon.—My love, you don't answer me: how do you do this morning? [*With an air of cold civility.*

Mrs. Love. A little indisposed in mind: but indisposition of the mind is of no consequence: nobody pities it.

Love. I beg your pardon, Mrs. Lovemore.

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indisposition of the mind—Sir Brilliant, that's a mighty pretty ring on your finger.

Sir Bril. A bauble: will you look at it? [*Gives the ring.*

Mrs. Love. Though I have but few obligations to Sir Brilliant, I suppose I am to ascribe to him the favour of this visit, Mr. Lovemore.

Love. [*Looking at the ring and laughing.*] Now there you wrong me.—Your inquiries about my health have been very obliging this morning, and I came to return the compliment before I go out.—It is set very neatly. [*Gives back the ring.*

Mrs. Love. Are you going out, Sir?

Love. A matter of business—How I do hate business!—But business, [*Examining his ruffles.*]—business must be done.—Pray is there any news?—Any news, my dear?

Mrs. Love. It would be news to me, Sir, if you would be kind enough to let me know whether I may expect the favour of your company at dinner to-day.

Love. It would be impertinent in me to answer such a question, for I can give no direct answer to it.—I am the slave of events; just as things happen; perhaps I may, perhaps not. But don't let me be of any inconvenience to you. Is it material where a body eats?—Have you heard what happened to me? [*Aside to* SIR BRILLIANT.

Sir Bril. When and where?

Love. A word in your ear—with your permission, Ma'am?

Mrs. Love. That cold, contemptuous civility, Mr. Lovemore——

Love. Po! pr'ythee now, how can you?—that is very peevish, and very ill-natured.—[*Turning to* SIR BRIL.] I lost every thing I played for after you went. The foreigner and he understand one another.—I beg your pardon, Mrs. Lovemore: it was only about an affair at the opera.

Mrs. Love. The opera, or any thing, is more agreeable than my company.

Love. Now there again you wrong me.—[*To* SIR BRILLIANT.] We dine at the St. Alban's.—How can you, Mrs. Lovemore? I make it a point not to incommode you. You possibly may have some private party; and it would be unpolite in me to obstruct your schemes of pleasure. Would not it, Sir Brilliant?

Sir Bril. Oh!—Gothic to the last degree!

Love. Very true; vulgar and mechanic!—[*Both stand laughing.*]

Mrs. Love. Go on; make sport for yourselves, gentlemen.

Love. Ho! ho! ho! I am sore with laughing.—If you, Madam, have arranged an agreeable party, for me to be present, it would look as if we lived together like Sir Bashful Constant and his lady; who are always, like two game cocks, ready armed to goad and spur one another. Hey! Sir Brilliant?

Sir Bril. Oh! the very thing: or like Sir Theodore Traffic at Turnbridge taking his wife under the arm in the public rooms, and 'come along home, I tell you.'

Love. Exactly so. [*Both continue laughing.*] Odds my life; I shall be beyond my time. [*Looks at his watch.*] Any commands into the city, my dear?

Mrs. Love. Commands!—no, Sir, I have no commands.

Love. I have an appointment at my banker's; Sir Brilliant, you know old Discount?

Sir Bril. He that was in parliament, and had the large contract?

Love. The same: *Entire Butt*, I think, was the name of his borough. Can I set you down?

Sir Bril. No; my carriage waits. I shall rattle half the town over presently.

Love. As you will. Sir Brilliant will entertain you, Ma'am. *Au revoir*, my love.—Sir Brilliant, yours.—Who waits there? [*Exit, singing.*

Sir Bril. *Bon voyage.*—You see, Madam, that I don't deprive you of his company.

Mrs. Love. Your influence is now unnecessary. It is grown habitual to him: he will drive to your Mrs. Bellmour, I suppose.

Sir Bril. *A-propos;* that brings us back to the little history I was going to give you of that lady. What is your charge against her? That she is amiable? Granted. Young, gay, rich, handsome, with enchanting talents, it is no wonder all the pretty fellows are on their knees to her. Her manner so entertaining! that quickness of transition from one thing to another! that round of variety; and every new attitude does so become her; and she has such a feeling heart, and, with an air of giddiness, so nice a conduct!

Mrs. Love. Mighty well, Sir: she *is* a very vestal. Finish your portrait. A vestal from your school of painting must be a curiosity.—But how comes it, Sir, if she is this wonder, that your honourable proposals are at an end there?

Sir Bril. Compulsion, Ma'am: it is not voluntary. My lord Etheridge is the happy man. I thought he was out of the kingdom; but his lordship is with her every evening. I can scarce gain admittance; and so all that remains for me, is to do justice to the lady, and console myself in the best way I can for the insufficiency of my pretensions.

Mrs. Love. Am I to believe all this?

Sir Bril. May the first woman I pay my addresses to, strike me to the centre with a supercilious eye-brow, if every syllable is not minutely true.—So that you see I am not the cause of your inquietude.—There is not in the world a person, who more earnestly aspires to prove the tender esteem he bears you.—I have long panted for an opportunity—by all that's soft she listens to me! [*Aside.*]——I have long panted, Ma'am, for a tender moment like this—

Mrs. Love. [*Looks gravely at him.*] Sir!

Sir Bril. I have panted with all the ardour, which charms like yours must kindle in every heart!—

Mrs. Love. [*Walks away.*] This liberty, Sir—

Sir Bril. Consider, Madam: we have both cause of discontent; both disappointed; both crossed in love; and the least we can do is both to join, and sweeten each other's cares.

Mrs. Love. And your friend, Sir, who has just left you—

Sir Bril. He, Madam, for a long time—I have seen it, with vexation seen it—yes, he has long been false to honour, love, and you.

Mrs. Love. Sir Brilliant, I have done. You take my wrongs too much to heart, Sir. [*Rings a bell.*

Sir Bril. Those eyes that tell us what the sun is made of, those hills of driven snow——

Mrs. Love. Will nobody answer there?

Enter MUSLIN.

Sir Bril. Madam, I desist: when you are in better humour, recollect what I have said. Your adorer takes his leave. Sir Brilliant,

mind your hits, and her strait-laced virtue will surrender at last. Madam—

[*Bows respectfully; Exit.*

Mus. As I live and breathe, Ma'am, if I was you, I would not fluster myself about it.

Mrs. Love. About what?

Mus. What signifies miucing the matter? I heard it all.

Mrs. Love. You did? Did you?

[*Looks angrily.*

Mus. Ma'am.

Mrs. Love. Impertinence! [*Walks about.*] Oh! Mr. Lovemore!—To make his character public, and render him the topic of every teatable throughout this town. I must avoid that.

Mus. What the deuce is here to do?—An unmannerly thing, for to go for to huff me in this manner! [*Aside.*

Mrs. Love. That would only widen the breach, and instead of neglect, might call forth resentment, and settle at last into a fixed aversion: lawyers, parting, and a separate maintenance!—What must be done?

Mus. What is she thinking of now?—A sulky thing not to be more familiar with such a friend as I am. [*Aside.*]—Did you speak to me, Ma'am?

Mrs. Love. It may succeed; suppose I try it. Muslin.

Mus. Ma'am. [*Running to her.*

Mrs. Love. You heard Sir Brilliant say, that Mr. Lovemore is not acquainted with the widow?

Mus. Lard, Ma'am, he's as full of tricks as a French milliner. I know he does visit there: I know it from William. I'll be hanged in my own garters, if he does not.

Mrs. Love. I know not what to do. Let my chair be got ready.

Mus. Your chair, Ma'am!—are you a going out?

Mrs. Love. Let me hear no more questions: do as I order you. [*Exit.*

Mus. Which way is the wind now? No matter; she does not know what she'd be at. If she would but take my advice,—go abroad, visit everywhere, see the world, throw open her doors, give balls, assemblies, concerts; sing, dance, dress, spend all her money, run in debt, ruin her husband; there would be some sense in that: the man would stay at home then to quarrel with her. She would have enough of his company. But no; mope, mope, for ever: heigho! tease, tease; Muslin, step to William; where's his master? When did he come home? How long has he been up? A fine life, truly.——I love to be in the fashion, for my part. Bless me, I had like to have forgot. Mrs. Marmalet comes to my rout to-night. She might as well stay away: she is nothing but mere lumber. The formal thing wont play higher than shilling whist. How the devil does she think I can make a shilling party for her! There is no such a thing now-a-days: nobody plays shilling whist now, unless I was to invite the trades-people: but I aha'n't let myself down for Madam Marmalet, that I promise her. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—An Apartment at Sir Bashful Constant's.

Enter Sir Bashful.

Sir Bash. Did not I hear a rap at the door? Yes, yes, I did; I am right. The carriage is just now driving away. Who answers there? Sideboard; step hither, Sideboard. I must know who it is: my wife keeps the best company in England. Hold, I must be wary. Servants love to pry into their master's secret.

Enter Sideboard.

Whose carriage was that at the door?

Side. The Dutchess of Hurricane, your honour.

Sir Bash. The Dutchess of Hurricane? [*Walks aside, and smiles.*] A woman of great rank!—what did she want?

Side. She has left this card for my lady.

Sir Bash. A card? Let me see it. [*Reads.*

The Dutchess of Hurricane presents compliments to Lady Constant. She has left the hounds and the foxes, and the brutes that gallop after them, to their own dear society for the rest of the winter. Her Grace keeps Wednesdays at Hurricane House for the rest of the winter.

Make me thankful, here's a card from a Dutchess!—What have you there?

Side. A parcel of cards, that have been left here this morning.

Sir Bash. All these in one morning? [*Looks at them.*] Why, I may as well keep an inn; may as well keep the Coach and Horses in Piccadilly. [*Reads fast.*] *Lady Riot—Mrs. All-night—The Dutchess of Carmine*—look ye there, another Dutchess! *Lady Basset—Lord Pleurisie—the Countess of Ratifie—Sir Richard Lungs—Lord Laudanum—Sir Charles Valerian—Lady Hectick—Lady Mary Grabble*—I can't bear all this, Sideboard. [*Aside and smiling.*] I can't bear the pleasure of it: all people of tip-top condition to visit my wife?

Enter Furnish.

What's the matter, Furnish?

Fur. The matter, Sir?—Nothing's the matter.

Sir Bash. What are you about?—Where are you going? What have you to do now?

Fur. Only to tell the chairmen they must take Black George with his flambeau, with them this evening, and carry the chair to pay visits for my lady.

Sir Bash. An empty chair to pay visits!—what polite ways people of fashion have got of being intimate with each other—[*Aside.*] Absurd as it is, I am glad to see my wife keep pace with the best of them. I laugh at it, and yet I like it.—Wounds! I shall be found out by my servants. I tell you, Sideboard, and you, Mrs. Busy Body, that your mistress leads a life of noise and hurry, and cards and dice, and vanity and nonsense, and I am resolved to bear it no longer. Don't I hear her coming?

Fur. My lady is coming, Sir.

Sir Bash. [*Aside and smiling.*] She looks charmingly.—Now I'll tell her roundly, a piece of mind. You shall see who commands in this house.

Enter Lady Constant.

Sir Bash. [*Steals a look.*] I could almost give up the point when I look at her.—So, Madam, I have had my house full of duns again to-day.

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Lady Cons. Obliging creatures, to call so often. What did they want?

Sir Bash. What!—what should they want but money?

Lady Cons. And you paid them, I suppose?

Sir Bash. You suppose!—'Sdeath, Madam, what do you take me for?

Lady Cons. I took you for a husband: my brother prescribed you. But his prescription has done me no good.

Sir Bash. Nor me, either: I have had a bitter pill of it.

Lady Cons. But the pill was gilded for you. My fortune, I take it, has paid off the old family mortgage on your estate.

Sir Bash. And at the rate you go on, a new mortgage will swallow up my estate. I see you are an ungrateful woman.

Lady Cons. That is, as you keep the account.

Sir Bash. And my accounts will show it.—Day after day nothing but extravagance to gratify your vanity. Did not I go into parliament to please you? Did not I go down to the Borough of Smoke-and-Sot, and get drunk there for a whole month together? Did not I get mobbed at the George and Vulture? and pelted and horsewhipped the day before the election? And was not I obliged to steal out of the town in a rabbit-cart? And all this to be somebody, as you call it? Did not I stand up in the House to make a speech to show what an orator you had married? And did not I expose myself? Did I know whether I stood upon my head or my heels for half an hour together? And did not a great man from the Treasury-bench tell me never to speak again?

Lady Cons. And why not take his advice?

Sir Bash. What, in the name of common sense, had I to do in parliament? My country! what's my country to me? The debts of the nation, and your gaming debts are nothing to me. I must help to pay both, must I? I can vote against taxes, and I can advertise in the Gazette to secure me from your extravagance. I have not lived in the Temple for nothing.

Fur. He slept there, and calls it studying the law.

Sir Bash. Hold you your tongue, Mrs. Pert; leave the room. Go both about your business.

[*Exeunt* FURNISH *and* SIDEBOARD.

[*Aside.*] I have kept it up before my servants. [*Looks at* LADY CONSTANT.] She is a fine woman, after all.

Lady Cons. Is there never to be an end of this usage, Sir? Am I to be for ever made unhappy by your humours?

Sir Bash. Humours! good sense and sound judgment, in the fine lady's dictionary, are to be called humours?

Lady Cons. And your humours are now grown insupportable.

Sir Bash. Your profusion is insupportable. At the rate you go on, how am I to find money for my next election?—If you would but talk this matter over coolly—She talks like an angel, and I wish I could say [*Aside.*] the same of myself.—What will the world think?—Only command your temper—what will they think, if I am seen to encourage your way of life?

Lady Cons. Amuse yourself that way, Sir. Avoid one error and run into the opposite extreme.

Sir Bash. [*Aside.*] There; a translation from Horace! *Dum vitant stulti vitia*—She is a notable woman.

Lady Cons. Let me tell you, there is not in life a more ridiculous sight than the person who guards with imaginary wisdom, against one giant vice, and leaves himself open to a million of absurdities.

Sir Bash. [*Aside.*] I am nothing to her in argument—she has a tongue that can reason me out of my senses.—I could almost find it in my heart to tell her the whole truth.—You know, my Lady Constant, that when you want any thing in reason——

Lady Cons. Is it unreasonable to live with decency? Is it unreasonable to keep the company my rank and education have entitled me to? Is it unreasonable to conform to the modes of life, when your fortune can so well afford it?

Sir Bash. [*Aside.*] She is a very reasonable woman, and I wish I had but half her sense.—You know I am good natured in the main, and if a sum of money within a moderate compass—If a brace of hundreds—[*Aside.*] why should not I make it three?—I know that you have contracted habits of life, and [*In a softened tone.*] habit, I know, is not easily conquered: and if three [*Smiling.*] hundred pounds will prevent disputes, why [*Smiling.*] as to the matter of three hundred pounds——

Enter FURNISH, *with a Band-box.*

Fur. Your ladyship's things from the milliner's.

Sir Bash. Death and fury! this woman has overheard me. Three hundred pounds, Madam! [*In a violent passion.*] let me tell you that three hundred pounds—what right have you to shovel away three hundred pounds?

Lady Cons. Why does the man fly out into such a passion?

Sir Bash. I will allow no such doings in my house. Don't I often come when my hall is besieged with a parcel of powder monkey servants? And did not I the other day, before I could get into my own doors, entangle myself among the chairmen's poles, and was not I confined there like a man in the stocks?

Lady Cons. Why would you be so awkward?

Sir Bash. An eternal scene of routs and drums. Have not I seen you put the fee simple of a score of my best acres upon a single card? And have not I muttered to myself, 'if that woman was as much in love with me as she is with Pam, what an excellent wife she would make.'

Lady Cons. Pam is very obliging: why wont you strive to be as agreeable?

Sir Bash. 'Sdeath, Madam, you are so fond of play, that I should not wonder to see my next child marked on the forehead with a pair of royal aces.

Fur. I am sure you deserve to be marked on the forehead with a pair of—

Sir Bash. Malapert hussy! do you meddle? Begone this moment. [*Exit* FURNISH.

Lady Cons. Fy upon it, Sir Bashful? I am tired of blushing for you.

Sir Bash. I am afraid I have gone too far: she is ashamed of me. [*Aside.*

Lady Cons. You agreed to a separation the other day, and there remains nothing but to execute articles, and make an end of all this disquiet.

Sir Bash. A separate maintenance will go but a little way to answer the bawling of milliners, mercers, jewellers, and gaming debts.

Lady Cons. It will purchase content, and nothing can obtain that under your roof.

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Sir Bash. [*Aside.*] I have shot my bolt too far—I fancy, my lady Constant, that you don't know me. We might explain matters, and—'sdeath, [*Aside.*] I am going to blab—I say, Madam, if you understood me rightly—as to the authority of a husband, I might, perhaps, be brought to give it up, in part at least; and if nobody was the wiser, I might connive—Po! confusion! interrupted again by that—

Enter FURNISH.

Fur. A servant from Mrs. Lovemore, Madam, to know—

Sir Bash. The authority of a husband I never will give up.

Lady Cons. A storm, a whirlwind is fitter to converse with.

Sir Bash. I will storm like a whirlwind in my own house. I have done, Madam: you are an ungovernable woman—[*Aside, and smiling.*] She is a charming woman, and if nobody saw it, I would let her govern me with all my heart. [*Exit.*

Lady Cons. Did any body ever see such behaviour?

Fur. Never; and how your ladyship bears it, I can't tell.

Lady Cons. That it should be my fate to be married to such a quicksand! What does Mrs. Lovemore say?

Fur. If your ladyship will be at home, she intends to do herself the pleasure of waiting upon you.

Lady Cons. Very well; I shall be at home. Upon recollection, I want to see her. Let the servant wait: I'll write an answer. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*Another Apartment.*

Enter Sir BASHFUL *and* LOVEMORE.

Sir Bash. Walk in, Mr. Lovemore, walk in. I am heartily glad to see you. This is kind.

Love. I am ready, you see, to attend the call of friendship.

Sir Bash. Mr. Lovemore, you are a friend indeed.

Love. You do me honour, Sir Bashful. And your lady, how does she do?

Sir Bash. Perfectly well: in great spirits. [*Smiling at* LOVEMORE.] I never saw her look better: but we have had t'other skirmish since I saw you.

Love. Another?

Sir Bash. Ay, another; and I did not bate her an ace. She is a rare one to argue. She is fit to discuss a point with any man. Nobody like her. Wit at will. I thought I managed the dispute, and that I should soon have had her at what you call a *non-plus.* But no, no; no such a thing; she can give you a sharp turn in a moment.

Love. Ay!

Sir Bash. Give her her due, I am nothing to her. I thought I had her fast, but she went round me quick as lightning; and would you believe it? [*Looks highly pleased.*] She did not leave me a word to say.

Love. Well! that was hard upon you.

Sir Bash. No, not hard at all. Those little victories I don't mind. You know I told you I had something for your private ear. Have you observed nothing odd and singular in me?

Love. Not in the least. In the whole circle of my acquaintance I know nobody so little tinged with oddity.

Sir Bash. What, have you seen nothing? [*Laughs.*] Have you remarked nothing particular in regard to my wife?

Love. Why, you don't live happy with her: but that is not a singular case.

Sir Bash. But I tell you—this must be in confidence—I am, at the bottom, a very odd fellow.

Love. You do yourself injustice, Sir Bashful.

Sir Bash. No, not in the least. It is too true—I am in the main a very odd fellow; I am indeed; as odd a fish as lives; and you must have seen it before now.

Love. I see it!—I am not apt to spy defects in my friends. What can this be! You are not jealous, I hope?

Sir Bash. You have not hit the right nail on the head. No, not jealous. Do her justice, I am safe as to that point. My lady has high notions of honour. No, it is not that.

Love. Not a ray of light to guide me: explain, Sir Bashful.

Sir Bash. [*Smiling at him.*] You could never have imagined it. But first let me shut this door.

Love. What whim has got possession of him now?

Sir Bash. Mr. Lovemore, I have great dependence upon you. I am going to make a discovery—I blush at the very thought of it. [*Turns away.*

Love. Be a man, Sir Bashful; out with it at once; let me advise you.

Sir Bash. The very thing I want. The affair is—but then if he should betray me!—Mr. Lovemore, I doubt you, and yet esteem you. Some men there are, who, when a confidence is reposed in them, take occasion from thence to hold a hank over their friend, and tyrannize him all the rest of his days.

Love. O fy! This is ungenerous. True friendship is of another quality: it feels from sympathy; honour is the active principle; and the strictest secrecy is an inviolable rule.

Sir Bash. Mr. Lovemore, I have no further doubt—stay; did not you hear a noise? Don't I see a shadow moving under the bottom of that door? [*Goes to the door.*]

Love. What has got into his head?

Sir Bash. [*Looking out.*] Servants have a way of listening.

Love. Rank jealousy! he has it through the very brain!

Sir Bash. No, no; all's safe. Mr. Lovemore, I will make you the depositary, the faithful depositary of a secret: let it pass from the bottom of my heart to the inmost recess of yours: there let it rest concealed from every prying eye.——My inclination—There—I see a laugh already forming in every feature of your face.

Love. Then my face is no true index of the mind. Were you to know the agitations in which you keep me by this suspense—

Sir Bash. I believe it. To make an end at once, my inclinations are totally changed—no, not changed, but they are not what they seemed to be. Love is the passion that possesses me—I am in love, and—[*Turns from him.*] and I am ashamed of myself.

Love. Ashamed! love is a noble passion: but don't let me hear any more about it. Lady Constant will discover all, and then the blame

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will fall on me. If your heart revolts from her, don't let me be thought in league with you.—You need not involve me in a quarrel with her ladyship.

Sir Bash. You don't take me right. You are wide, quite wide of the mark. Hear me out.

Love. No, no more. You must excuse me.

Sir Bash. You shall hear me. The object of my passion, this charming woman, whom I dote on to distraction——

Love. Your pardon; I wont hear it—[*Walks away from him.*] When her ladyship hears of his gallantry, the devil is in the dice, if the spirit of revenge does not mould her to my purposes.

Sir Bash. [*Following* LOVEMORE.] I say, Mr. Lovemore, this adorable creature——

Love. Keep your secret, Sir Bashful. [*Avoiding him.*

Sir Bash. [*Following him.*] Who looks so lovely in my eyes——

Love. Well; I don't desire to know her.

Sir Bash. You do know her. [*Following him.*] This idol of my heart is my own wife.

Love. [*Stares at him.*] Your own wife!

Sir Bash. Yes, my own wife. [*Looks silly, and turns away.*] 'Tis all over with me: I am undone.

Love. This is the most unexpected discovery.

Sir Bash. Look ye there, now; he laughs at me already.

Love. [*Aside.*] His wife must not know this. The grass is cut under my feet if ever she hears a word of it.

Sir Bash. [*Aside.*] He is struck with amazement, and does not say a word to me.

Love. [*Aside.*] I must not encourage him.—And can this be possible, Sir Bashful? In love with your own wife?

Sir Bash. Spare my confusion. I have made myself very ridiculous. [*Looks at him, and turns away.*] I know I have.

Love. Ridiculous! Far from it. Can it be wrong to love a valuable woman? Not to feel the impressions of beauty and of merit were downright insensibility; but then we should always admire with discretion. The folly of us married men consists in letting our wives perceive the vehemence with which we love; and the consequence is, we are enslaved for the rest of our lives.—I could trust you with a secret, which, perhaps, would keep you in countenance. Could you imagine it? I love my wife.

Sir Bash. How!

Love. I am in love with my wife.

Sir Bash. Oh! no, no;—hey! [*Looking highly pleased.*] you make me laugh. You don't love her, do you?

Love. Passionately, tenderly; with all the ardour of affection.

Sir Bash. Give me your hand. Ha! ha!—I did not expect this. This is some relief.—Ha! ha!—you have made me happy. And have you led the life you have done all this time, on purpose to conceal your regard from her?

Love. For that very purpose. I esteem her, I love her; but I would not have her know it.

Sir Bash. No!

Love. Upon no consideration; nor would I have the world know it.

Sir Bash. Perfectly right.

Love. To be sure. Tell your wife that you esteem her good qualities, and admire her person, she cries *victoria*, falls to plundering, and then you must either break her chain, or wear it in the face of the world, a laughing-stock for all your acquaintance.

Sir Bash. That is what I have always been afraid of.

Love. Not without reason. The world delights in ridicule. Do you know, if our secrets were to transpire, that we should have nothing but wit, and raillery, and fleers, and taunts flying about our ears?

Sir Bash. But I have taken good care. I have quarrelled with my lady ten times a day, on purpose to cloak the affair, and prevent all suspicion.

Love. Admirable! I commend your prudence. Besides, my lady Constant, you know, has some youthful vigour about her; a graceful person, and an eye that inflames desire; and desire, at your time of life, you know——

Sir Bash. Po! it is not for that; that is nothing. I wear admirably well, Mr. Lovemore.

Love. Do you?

Sir Bash. As young as ever: but I don't let her know it.

Love. Well! if you are discreet in that point, you are a very Machiavel!

Sir Bash. Yes, yes; I fight cunning. [*Laughs.*

Love. Let nothing betray you. Be upon your guard: that is my own plan exactly. You want no advice from me.

Sir Bash. Pardon me: you can assist me.—My dear brother sufferer, give me your hand. We can in a sly way be of great use to each other.

Love. As how?

Sir Bash. I'll tell you. There are some things which you know our wives expect to be done.

Love. So there are.—[*Aside.*] What the devil is he at now?

Sir Bash. Now if you will assist me——

Love. You may depend upon my assistance.

Sir Bash. Thus it is: my wife, you know, keeps a power of company, and makes a great figure there. I could show her in any company in England: I wish she could say the same of me.

Love. Why truly I wish she could.

Sir Bash. But that's out of the question.—Now, if you will come into my scheme—It must be a deep secret—How? Is that Sir Brilliant's voice?

Enter SIR BRILLIANT.

Sir Bril. Sir Bashful, you see what attraction you have. Lovemore, I did not expect to see you here.

Love. Nor did I expect you, Sir Brilliant.

Sir Bash. Confusion!—This unseasonable visit— [*Aside.*

Sir Bril. And your lady, is she at home, Sir Bashful?

Sir Bash. Her own people keep that account, Sir, I know nothing of her.

Sir Bril. Nay, never talk slightingly of a lady who possesses so many elegant accomplishments. She has spirit, sense, wit, and beauty.

Sir Bash. Spirit, sense, wit, and beauty!—she has them all sure enough.—Sir, I am no sworn appraiser, to take an inventory of her effects.—[*Aside.*] Hey! Lovemore. [*Looks at him, and laughs.*

Love. [*To* SIR BASHFUL.] Vastly well.

Sir Bril. Is her ladyship visible this morning?

Sir Bash. Whether she is visible, or not, is no business of mine, but I know she is unintelligible this morning, and incomprehensible this morning. She has the vapours; but your conversation, I suppose, will brighten her up for the rest of the day.

Sir Bril. Why, as it happens, I have the rarest piece of news to communicate to her. Lovemore, you know Sir Amorous la Fool?

Love. He that was Sheriff the other day? Came up with an address, and got himself knighted?

Sir Bril. The same. He declared he would live with his friends upon the same familiar footing as before, and his new dignities would make no alteration.

Sir Bash. I have seen the knight. What of him?

Sir Bril. Poor devil. He is in such a scrape!

Sir Bash. What's the matter? Bubbled at play, I suppose.

Sir Bril. Worse, much worse.

Love. He has been blackballed at one of the clubs?

Sir Bash. Or run through the body in a duel?

Sir Bril. Why that's a scrape indeed; but it is not that.

Sir Bash. What then?

Sir Bril. So unfortunate a discovery; he has fallen in love—I cannot help laughing at him.

Love. Po! fallen in love with some coquette, who plays off her airs, and makes a jest of him.

Sir Bash. A young actress, may be, or an opera singer?

Sir Bril. No, you will never guess. Sir Bashful,—like a silly devil, he is fallen in love with his own wife.

Sir Bash. Fallen in love with his own wife! [*Stares at him.*

Sir Bril. Yes; he has made up all quarrels; his jealousy is at an end, and he is to be upon his good behaviour for the rest of his life.—Could you expect this, Lovemore?

Love. No, Sir; neither I, nor my friend, Sir Bashful, expected this.

Sir Bash. It is a stroke of surprise to me. [*Looking uneasy.*

Sir Bril. I heard it at my Lady Betty Scandal's, and we had such a laugh: the whole company were in astonishment; whist stood still, quadrille laid down the cards, and brag was in suspense. Poor Sir Amorous! it is very ridiculous, is not it, Sir Bashful?

Sir Bash. Very ridiculous, indeed.—[*Aside.*] My own case exactly, and my friend Lovemore's too.

Sir Bril. The man is lost, undone, ruined, dead and buried.

Love. [*Laughing.*] He will never be able to show his face after this discovery.

Sir Bril. Oh, never; 'tis all over with him. Sir Bashful, this does not divert you; you don't enjoy it.

Sir Bash. Who, I?—I—I—nothing can be more pleasant, and—I—laugh as heartily as I possibly can. [*Forcing a laugh.*

Sir Bril. Lovemore, you remember Sir Amorous used to strut, and talk big, and truly he did not care a pinch of snuff for his wife, not he! pretended to be as much at ease as Sir Bashful about his lady, and as much his own master as you yourself, or any man of pleasure about town.

Love. I remember him: but as to Sir Bashful and myself, we know the world; we understand life.

Sir Bash. So we do; the world will never have such a story of us. Will they, Lovemore?

Love. Oh! we are free: we are out of the scrape.

Sir Bril. Sir Amorous la Fool will be a proverb. Adieu, for him the side-box whisper, the soft assignation, and all the joys of freedom. He is retired with his Penelope to love one another in the country; and next winter they will come to town to hate one another.

Sir Bash. Do you think it will end so?

Sir Bril. No doubt of it. That is always the *denouement* of modern matrimony. But I have not told you the worst of his case. Our friend, Sir Charles Wildfire, you know, was writing a comedy, and what do you think he has done. He has drawn the character of Sir Amorous, and made him the hero of the play.

Sir Bash. What, put him into a comedy?

Sir Bril. Even so: it is called 'The Amorous Husband; or, The Man in Love with his own wife.' Oh, oh, oh, oh!

Love. We must send in time for places. [*Laughs with* SIR BRILLIANT.

Sir Bash. Lovemore carries it with an air. [*Aside.*

Sir Bril. Yes, we must secure places. Sir Bashful, you shall be of the party.

Sir Bash. The party will be very agreeable, I shall enjoy the joke prodigiously. Ha, ha! [*Forces a laugh.*

Love. Yes, Sir Bashful, we shall relish the humour. [*Looks at him and laughs.*

Sir Bril. The play will have a run: the people of fashion will crowd after such a character.—I must drive to a million of places and put it about; but first, with your leave, Sir Bashful, I will take the liberty to give a hint of the affair to your lady. It will appear so ridiculous to her.

Sir Bash. Do you think it will?

Sir Bril. Without doubt: she has never met with any thing like it: has she, Lovemore?

Love. I fancy not: Sir Bashful, you take care of that.

Sir Bash. Yes, yes; I shall never be the town-talk.—Hey, Lovemore!

Sir Bril. Well, I'll step and pay my respects to my Lady Constant. Poor Sir Amorous! he will have his horns added to his coat of arms in a little time. Ha, ha! [*Exit.*

Sir Bash. There, you see how it is. I shall get lampooned, be-rhymed, and niched into a comedy.

Love. Po! never be frightened at this. Nobody knows of your weakness but myself, and I can't betray your secret, for my own sake.

Sir Bash. Very true.

Love. This discovery shows the necessity of concealing our loves. We must act with caution. Give my lady no reason to suspect that you have the least regard for her.

Sir Bash. Not for the world.

Love. Keep to that.

Sir Bash. I have done her a thousand kindnesses, but all by stealth; all in a sly way.

Love. Have you?

Sir Bash. Oh! a multitude. I'll tell you. She has been plaguing me a long time for an addition to her jewels. She wants a diamond

cross, and a better pair of diamond buckles. Madam, says I, I will have no such trumpery; but then goes I and bespeaks them of the first jeweller in town.—All under the rose. The buckles are finished: worth five hundred! She will have them this very day, without knowing from what quarter they come—I can't but laugh at the contrivance—the man that brings them will run away directly, without saying a word. [*Laughs heartily.*

Love. Sly, sly.—You know what you are about.

Sir Bash. Ay, let me alone—[*Laughs with* LOVEMORE.] And then to cover the design still more, when I see her wear her baubles, I can take occasion to be as jealous as bedlam.

Love. So you can: ha, ha!—[*Aside.*] I wish he may never be jealous of me in good earnest.

Sir Bash. Give me your hand. [*Looks at him, and laughs.*] I am safe, I think.

Love. [*Laughing with him.*] Perfectly safe ——[*Aside.*] if it was not for his own folly.

Sir Bash. But I was telling you, Mr. Lovemore:—we can be of essential use to each other.

Love. As how, pray?

Sir Bash. Why, my lady is often in want of money. It would be ridiculous in me to supply her. Now, if you will take the money from me, and pretend to lend it to her, out of friendship, you know——

Love. Nothing can be better—[*Aside.*] Here is a fellow pimping for his own horns.—I shall be glad to serve you.

Sir Bash. I am for ever obliged to you—here, here; take it now—here it is, in bank notes—one, two, three; there is three hundred—give her that, and tell her you have more at her service to-morrow or next day, if her occasions require it.

Love. My good friend, to oblige you. [*Takes the money.*]—This is the rarest adventure!

Sir Bash. I'll do any thing for you in return.

Love. I shall have occasion for your friendship—that is, to forgive me, if you find me out. [*Aside.*

Sir Bash. Lose no time; step to her now—hold, hold; Sir Brilliant is with her.

Love. I can dismiss him. Rely upon my friendship: I will make her ladyship easy for you.

Sir Bash. It will be kind of you.

Love. It shall be her own fault if I don't.

Sir Bash. A thousand thanks to you—well, is not this the rarest project?

Love. It is the newest way——of satisfying a man's wife!

Sir Bash. Ay! let this head of mine alone.

Love. [*Aside.*] Not if I can help it. Hush!—I hear Sir Brilliant; he is coming down stairs. I'll take this opportunity, and step to her ladyship now.

Sir Bash. Do so, do so.

Love. I am gone.—[*Aside.*] Who can blame me now if I cuckold this fellow? [*Exit.*

Sir Bash. Prosper you, prosper you, Mr. Lovemore. Make me thankful: he is a true friend. I don't know what I should do without him.

Enter SIR BRILLIANT.

Sir Bril. Sir Bashful, how have you managed this?

Sir Bash. I have no art, no management. What's the matter?

Sir Bril. I don't know what you have done, but your lady laughs till she is ready to expire at what I have been telling her.

Sir Bash. And she thinks Sir Amorous la Fool an object of ridicule?

Sir Bril. She does not give credit to a single syllable of the story. A man that loves his wife would be a Phœnix indeed! Such a thing might exist formerly, but in this polished age is no where to be found. That's her opinion of the matter.

Sir Bash. [*Laughs.*] A whimsical notion of hers! and so she thinks you may go about with a lantern to find a man that sets any value upon his wife?

Sir Bril. You have managed to convince her of it. How the devil do you contrive to govern so fine a woman? I know several without her pretensions, who have long ago, thrown off all restraint. You keep up your dignity.

Sir Bash. Yes, I know what I am about.

Sir Bril. You!—you are quite in the fashion.—*A-propos;* I fancy I shall want you to afford me your assistance. You know my Lady Charlotte Modelove? She has a taste for the theatre: at Bell-grove Place she has an elegant stage, where her select friends amuse themselves now and then with a representation of certain comic pieces. We shall there act the new comedy, but we apprehend some difficulty in the arrangement of the several characters. Now you shall act Sir Amorous, and——

Sir Bash. I act, Sir!—I know nothing of the character.

Sir Bril. Po! say nothing of that. In time you may reach the ridiculous absurdity of it, and play it as well as another.

Sir Bash. [*Aside.*] Confusion! he does not suspect, I hope—Divert yourselves, Sir, as you may; but not at my expense I promise you.

Sir Bril. Never be so abrupt. Who knows but Lady Constant may be the happy wife, the *Cara Sposa* of the piece: and then, you in love with her, and she laughing at you for it, will give a zest to the humour, which every body will relish in the most exquisite degree.

Sir Bash. Po! this is too much. You are very pleasant, but you wont easily get me to play the fool.

Sir Bril. Well, consider of it. I shall be delighted to see my friend, Sir Bashful, tied to his wife's apron-string, and with a languishing look, melting away in admiration of her charms. Oh, ho, ho, ho!—adieu! *a l'honneur;* good morning, Sir Bashful. [*Exit.*

Sir Bash. I don't know what to make of all this. But there is no danger. As long as nobody knows it, I may venture to love my wife. There will be no harm while the secret is kept close as night, concealed in tenfold darkness, from the wits and scoffers of the age.

Enter LOVEMORE.

Sir Bash. Well, well;—how? what have you done.

Love. As I could wish: she is infinitely obliged to me, and will never forget the civility.

Sir Bash. A thousand thanks to you. I am not suspected?

Love. She has not a distant idea of you, in

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this business. She was rather delicate at first, and hesitated, and thought it an indecorum to accept of money even from a friend. But that objection soon vanished. I told her, it is but too visible that she is unfortunately yoked with a husband, whose humour will never be softened down to the least compliance with her inclinations.

Sir Bash. That was well said, and had a good effect, I hope.

Love. I hope so too.

Sir Bash. It helps to carry on the plot, you know.

Love. Admirably! it puts things in the train I wish.

Sir Bash. And so, to cover the design, you gave me the worst of characters.

Love. I painted you in terrible colours.

Sir Bash. Do so always, and she will never suspect me of being privy to any civility you may show her.

Love. I would not have you know any thing of my civility to her for the world. [*Aside.*]—I have succeeded thus far. I talked a few musty sentences, such as the person who receives a civility confers the obligation, with more jargon to that purpose, and so with some reluctance she complied at last, and things are now upon the footing I would have them.—Death and fury! there comes my wife.

Sir Bash. Ay, and here comes my wife.

Love. What the devil brings her hither?

Sir Bash. [*Aside.*] Now, now; now let me see how he will carry it before Mrs. Lovemore.—Walk in, Madam! walk in, Mrs. Lovemore.

Enter MRS. LOVEMORE, *and* LADY CONSTANT, *at opposite doors.*

Lady Cons. Mrs. Lovemore, to see you abroad is a novelty indeed.

Mrs. Love. As great, perhaps, as that of finding your ladyship at home. Mr. Lovemore, I did not expect to have the pleasure of meeting you.

Love. Then we are both agreeably surprised.

Sir Bash. Now mind how he behaves. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Love. I thought you were gone to your city-banker.

Love. And you find that you are mistaken. I have deferred it till the evening.—[*Aside.*] 'Sdeath! to be teased in this manner.

Sir Bash. [*Aside.*] No, no; he wont drop the mask. [*Looks at* LADY CONSTANT.] She has touched the cash; I can see the bank-notes sparkling in her eye.

Mrs. Love. If you don't go into the city till the evening, may I hope for your company at dinner, Mr. Lovemore?

Love. The question is entertaining, but as it was settled this morning, I think it has lost the graces of novelty.

Sir Bash. He wont let her have the least suspicion of his regard. [*Aside.*

Lady Cons. I dare say Mr. Lovemore will dine at home, if it conduces to your happiness, Ma'am; and Sir Bashful, I take it, will dine at home for the contrary reason.

Sir Bash. Madam, I will dine at home, or I will dine abroad, for what reason I please, and it is my pleasure, to give no reason for either.—Lovemore! [*Looks at him, and smiles.*

Love. [*Aside to* SIR BASHFUL.] Bravo!—What a blockhead it is!

Mrs. Love. As you have your chariot at the door, Mr. Lovemore, if you have no objection, I will send away my chair, and you may do me the honour of a place in your carriage.

Love. The honour will be very great to me, but—so many places to call at.—If I had known this sooner——You had better keep your chair.

Sir Bash. [*Aside.*] Cunning! cunning! he would not be seen in his chariot with her for the world. He has more discretion than I have.

Lady Cons. Mrs. Lovemore, since you have, at last, ventured to come abroad, I hope you will think it a change for the better. You are too domestic. I shall expect now to see you often: and, *a-propos*, I am to have a rout to-morrow evening; if you will do me the honour of your company——

Sir Bash. A rout to-morrow evening! you have a rout every evening, I think. Learn of Mrs. Lovemore, imitate her example, and don't let me have your hurricane months all the year round in my house.—Hip! [*Aside.*] Lovemore, how do you like me?

Love. [*Aside to* SIR BASHFUL.] You improve upon it every time. But I am loitering here as if I had nothing to do.—My lady Constant, I have the honour to wish your ladyship a good morning. Sir Bashful, yours—Madam.

[*Bows gravely to* MRS. LOVEMORE, *hums a tune, and exit.*

Sir Bash. [*Aside.*] He knows how to play the game. I'll try what I can do. Mrs. Lovemore, I have the honour to wish you a good morning. Madam—

[*Bows gravely to* LADY CONSTANT, *hums a tune, and exit.*

Mrs. Love. Two such husbands!

Lady Cons. As to my swain, I grant you: Mr. Lovemore is, at least, well bred; he has an understanding, and may in time reflect.—Sir Bashful never qualifies himself with the smallest tincture of civility.

Mrs. Love. If civility can qualify the draught, I must allow Mr Lovemore to have a skilful hand. But there is no end to his projects.—Every day opens a new scene. Another of his intrigues is come to light. I came to consult with your ladyship. I know you are acquainted with the widow Bellmour.

Lady Cons. The widow Bellmour! I know her perfectly well.

Mrs. Love. Not so well, perhaps, as you may imagine. She has thrown out the lure for my wild gallant, and in order to deceive me——

Lady Cons. My dear, you must be mistaken. Who tells you this?

Mrs. Love. Oh! I can trust to my intelligence. Sir Brilliant Fashion, by way of blind to me, has been this morning drawing so amiable a picture of the lady—

Lady Cons. Sir Brilliant's authority is not always the best, but in this point you may trust to him.

Mrs. Love. But when you have heard all the circumstances—

Lady Cons. Depend upon it, you are wrong. I know the widow Bellmour. Her turn of character, and way of thinking——

Mrs. Love. Excuse me, Madam. You decide without hearing me.

Lady. Cons. All scandal, take my word for it. However, let me hear your story. We'll adjourn to my dressing-room, if you will; and I promise to confute all you can say.—I would have you know the widow Bellmour: you will

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be in love with her.—My dear Madam, have not you a tinge of jealousy?—Beware of that malady. If you see things through that medium, I shall give you up.

That jaundice of the mind, whose colours strike
On friends and foes, and paint them all alike.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—An Apartment at the Widow BELLMOUR'S; *several Chairs, a Toilet, a Book-Case, and a Harpsichord, disposed up and down.* MIGNIONET *putting things in order.*

Mign. I don't well know what to make of this same Lord Etheridge. He is coming here again to-day, I suppose: all this neatness, and all this care, must be for him.——Well, it does not signify: [*Arranging the chairs.*] there is a pleasure in obeying Madam Bellmour. She is a sweet lady, that's the truth of it.—'Twere a pity if any of these men, with their deceitful arts, should draw her into a snare.—But she knows them all: they must rise early who can outwit her. [*Settling the toilet.*

Enter Mrs. BELLMOUR, *reading.*

Oh! blest with temper, whose unclouded ray
Can make to-morrow cheerful as to-day;
She who can own a sister's charms, and hear
Sighs for a daughter with unwounded ear;
That never answers till a husband cools,
And if she rules him, never shows she rules.

Sensible, elegant Pope!

Charms by accepting, by submitting sways;
Yet has her humour most, when she obeys.

[*Seems to read on.*

Mign. Lord love my mistress! always so charming, so gay, and so happy!

Mrs. Bell. These exquisite characters of women! They are a sort of painter's gallery, where one sees the portraits of all one's acquaintance, and sometimes we see our own features too. Mignionet, put this book in its place.

Mign. Yes, Ma'am; and there's your toilet looks as elegant as hands can make it.

Mrs. Bell. Does it? I think it does. You have some taste. *A-propos*, where is my new song?—Oh! here it is: I must make myself mistress of it. [*Plays upon the harpsichord, and sings a little.*] I believe I have conquered it. [*Rises, and goes to her toilet.*] This hair is always tormenting me, always in disorder: this lock must be for ever gadding out of its place. I must and will subdue it.—Do you know, Mignionet, that this is a pretty song? It was writ by my Lord Etheridge. My Lord has a turn. [*Sings a little.*] I must be perfect before he comes. [*Hums the tune.*] Do you know that I think my lord is one of those men who may be endured?

Mign. Yes, Ma'am, I know you think so.

Mrs. Bell. Do you?

Mign. And if I have any skill, Ma'am, you are not without a little partiality for his lordship.

Mrs. Bell. Really? Then you think I like him, perhaps. Do you think I like him? I don't well know how that is. Like him! no, not absolutely: it is not decided: and yet I don't know, if I had a mind to humour myself, and to give way a little to inclination, there is something here in my heart that would be busy, I believe.—The man has a softness of manner, a turn of wit, and does not want sentiment. Can I call it sentiment? Yes, I think I may. He has sentiment; and then he knows the manners, the usage of the world, and he points out the ridicule of things with so much humour!

Mign. You'll be caught, Ma'am, I see that—To be sure, my lord has a quality-air, and can make himself agreeable. But what of that? You know but very little of him. Is a man's character known in three or four weeks' time? [*Mrs.* BELLMOUR *hums a tune.*] Do, my dear Madam, mind what I say: I am at times very considerate. I make my remarks, and I see very plainly—Lord, Ma'am, what am I doing? I am talking to you for your own good, and you are all in the air, and no more mind me; no, no more than if I was nothing at all.

Mrs. Bell. [*Continues humming a tune.*] You talk wonderfully well upon the subject; but as I know how the cards lie, and can play the best of the game; and as I have a song to amuse me, one is inclined to give musical nonsense the preference.

Mign. I assure you, Ma'am, I am not one of those servants that bargain for their mistress's inclination: but you are going to take a leap in the dark. What does my Lord Etheridge mean, with his chair always brought into the hall, and the curtains close about his ears? Why does he not come like himself, and not care who sees him? There's some mystery at the bottom, I'll be sworn there is; and so you'll find at last.—Dear heart, Ma'am, if you are determined not to listen, what signifies my living with you? At this rate, I am of no service to you.

Mrs. Bell. There;—I have conquered my song.—[*Runs to her glass.*] How do I look today? The eyes do well enough, I think.——And so, Mignionet, you imagine I shall play the fool, and marry my Lord Etheridge?

Mign. You have it through the very heart of you: I see that.

Mrs. Bell. Do you? I don't know what to say to it. Poor Sir Brilliant Fashion! if I prefer his rival, what will become of him!—I wont think about it.

Enter POMPEY.

Mrs. Bell. What's the matter, Pompey?

Pom. A lady in a chair desires to know if your ladyship is at home.

Mrs. Bell. Has the lady no name?

Pom. Yes; I fancy she has, Ma'am; but she did not tell it.

Mrs. Bell. How awkward!—well, show the lady up stairs.

Mign. Had you not better receive her in the drawing-room, Ma'am? I have not half done my business here.

Mrs. Bell. Oh! you have done very well. There will be less formality here. I dare say it is some intimate acquaintance, though that foolish boy does not recollect her name. Here she comes. I don't know her.

Enter Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Mrs. Love. [*Disconcerted.*] I beg pardon for this intrusion.

Mrs. Bell. Pray, walk in, Ma'am. Mignionet, reach a chair.

[Mrs. LOVEMORE *crosses the stage, and they salute each other with an air of distant civility.*

Mrs. Love. I am afraid this visit from one who has not the honour of knowing you—

Mrs. Bell. Oh, make no apology, Ma'am.—Mignionet, you may withdraw.

[*Exit* MIGNIONET.

Mrs. Love. It may appear extraordinary that a stranger thus intrudes upon you; but a particular circumstance determined me to take this liberty. I hope you will excuse the freedom.

Mrs. Bell. You do me honour, Ma'am; pray, no excuses. A particular circumstance, you say?

Mrs. Love. I shall appear, perhaps, very ridiculous; and, indeed, I am afraid I have done the most absurd thing; but a lady of your acquaintance—you know my Lady Constant, Ma'am?

Mrs. Bell. Extremely well.

Mrs. Love. She has given you such an amiable character for benevolence, and a certain elegant way of thinking, entirely your own, that I flatter myself, if it is in your power, you will be generous enough to afford me your assistance.

Mrs. Bell. Lady Constant is very obliging. Make a trial of me, Ma'am, and if I can be of any use—

Mrs. Love. I fear I shall ask you a strange question:—are you acquainted with a gentleman of the name of Lovemore?

Mrs. Bell. Lovemore? No such name on my list. Lovemore! No;—I recollect no such person. The circle of my acquaintance is small: I am almost a stranger in town.

Mrs. Love. That makes an end, Ma'am. I beg your pardon. I have given you an unnecessary trouble. [*Going.*

Mrs. Bell. [*Aside.*] Mighty odd this! her manner is interesting.—You have given me no trouble, but my curiosity is excited. [*Takes her by the hand.*] I beg you will keep your chair. Pray be seated.—What can this mean? [*Aside.*]—Will you be so good as to inform me who the gentleman is?

Mrs. Love. The story will be uninteresting to you, and to me it is painful. My grievances——

[*Puts her handkerchief to her eyes.*

Mrs. Bell. [*Aside.*] Her grief affects me. [*Looks at her till she has recovered herself.*] I would not importune too much——

Mrs. Love. You have such an air of frankness and generosity, that I will open myself without reserve: I have the tenderest regard for Mr. Lovemore: I have been married to him these two years. I admired his understanding, his sensibility, and his spirit. My heart was his: I loved him with unbounded passion. I thought the flame was mutual, and you may believe I was happy. But of late there is such a revolution in his temper: I know not what to make of it. I am doomed to be unhappy.

Mrs. Bell. Perhaps not: you may still have much in your power.

Mrs. Love. My power is at an end. Instead of the looks of affection, and the expressions of tenderness, with which he used to meet me, it is nothing now but cold, averted, superficial civility; while abroad, he runs on in a wild career of pleasure, and, to my deep affliction, has attached himself entirely to another object.

Mrs. Bell. And if I had known Mr. Lovemore, do you imagine that my advice or persuasion would avail you any thing?

Mrs. Love. I had such a fancy.—[*Aside.*] What can I think of her!

Mrs. Bell. You are much mistaken. In these cases friends may interpose, but what can they do? They recommend a wife to the goodwill, the honour, and the generosity of her husband. But when a woman, who should be esteemed and loved, is recommended as an object of compassion, she is humbled indeed: it is all over with her. A wife should recommend herself by the graces of her person, and the variety of her talents. Men will prove false: and if there is nothing in your complaint but mere gallantry on his side, I protest I do not see that your case is so very bad.

Mrs. Love. Can it be worse, Ma'am?

Mrs. Bell. A great deal.—If his affections, instead of being alienated, had been extinguished, what would be the consequence?—A downright, sullen, habitual insensibility. From that lethargy of affection a man is not easily recalled. In all Love's bill of mortality, there is not a more fatal disorder. But this is not the case with Mr. Lovemore: by your account, he still has sentiment; and where there is sentiment, there is room to hope for an alteration.—But where the heart has lost its feeling, you have the pain of finding yourself neglected; and for what?—the man has grown stupid, and to the warm beams of wit and beauty as impenetrable as an ice-house.

Mrs. Love. That is not my complaint. I have to do with one, who is too susceptible of impressions from every beautiful object that comes in his way.

Mrs. Bell. Why, so much the better. A new idea strikes his fancy. He is inconstant; but after wavering and fluttering, he may settle at last.

Mrs. Love. How light she makes of it! she apologizes for him! [*Aside.*

Mrs. Bell. And, perhaps, the fault is on the woman's side——

Mrs. Love. The virtue of my conduct, Madam——

Mrs. Bell. Oh! I would have laid my life you would be at that work. But virtue is not the question at present. I suppose virtue; that is always understood. The fault I mean is the want of due attention to the art of pleasing. It is there that most women fail. In these times, virtue may be its own reward. Virtue alone cannot please the taste of the age. It is *la belle nature*, virtue embellished by the advantages of art, that men expect now-a-days. That is the whole affair: I would not make myself uneasy, Ma'am.

Mrs. Love. Not uneasy, when his indifference does not diminish my regard for him! Not uneasy, when the man I dote upon no longer fixes his happiness at home!

Mrs. Bell. Give me leave to speak my mind freely. I have observed, when the fiend jealousy is roused, that women lay out a wonderful deal of anxiety and vexation to no account; when, perhaps, if the truth were known, they should be angry with themselves instead of their husbands.

Mrs. Love. Angry with myself, Madam! Calumny can lay nothing to my charge.

Mrs. Bell. There again now! that is the folly of us all.

Mrs. Love. And after being married so long, and behaving all the time with such an equality!

Mrs. Bell. Ay, that equality is the rock so many split upon. The men will change. Excuse my freedom. They are so immersed in luxury, that they must have eternal variety in their happiness.

Mrs. Love. She justifies him. [*Aside.*

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Mrs. Bell. Your case may not be desperate: I would venture to lay a pot of coffee, that the person who now rivals you in your husband's affections does it without your good qualities, and even without your beauty, by the mere force of agreeable talents, and some skill in the art of pleasing.

Mrs. Love. I am afraid that compliment——

Mrs. Bell. If I judge right, you are entitled to it. Let me ask you: Do you know this formidable rival?

Mrs. Love. There, I own, I am puzzled.

Mrs. Bell. What sort of a woman is she?

Mrs. Love. Formidable indeed: she has been described to me, as one of charming and rare accomplishments.

Mrs. Bell. Never throw up the cards for all that. Take my advice, Ma'am. You seem to have qualities that may dispute your husband's heart with any body; but the exertion of those amiable qualities, I fear, may be suppressed. Excuse my frankness. You should counteract your rival by the very arts which she employs against you. I know a lady now in your very situation: and what does she do? She consumes herself with unceasing jealousy; whereas, if she would exert but half the pains she uses in teasing herself, to vie with the person who has won her husband from her; to vie with her, I say, in the art of pleasing—for there it is a woman's pride should be piqued—Would she do that, take my word for it, victory would declare in her favour. You are not without attractions; give them their energy, and you conquer.

Mrs. Love. Do you think so, Ma'am?

Mrs. Bell. Think so! I am sure of it. You must exert yourself. It is the wife's business to bait the hook for her husband with variety. Virtue alone, by her own native charms would do, if the men were perfect. But it is otherwise; and since vice can assume allurements, why should not truth and innocence have additional ornaments also?

Mrs. Love. I find Sir Brilliant has told me truth. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Bell. Give me leave, Ma'am: I have been married, and am a little in the secret. To win a heart is easy; to keep it is the difficulty. After the fatal words, 'for better, for worse,' women relax into indolence, and while they are guilty of no infidelity, they think every thing safe. But they are mistaken: a great deal is wanting; an address, a vivacity, a desire to please; the agreeable contrast; the sense that pleases, the folly that charms.—A favourite poet, Prior, has expressed it with delicacy:

Above the fix'd and settled rules,
Of vice and virtue in the schools,
The better part should set before 'em,
A grace, a manner, a decorum.

Mrs. Love. But when the natural temper—

Mrs. Bell. Oh! the natural temper must be forced. Home must be made a place of pleasure to the husband. How is that to be done? That equality which you talk of, is a sameness that palls and wearies. A wife should throw infinite variety into her manner. She should, as it were, multiply herself, and be, as it were, sundry different women on different occasions: the tender, the affectionate, the witty, the silent; all in their turns; all shifting the scene, and she succeeding to herself as quick as lightning. And this I take to be the whole mystery; the way to keep a man.—But I beg your pardon. I go on too fast: you will think me the giddiest creature.

Mrs. Love. Quite the reverse, Ma'am: you are very obliging.

Mrs. Bell. I have tired myself and you too.—But pray, may I now inquire, who was so kind as to intimate that I am acquainted with Mr. Lovemore?

Mrs. Love. It was a mere mistake. I have given you a great deal of trouble. You will excuse my frankness: I had heard that his visits were frequent here.

Mrs. Bell. His visits frequent here! My Lady Constant could not tell you so?

Mrs. Love. She told me quite the contrary. She knows your amiable qualities, and does you justice.

Mrs. Bell. The accident is lucky; it has procured me the honour of your acquaintance. And I suppose you imagine that I had robbed you of Mr. Lovemore's heart?—Scandal will be buzzing about. I can laugh at every thing of that sort. [*A rap at the door.*] Oh! Heavens! some troublesome visit.—— [*Rings a bell.*

Enter MIGNIONET.

I am not at home. Go and give an answer.

Mign. It is Lord Etheridge, Ma'am: he is coming up stairs. The servants did not know you had changed your mind.

Mrs. Bell. Was ever any thing so cross? Tell his lordship I have company; I am busy; I am not well; any thing, don't let him come in. Make haste, despatch: I wont see him.

Mrs. Love. I beg I may not hinder you: I shall take my leave.

Mrs. Bell. By no means. Our conversation grows interesting. I positively will not see my lord.

Mrs. Love. I can't agree to that. You must see his lordship. I can step into another room.

Mrs. Bell. Will you be so good—You will find something to amuse you in that cabinet. [*Points to a door in the back scene.*] We must talk farther. My lord sha'n't stay long.

Mrs. Love. Nay, but if you stand upon ceremony—

Mrs. Bell. Very well: I'll contrive it. This is a lover of mine. A lover and a husband are the same thing. Perhaps it will divert you to hear how I manage him. I hear him on the stairs. Make haste: Mignionet, show the way.

[MRS. LOVE. *and* MIGNIONET *go out at the back scene.*

Mrs. Bell. Let me see how I look to receive him. [*Runs to her glass.*

Enter LOVEMORE, *with a Star and Garter, as* LORD ETHERIDGE.

Love. *A heavenly image in the glass appears,*
To that she bends, to that her eyes she rears,
Repairs her smiles——

Mrs. Bell. Repairs her smiles, my lord. You are satirical this morning. Pray, my lord, are my features out of repair, like an old house in the country, that wants a tenant?

Love. Nay, now you wrest my words from their visible intention. You can't suppose that I impute to such perfect beauty the least want of repair, whatever may be the case, Ma'am, with regard to the want of a tenant.

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Mrs. Bell. Oh! then your opinion is, that I want a tenant. And perhaps you think I am going to put up a bill to signify to all passers by, that here is a mansion to be let, inquire of the widow Bellmour. I like your notion: I don't think it would be a bad scheme. Shall I try it?

Love. A palace needs no such invitation. Its natural beauty attracts admiring eyes. But who can bid up to the price? The person who is able to do it——

Mrs. Bell. Will be happy; I know that is what you are going to say. But he must do homage for it: and then I will let it to none but a single gentleman. Do you know any body whom these conditions will suit?

Love. Those conditions, Ma'am—[*Aside.*] What the devil does she mean? I am not detected, I hope——To be sure, Ma'am, those conditions—And—none but single gentlemen will presume to——

Mrs. Bell. And then it must be a lease for life. But that will never do; nobody will be troubled with it. I shall never get it off my hands: do you think I shall, my lord?

Love. There must be very little taste left, if you have not a number of bidders. You know the ambition of my heart; you know I am devoted to you upon any terms, even though it were to be bought with life.

Mrs. Bell. Heavens! what a dying swain you are! And does your lordship mean to be guilty of matrimony? Lord, what a question have I asked! To be sure, I am the giddiest creature. My lord, don't you think me a strange madcap?

Love. A vein of wit, like yours, that springs at once from vivacity and sentiment, serves to exalt your beauty, and give animation to every charm.

Mrs. Bell. Upon my word, you have said it finely! But you are in the right, my lord. Your pensive melancholy beauty is the most insipid thing in nature. And yet we often see features without a mind; and the owner of them sits in the room with you, like a mere vegetable, for an hour together, till, at last, she is incited to the violent exertion of, 'Yes, Sir,'—'I fancy not, Ma'am;' and then a matter of fact conversation—'Miss Beverly is going to be married to Captain Shoulder-knot—my Lord Mortgage has had another tumble at hazard—Sir Harry Wilding has lost his election—they say short aprons are coming into fashion.

Love. Oh! a matter of fact conversation is unsupportable.

Mrs. Bell. But you meet with nothing else. All in great spirits about nothing, and not an idea among them. Go to Ranelagh, or to what public place you will, it is just the same. A lady comes up to you; 'How charmingly you look!—But, my dear M'em, did you hear what happened to us the other night? We were going home from the opera—you know my aunt Roly Poly; it was her coach. There was she and Lady Betty Fidget—What a sweet blonde! How do you, my dear? [*Courtesying as to another going by.*]—My Lady Betty is quite recovered; we were all frightened about her: but Doctor Snake-root was called in; no, not Doctor Snake-root, Doctor Bolus; and so he altered the course of the medicines, and so my Lady Betty is purely now.—Well, there was she, and my aunt, and Sir George Bragwell—a pretty man Sir George—finest teeth in the world—Your ladyship's most obedient—[*Courtesying.*] We expected you last night, but you did not come.——He, he, he!—and so there was Sir George and the rest of us, and so, turning the corner of Bond-street, the brute of a coachman—I humbly thank your grace [*Courtesies.*] the brute of a coachman overturned us, and so my aunt Roly Poly was frightened out of her wits; and Lady Betty has had her nerves again, Only think! such accidents!—I am glad to see you look so well; *a l'honneur;*' he, he, he!

Love. Ho, ho! you paint to the life. I see her moving before me in all her airs.

Mrs. Bell. With this conversation their whole stock is exhausted, and away they run to cards. Quadrille has murdered wit!

Love. Ay, and beauty too. Cards are the worst enemies to a complexion: the small pox is not so bad. The passions throw themselves into every feature: I have seen the countenance of an angel changed, in a moment, to absolute deformity: the little loves and graces that sparkled in the eye, bloomed in the cheek, and smiled about the mouth, all wing their flight, and leave the face, which they before adorned, a prey to grief, to anger, malice, and fury, and the whole train of fretful passions.

Mrs. Bell. And the language of the passions is sometimes heard upon those occasions.

Love. Very true, Ma'am; and if, by chance, they do bridle and hold in a little, the struggle they undergo is the most ridiculous sight in nature. I have seen a huge oath quivering on the pale lip of a reigning toast for half an hour together, and an uplifted eye accusing the gods for the loss of an odd trick. And then at last, the whole room in a Babel of sounds. 'My lord, you flung away the game.—Sir George, why did not you rough the spade?—Captain Hazard, why did not you lead through the honours?—Ma'am, it was not the play—Pardon me, Sir—but Ma'am,--but Sir—I would not play with you for straws: don't you know what Hoyle says?—If A and B are partners against C and D, and the game nine all, A and B have won three tricks, and C and D four tricks; C leads his suit, D puts up the king, then returns the suit; A passes, C puts up the queen, and B trumps it; and so A and B, and C and D are bandied about; they attack, they defend, and all is jargon and confusion, wrangling, noise, and nonsense; and high life, and polite conversation.———Ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. Bell. Ho, ho! the pencil of Hogarth could not do it better. And yet one is dragged to these places. One must play sometimes. We must let our friends pick our pockets now and then, or they drop our acquaintance. Do you ever play, my Lord?

Love. Play, Ma'am——[*Aside.*] What does she mean? I must play the hypocrite to the end of the chapter.——Play?—Now and then, as you say, one must, to oblige, and from necessity; but from taste, or inclination, no; I never touch a card.

Mrs. Bell. Oh! very true; I forgot. You dedicate your time to the muses; a downright rhyming peer. Do you know, my lord, that I am charmed with your song?

Love. Are you?

Mrs. Bell. Absolutely; and I really think you would make an admirable Vauxhall poet.

Love. Nay, now you flatter me.

Mrs. Bell. No, as I live; it is very pretty. And do you know that I can sing it already? Come, you shall hear how I murder it. I have

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no voice to-day, but you shall hear me.

[*Sings.*

Attend all ye fair, and I'll tell you the art,
To bind ev'ry fancy with ease in your chains;
To hold in soft fetters the conjugal heart,
And banish from HYMEN *his doubts and his pains.*

When Juno was deck'd with the Cestus of Love,
At first she was handsome; she charming became;
With skill the soft passions it taught her to move,
To kindle at once, and to keep up the flame.

'Tis this gives the eyes all their magic and fire,
The voice-melting accents; impassions the kiss;
Confers the sweet smile that awakens desire,
And plants round the fair each incentive to bliss.

Thence flows the gay chat, more than reason that charms;
The eloquent blush, that can beauty improve;
The fond sigh, the fond vow, the soft touch that alarms;
The tender disdain, the renewal of love.

Ye fair, take the Cestus, and practise its power:
The mind unaccomplished, mere features are vain;
With wit, with good humour, enliven each hour,
And the loves, and the graces, shall walk in your train.

Love. My poetry is infinitely obliged to you. It grows into sense as you sing it. Your voice, like the Cestus of Venus, bestows a grace upon every thing.

Mrs. Bell. Oh! fulsome; I sing horridly! [*Goes to the glass.*] How do I look?—Don't tell me, my Lord: you are studying a compliment, but I am resolved to mortify you; I wont hear it.—Well! have you thought of any thing? Let it pass; 'tis too late now. Pray, my Lord, how came you to choose so grave a subject as connubial happiness?

Love. Close and particular that question.

[*Aside.*

Mrs. Bell. Juno! Hymen! doubts and pains! one would almost swear that you had a wife at home who sat for the picture.

Love. Ma'am, the—[*Embarrassed.*] The compliment—you are only laughing at me—the subject, from every day's experience——[*Aside.*] Does she suspect me?—the subject is common—Bachelors' wives, you know—ha, ha!—And when you inspire the thought; when you are the bright original, it is no wonder that the copy—

Mrs. Bell. Horrid! going to harp on the old string. Odious solicitations! I hate all proposals. I am not in the humour. You must release me now: your visit is rather long. I have indulged you a great while. And, besides, were I to listen to your vows, what would become of poor Sir Brilliant Fashion?

Love. Sir Brilliant Fashion?

Mrs. Bell. Do you know him?

Love. I know whom you mean. I have seen him; but that's all. He lives with a strange set, and does not move in my sphere. If he is a friend of yours, I have no more to say.

Mrs. Bell. Is there any thing to say against him?

Love. Nay, I have no knowledge of the gentleman. They who know him best, don't rate him high. A sort of a current coin that passes in this town. You will do well to beware of counterfeits.

Mrs. Bell. But this is very alarming——

Enter MIGNIONET, *in a violent hurry.*

Mign. My dear Madam, I am frighted out of my senses. The poor lady—where are the hartshorn drops?

Love. The lady! what lady?

Mign. Never stand asking what lady. She has fainted away all on a sudden: she is now in strong hysterics: give me the drops.

Mrs. Bell. I must run to her assistance. Adieu, my Lord. I shall be at home in the evening. Mignionet, step this way. Your lordship will excuse me: I shall expect to see you. Come, Mignionet; make haste, make haste. [*Exit with* MIGNIONET.

Love. I hope the lady has not overheard me. What a villain am I to carry on this scheme against so much beauty, innocence, and merit! And to wear this badge of honour for the darkest purposes! And then my friend, Sir Brilliant, will it be fair to supplant him?—Pr'ythee, be quiet, my dear conscience! none of your meddling: don't interrupt a gentleman in his pleasures. Don't you know, my good friend, that love has no respect for persons, but soars above all laws of honour and of friendship? No reflection; have her I must, and that quickly too, or she will discover all. Besides, this is my wife's fault: why does not she make home agreeable? I am willing to be happy; I could be constant to her, but she is not formed for happiness. What the devil is Madam Fortune about now?—[*Sir* BRILLIANT *sings within.*] Sir Brilliant, by all that's infamous. Confusion! no place to hide me? no escape? The door is locked. Mignionet, Mignionet, open the door.

Mign. [*Within.*] You must not come in here.

Love. What shall I do? This star, and this ribbon will bring me to disgrace. Away with this tell-tale evidence. [*Takes off the ribbon.*] Go, thou blushing devil, and hide thyself for ever. [*Puts it in his pocket.*

Enter Sir BRILLIANT, *singing.*

Sir Bril. Mrs. Bellmour, I have such a story for you.—How!—Lovemore?

Love. Your slave, Sir Brilliant, your slave.

[*Hiding the star with his hat.*

Sir Bril. I did not think you had been acquainted here.

Love. You are right. I came in quest of you. I saw the lady. I was drawn hither by mere curiosity. We have had some conversation; and I made it subservient to your purposes. I have been giving a great character of you.

Sir Bril. You are always at the service of your friends. But what's the matter? what are you fumbling about? [*Pulls the hat.*

Love. 'Sdeath! have care: don't touch me.

[*Puts his handkerchief to his breast.*

Sir Bril. What the devil is the matter?

Love. Oh! keep off—[*Aside.*] Here's a business.—Taken in the old way: let me pass.—I have had a fling at Lord Etheridge: he will be out of favour with the widow: I have done you that good.—Racks and torments, my old complaint! [*Wanting to pass him.*

Sir Bril. What complaint? You had better sit down.

Love. No, no; air, the air. I must have a surgeon. A stroke of a tennis-ball! My Lord Rackett's unlucky left-hand. Let me pass. There is something forming here. [*Passes him.*] To be caught is the devil. [*Aside.*] Don't mention my name. You will counteract all I have

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said.——Oh! torture, torture!—I will explain to you another time. Sir Brilliant, yours. I have served your interest—Oh! there is certainly something forming. [*Exit.*

Sir Bril. What does all this mean?—So, so, Mrs. Lovemore's suspicions are well founded.—The widow has her private visits, I see. Yes, yes; there is something forming here.

Enter MRS. BELLMOUR.

So; here she comes. The whole shall be explained. I hope, Ma'am, that I don't interrupt you with any picquet friend.

Mrs. Bell. You are always a torment: what brings you hither?

Sir Bril. There are times, Ma'am, when a visit—

Mrs. Bell. Is unseasonable, and yours is so now. How can you teaze me?

Sir Bril. I thought as much.—There are some things that may require to be discussed between us.

Mrs. Bell. Reserve them all for another time. I can't hear you now. You must leave me. There is a lady taken ill in the next room.

Sir Bril. And here has been a gentleman taken ill in this room.

Mrs. Bell. How troublesome! you must be gone. Do you dispute my will and pleasure?—Fly this moment.

Sir Bril. But, Ma'am—Nay, if you insist upon it— [*Goes.*

Mrs. Bell. But, Sir!—I will be absolute: you must leave me. [*Puts him out.*] There, and now I'll make sure of the door.

Enter MRS. LOVEMORE, *leaning on* MIGNIONET.

Mign. This way, Madam: here is more air in this room.

Mrs. Bell. How do you find yourself. Pray, sit down.

Mrs. Love. My spirits were too weak. I could not support it any longer; such a scene of perfidy!

Mrs. Bell. You astonish me: what perfidy?

Mrs. Love. Perfidy of the blackest dye: I told you that you were acquainted with my husband!

Mrs. Bell. Acquainted with your husband! [*Angrily.*

Mrs. Love. A moment's patience—Yes, Madam, you are acquainted with him.—The base man who went hence but now—

Mrs. Bell. Sir Brilliant Fashion?

Mrs. Love. No, your Lord Etheridge, as he calls himself—

Mrs. Bell. Lord Etheridge? What of him, pray?

Mrs. Love. False, dissembling man! he is my husband, Ma'am: not Lord Etheridge, but plain Mr. Lovemore; my Mr. Lovemore.

Mrs. Bell. And has he been base enough to assume a title to ensnare me to my undoing?

Mign. [*Going.*] Well, for certain, I believe the devil's in me: I always thought him a sly one. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Love. To see him carrying on this dark design—to see the man whom I have ever esteemed and loved,—the man whom I must still love,—esteem him, I fear, I never can,—to see him before my face with that artful treachery! it was too much for sensibility like mine; I felt the shock too severely, and I sunk under it.

Mrs. Bell. I am ready to sink this moment with amazement. I saw him, for the first time, at old Mrs. Loveit's. She introduced him to me. The appointment was of her own making.

Mrs. Love. You know Mrs. Loveit's character, I suppose.

Mrs. Bell. The practised veteran!—Could I suspect that a woman in her stile of life, would lend herself to a vile stratagem against my honour? That she would join in a conspiracy against her own sex?—Mr. Lovemore shall never enter these doors again—I am obliged to you, Ma'am, for this visit; to me a providential incident. I am sorry for your share in it. The discovery secures my peace and happiness; to you it is a fatal conviction, a proof unanswerable against the person to whom you are joined for life.

Mrs. Love. After this discovery, it cannot be for life. I am resolved not to pass another day under his roof.

Mrs. Bell. Hold, hold; no sudden resolutions. Consider a little: passion is a bad adviser. This may take a turn for your advantage.

Mrs. Love. That can never be; I am lost beyond redemption.

Mrs. Bell. Don't decide too rashly. Come, come, the man who has certain qualities, is worth thinking about, before one throws the hideous thing away for ever. Mr. Lovemore is a traitor; but is not he still amiable? And besides, you have heard his sentiments. That song points at something. Perhaps you are a little to blame. He did not write upon such a subject, without a cause to suggest it. We will talk over this matter coolly. You have saved me, and I must return the obligation.—You shall stay dinner with me.

Mrs. Love. Excuse me.—Mr. Lovemore may possibly go home. He shall hear of his guilt, while the sense of it pierces here, and wounds me to the quick.

Mrs. Bell. Now there you are wrong; take my advice first. I will lay such a plan as may ensure him yours for ever. Come, come, you must not leave me yet. [*Takes her hand.*]—Answer me one question; don't you still think he has qualities that do, in some sort, apologize for his vices?

Mrs. Love. I don't know what to think of it; I hope he has.

Mrs. Bell. Very well then. I have lost a lover; you may gain one. Your conduct upon this occasion may reform him; and let me tell you that the man, who has it in his power to atone for his faults, should not be entirely despised.——Let the wife exert herself; let her try her powers of pleasing, and take my word for it,

The wild gallant no more abroad will roam,
But find his loved variety at home. [Exeunt.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—An Apartment in LOVEMORE'S *House.*

MR. *and* MRS. LOVEMORE *at Table after Dinner: Servants taking things out of the Room.*

Love. [*Filling a glass.*] I wonder you are not tired of the same eternal topic. [*Sipping his wine.*

Mrs. Love. If I make an eternal topic, it is for your own good, Mr. Lovemore.

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Love. I know I have your good wishes, and you have mine. All our absent friends, Mrs. Lovemore. [*Drinks.*

Mrs. Love. If you would but wish well to yourself, Sir, I should be happy.—But in the way you go on, your health must be ruined; day is night, and night day; your substance squandered; your constitution destroyed; and your family quite neglected.

Love. Family neglected! you see I dined at home, and this is my reward for it.

Mrs. Love. You dined at home, Sir, because something abroad has disconcerted you. You went, I suppose, after I saw you at Lady Constant's, to your old haunt, your friend, Mrs. Loveit—

Love. Mrs. Loveit! ha, ha! I dropp'd her acquaintance long ago. No, my love, I drove into the city, and spent the rest of the morning upon business. I had long accounts to settle with old Discount the banker.

Mrs. Love. And that to be sure engrossed all your time. Business must be minded. Did you find him at home?

Love. It was by his own appointment. I went to his house directly after I parted from you. I have been no where else. Matters of account always fatigue me.

Mrs. Love. I would not be too inquisitive, Sir.

Love. Oh! no; you never are. I staid at the banker's the rest of the time, and I came straight from his house, to have the pleasure of dining with you. [*Fills a glass of wine.*

Mrs. Love. Were there any sincerity in that declaration, I should be happy. A tavern life has hitherto been your delight. I wonder what delight you can find in such an eternal round of gaming, riot, and dissipation. Will you answer me one question?

Love. With great pleasure,—[*Aside.*]—if it is not inconvenient.

Mrs. Love. Lay your hand on your heart, and tell me,—Have I deserved this usage?

Love. My humble service to you, my love. [*Drinks.*

Mrs. Love. I am sure I have never been deficient in any one point of the duty I owe you. You won my heart, and I gave it freely.

Love. [*Going to sleep.*] It is very true.

Mrs. Love. Your interest has been mine. I have known no pleasure unconnected with your happiness. Diversion, show, and pomp, have had no allurements for me.

Love. [*Dropping asleep.*] Yes,—you are right—just as you please—

Mrs. Love. Had I been inclined to follow the example of other women, your fortune would have felt it before now. You might have been thousands out of pocket; but your interest has been the object of my attention; and your convenience—

Love. [*Turns his chair from her.*] You reason very——you reason admir—ably——admir—ably——always——al—ways——gay——and——enter—entertaining——

[*Going to sleep.*

Mrs. Love. Marriage is generally considered as an introduction to the great scene of the world. I thought it a retreat to less noisy and serener pleasures. What is called polite company [*He falls fast asleep.*] was not my taste. You was lavish in expense; I was, therefore, an economist. From the first moment marriage made me yours, the pleasure arising from your company——There! fast asleep! Agreeable company indeed!——This is ever his way.—[*She rises.*] Unfeeling man!—It is too plain that I am grown his aversion. Mr. Lovemore! [*Looking at him.*] you little think what a scene this day has brought to light.——And yet he hopes with falsehood to varnish and disguise his treachery. How mean the subterfuge! shall I rouse him now, and tax him with his guilt? My heart is too full: reproach will only tend to exasperate, and perhaps make him irreconcileable. The pride that can stoop to low and wretched artifice, but ill can brook detection. Let him rest for the present. The widow Bellmour's experiment may answer better.——I will try it, at least.——Oh! Mr. Lovemore, you will break my heart.

[*Looks at him, and exit.*

Love. [*Talking in his sleep.*] I do listen—I am not asleep. [*Sleeps and nods.*] You are very right;—always right—I am only thinking a little. No—no—no—[*Mutters indistinctly.*] It was not two o'clock—in bed—in bed by twelve—Sir Bashful is an oaf—The widow Bellmour—[*Sleeps, and his head rolls about.*] What's the matter? [*Waking.*] I beg your pardon; I was beginning to nod. What did you say, my dear? [*Leans on the table without looking about.*] One cannot always, you know—[*Turns about.*] 'Sdeath! she is gone! Oh! fast asleep. This is ever the way when one dines at home. Let me shake it off. [*Rises.*] What's o'clock?—No amusement in this house; what shall I do? The widow?—I must not venture in that quarter. My evil genius, Sir Brilliant, will be busy there. Is any body in the way? I must sally out. My dear Venus, favour your votary this afternoon.

——*Your best arms employ,*
All wing'd with pleasure, and all tipp'd with joy.
[Exit.

SCENE II.—Changes to SIR BASHFUL'S.

Enter LADY CONSTANT *and* FURNISH.

Lady Cons. Who brought this letter?

Fur. A servant of Mrs. Lovemore's: he waits an answer.

Lady Cons. My compliments to Mrs. Lovemore, and I shall wait upon her.

Fur. Yes, Ma'am. [*Going.*

Lady Cons. And hark ye, Furnish; have the things been carried to Sir Brilliant, as I ordered?

Fur. I have obeyed your ladyship's commands. The steward went himself. Mr. Pounce, your ladyship knows, is a trusty body. You may depend upon his care.

Lady Cons. Go, and send Mrs. Lovemore her answer. She may depend upon my being with her in time. [*Exit* FURNISH.] What can Mrs. Lovemore want? [Reads.] '*Ladyship's company to a card-party; but cards are the least part of my object. I have something of higher moment in view, and the presence of my friends is absolutely necessary.*' There is some mystery in all this. What does she mean? I shall go, and then the scene will clear up: those diamond buckles embarrass me more than Mrs. Lovemore's unintelligible letter. Diamond buckles to me! From what quarter? Who could send them? Nobody but Sir Brilliant. I am right in my conclusion: they came from him. Who could take the liberty but a person of his cast? A presuming man! But I have mortified his vanity. Before this time, he has found his diamonds thrown back upon his

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hands, with the disdain which such confidence deserves,—But if I have made a mistake!—Oh! no; no danger. Has not Sir Brilliant made overtures to me! Has not he declared himself? He sees Sir Bashful's behaviour, and his vanity plumes itself upon that circumstance. To give me my revenge against a crazy and insufferable husband, he would fain induce me to ruin myself with a coxcomb. Besides, he heard the whole of Sir Bashful's dispute about diamonds and trinkets: the thing is clear; it was Sir Brilliant sent them; and by that stratagem he hopes to bribe me into compliance. That bait will never take; though here comes one, who, I am sure, deserves to be treated without a grain of ceremony.

Enter SIR BASHFUL.

Sir Bash. Here she is. Now let me see whether she will take any notice of the present I sent her. She has reason to be in good humour, I think.—Your servant, Madam.

Lady Cons. Your address is polite, Sir.

Sir Bash. [*Aside.*] Still proud and obstinate!—Has any thing happened to disturb the harmony of your temper?

Lady Cons. Considering what little discord you make, it is a wonder that my temper is not always in tune.

Sir Bash. If you never gave me cause, Madam—

Lady Cons. Oh! for mercy's sake, truce with altercation. I am tired out with the eternal violence of your temper. Those frequent starts of passion hurry me out of my senses: and those unaccountable whims, that hold such constant possession of you—

Sir Bash. Whims, Madam?—Not to comply with you in every thing, is a whim, truly. Must I yield to the exorbitant demands of your extravagance? When you laid close siege to me for diamond baubles, and I know not what, was that a whim of mine? Did I take that fancy into my head without cause, and without sufficient foundation?

Lady Cons. Well, we have exhausted the subject. Have not you told me a thousand times, that there is no living with me? I agree to it. And have not I returned the compliment? We have nothing new to say; and now, all that remains is, to let the lawyer reduce to writing our mutual opinions, and so we may part with the pleasure of giving each other a most woful character.

Sir Bash. [*Aside.*] The buckles have had no effect. Stubborn! she has received them, and wont own it.

Lady Cons. A dash of your pen, Sir, at the foot of certain articles now preparing, will make us both easy. [*Going.*

Sir Bash. If we don't live happily, it is your own fault.

Lady Cons. That is very odd.

Sir Bash. If you would control your passion for play—

Lady Cons. Quite threadbare!

Sir Bash. I have still a regard for you.

Lady Cons. Worn out to frippery.—I can't hear any more. The law will dress it up in new language for us, and that will end our differences. [*Exit.*

Sir Bash. [*Alone.*] I must unburthen my heart: there is no time to be lost. I love her; I admire her; she inflames my tenderest passions, and raises such a conflict here in my very heart, I cannot any longer conceal the secret from her. I'll go and tell her all this moment—But then that meddling fiend, her maid, will be there: po! I can turn her out of the room; but then the jade will suspect something. Her ladyship may be alone: I'll send to know where she is. Who is there? Sideboard!—

Enter SIDEBOARD.

Sir Bash. Go and tell your lady that—— [*Pauses.*

Side. Did your honour want me?

Sir Bash. No matter: it does not signify.—[*Aside.*] I shall never be able to tell her my mind: a glance of her eye, and my own confusion, will undo all.

Side. I thought your honour called.

Sir Bash. [*Aside.*] A thought comes across me; I'll write her a letter. Yes, yes, a letter will do the business. Sideboard, draw that table this way—Reach me a chair.

Side. There, your honour.

Sir Bash. Do you stay while I write a letter. You shall carry it for me. [*Sits down to write.*

Side. Yes, Sir. I hope he has an intrigue upon his hands. A servant thrives under a master that has his private amusements. Love on, say I, if you are so given; it will bring grist to my mill.

Sir Bash. [*Writing.*] This will surprise her. Warm, passionate, and tender; and yet it does not come up to what I feel.

Side. What is he at?—I may as well read the newspaper. [*Takes it out of his pocket.*] What in the name of wonder, is all this?—Ha, ha! [*Bursts into a loud laugh.*] I never heard the like of this before. Oh, ho, ho, ho!

Sir Bash. What does the scoundrel mean? [*Stares at him.*

Side. Ha, ha, ha! I can't help laughing.

Sir Bash. Does the villain suspect me?—[*Rises.*] Hark ye, Sirrah, if ever I find that you dare listen at any door in my house—

Side. Sir!

Sir Bash. Confess the truth: have you not been listening to my conversation with Mr. Lovemore this morning?

Side. Who, I, Sir? I would not be guilty of such a thing: I never did the like in all my days.

Sir Bash. What was you laughing at?

Side. A foolish thing in the newspaper, Sir, that's all. I'll read it to your honour. [*Reads.*] 'We hear that a new comedy is now in rehearsal, and will speedily be performed, intitled, *The Amorous Husband; or, The Man in Love with his own Wife.*

Sir Bash. And what do you see to laugh at?

Side. See, Sir! I have lived in a great many families, and never heard of the like before.

Sir Bash. [*Aside.*] There, there, there! I shall be the butt of my own servants.—Sirrah, leave the room: and let me never hear that you have the trick of listening in my house.

Side. No, Sir.—The Man in Love with his own Wife! [*Exit, laughing.*

Sir Bash. What does the varlet mean?—No matter—I have finished my letter, and it shall be sent this moment.—But then, if I should get into a comedy?—Po! no more scruples. I'll seal it directly.—Sideboard!—

Enter SIDEBOARD.

Sir Bash. [*Sealing the letter.*] I have opened my heart to her.—What do you bring your hat and stick for?

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Side. To go out with your honour's letter.

Sir Bash. You have not far to go. Take this, and let nobody see you.

Side. I warrant me, your honour. [*Exit.*

Sir Bash. I feel much lighter now. A load is taken off my heart.

Enter SIDEBOARD.

Sir Bash. What do you come back for?

Side. A word or two, by way of direction, if you please, Sir.

Sir Bash. Blockhead! give it to me. [*Aside.*] If I direct it, he finds me out.—Go about your business: I have no occasion for you: leave the room.

Side. Very well, Sir.—Does he think to manage his own intrigues! if he takes my commission out of my hands, I shall give him warning. The vices of our masters are all the vails a poor servant has left. [*Exit.*

Sir Bash. What must be done?—Mr. Lovemore could conduct this business for me. He is a man of address, and knows all the approaches to a woman's heart. That fellow Sideboard coming again?—No, no, this is lucky. Mr. Lovemore, I'm glad to see you.

Enter LOVEMORE.

Love. A second visit, you see, in one day, entirely on the score of friendship.

Sir Bash. And I thank you for it; heartily thank you.

Love. I broke away from the company at the St. Alban's on purpose to attend you. Well, I have made your lady easier in her mind, have not I?

Sir Bash. We don't hit it at all, Mr. Lovemore.

Love. No!

Sir Bash. I think she has been rather worse since you spoke to her.

Love. A good symptom that. [*Aside.*

Sir Bash. She has received the diamond buckles. They were delivered to her maid sealed up, and the man never staid to be asked a question. I saw them in her own hand; but not a syllable escaped her. She was not in the least softened, obstinate as a mule.

Love. The manner of conveying your presents was not well judged. Why did you not make me the bearer?

Sir Bash. I wish I had. She talks of parting; and, so, to avoid coming to extremities, I have even thought of telling her the whole truth at once.

Love. How! acquaint her with your passion?

Sir Bash. Ay, and trust to her honour. I could not venture to speak; I should blush, and falter, and look silly; and so I have writ a letter to her. Here it is, signed and sealed, but not directed. I got into a puzzle about that. Servants, you know, are always putting their own construction upon things.

Love. No doubt: and then your secret flies all over the town.

Sir Bash. That's what alarmed me. You shall write the superscription, and send it to her.

Love. No, that wont do. Give her a letter under your hand? I'll speak to her for you: let me try how her pulse beats.

Sir Bash. But a letter may draw an answer from her, and then you know—[*Smiling at him.*]—I shall have it under her hand.

Love. I don't like this hurry: we had better take time to consider of it.

Sir Bash. No, I can't defer the business of my heart a single moment. It burns like a fever here. Sit down, and write the direction: I'll step and send the servant. He shall carry it as if it were a letter from yourself.

Enter SIDEBOARD.

Side. Sir Brilliant Fashion is below, Sir.

Love. What brings him? He will only interrupt us. Go and talk to him, Sir Bashful: hear what he has to say; amuse him: any thing, rather than let him come up.

Sir Bash. I am gone: he sha'n't molest you. [*Exit with* SIDEBOARD.

Love. Fly, make haste; and don't let him know that I am here.—A lucky accident this; I have gained time by it. All matters were in a right train, and he himself levelling the road for me, and now this letter blows me up into the air at once. Some unlucky planet rules today. First, the Widow Bellmour, a hairbreadth's 'scape I had of it; and now almost ruined here! What, in the name of wonder, has he writ to her?—Friendship and wafer, by your leave.—But will that be delicate?—Po! honour has always a great deal to preach upon these occasions; but then the business of my love!—Very true; the passions need but say a word, and their business is done. [*Opens the letter, and reads.*] This must never reach her. I'll write a letter from myself. [*Sits down, writes, and starts up.*] I hear him coming: no; all safe. [*Writes.*] This will do:—vastly well.—Her husband's inhumanity! Ay, mention that.—The diamonds may be a present from me: yes, I'll venture it.—There, there, that will do—Long adored—Ay—sweetest revenge—Ay—Eternal admirer—Lovemore.—Now, now let me see it.—Admirable! this will do the business. [*Seals the letter.*

Enter SIR BASHFUL.

Sir Bash. Well, have you sent it?

Love. Not yet; I am writing the direction.

Sir Bash. And where is that blockhead?—Sideboard!

Enter SIDEBOARD.

Sir Bash. Numskull, why don't you wait?—Mr. Lovemore wants you.

Love. Step and deliver this to your lady: and if she pleases, I will wait upon her,

Sir Bash. Charming!—Take it up stairs directly.

Side. Up stairs, Sir? My lady is in the next room.

Sir Bash. Take it to her; make haste; begone. [*Exit* SIDEBOARD.] I hope this will succeed: I shall be for ever obliged to you, and so will her ladyship.

Love. I hope she will, and I shall be proud to serve her.

Sir Bash. You are very good. She wont prove ungrateful, I dare answer for her.—I should like to see how she receives the letter.—The door is conveniently open.—I will have a peep. Ay, there; there she sits.

Love. Where, Sir Bashful?

Sir Bash. Hush, no noise.—There, do you see her? She has the letter in her hand.—This is a critical moment: I am all over in a tremble.

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Love. Silence; not a word. She opens it.—[*Aside.*] Now, my dear Cupid, befriend me now, and your altar shall smoke with incense.

Sir Bash. She colours.

Love. I like that rising blush: a soft and tender token.

Sir Bash. She turns pale.

Love. The natural working of the passions.

Sir Bash. And now she reddens again.—What is she at now?—There, she has torn the letter in two;—I am a lost, an undone man. [*Walks away.*

Love. She has flung it away with indignation: I am undone too. [*Aside, and walks away from the door.*

Sir Bash. Mr. Lovemore, you see what it is all come to.

Love. I am sorry to see so haughty a spirit.

Sir Bash. An arrogant, ungrateful woman! to make such a return to so kind a letter!

Love. Ay, so kind a letter!

Sir Bash. Did you ever see such an insolent scorn?

Love. I never was so disappointed in all my life.

Sir Bash. A letter full of the tenderest protestations!

Love. Yes; an unreserved declaration of love!

Sir Bash. Made with the greatest frankness; throwing myself at her very feet.

Love. Did she once smile? was there the faintest gleam of approbation in her countenance?

Sir Bash. She repaid it all with scorn, with pride, contempt, and insolence. I cannot bear this; despised, spurned, and treated like a puppy.

Love. There it stings——like a puppy, indeed!

Sir Bash. Is there a thing in nature so mortifying to the pride of man, as to find one's self rejected and despised by a fine woman, who is conscious of her power, and triumphs in her cruelty?

Love. It is the most damnable circumstance!——

Sir Bash. My dear Mr. Lovemore, I am obliged to you for taking this matter so much to heart.

Love. I take it more to heart than you are aware of.

Sir Bash. This is mortifying; enough to make one ashamed all the rest of one's life.

Love. I did not expect this sullen ill humour.

Sir Bash. Did you ever know so obstinate, so uncomplying a temper?

Enter SIR BRILLIANT.

Sir Bril. Sir Bashful, I forgot to tell you—

Love. He, again! he hunts me up and down, as vice did the devil, with a dagger of lath, in the old comedy. [*Aside.*

Sir Bril. Hey!—what's the matter? You seem both out of humour: what does this mean? Have you quarrelled?

Sir Bash. No, Sir; no quarrel:—Why would my booby servant let him in again? [*Aside.*

Sir Bril. Strike me stupid, but you look very queer upon it!—Lovemore is borrowing money, I suppose: Sir Bashful is driving a a hard bargain, and you can't agree about the premium: Sir Bashful, let my friend Lovemore have the money.

Sir Bash. Money!——what does he mean?

Sir Bril. Both out of humour, I see: well, as you will. You have no reason to be in harmony with yourselves; my stars shine with a kinder aspect. Here, here, behold a treasury of love. I came back on purpose to show it to you. [*Takes a shagreen case out of his pocket.*] See what a present I have received; a magnificent pair of diamond buckles, by all that's amiable.

Love. How?

Sir Bash. [*Walking up to him.*] A pair of diamond buckles?

Sir Bril. How such a present should be sent to me is more than I can explain at present. Perhaps my friend Lovemore gained some intelligence in the quarter where I surprised him to-day, on a visit which I little suspected.

Love. That was to serve you: I know nothing of this business.

Sir Bril. The pain in your side, I hope, is better.——

Love. Po! this is only to distract your attention, Sir Bashful.

Sir Bash. So I suppose. And was this a present to you?

Sir Bril. A present, Sir. The consequence of having some tolerable phrase, a person, and a due degree of attention to the service of the ladies.—Don't you envy me, Sir Bashful?

Sir Bash. I can't say but I do.—[*Turns to* LOVEMORE.] My buckles, by all that's false in woman!

Love. Take no notice.——[*Walks aside.*] Has he supplanted me here too, as well as with the widow?

Sir Bril. What's the matter with you both?——Burning with envy!

Sir Bash. And I suppose an elegant epistle or a well-penned *billet-doux*, accompanied this token of the lady's affection.

Sir Bril. That would have been an agreeable addition, but it is still to come. Too many favours at once might overwhelm a body. A country-looking fellow, as my people tell me, left this curiously sealed up, at my house: he would not say from whence he came: I should know that in time, was all they could get from him; and I am now panting to learn from whence this mighty success has attended me. Sir Bashful, I came, saw, and conquered. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Sir Bash. But may not this be from some lady, who imagines that you sent it, and therefore chooses to reject your present?

Sir Bril. Oh, no; that cannot be the case. A little knowledge of the world would soon convince you that ladies do not usually reject presents from the man who has the good fortune to please by his manner, his taste for dress, and a certain *je ne sçai quoi* in his person and conversation.

Sir Bash. So I believe.——[*Walks aside.*] What say you to this, Mr. Lovemore?

Love. She would not have torn a letter from him.

Sir Bril. No, Sir Bashful; a present from me would not have been returned back upon my hands.

Sir Bash. I dare say not.—[*To* LOVEMORE.] I suppose she will give him my three hundred pounds into the bargain.

Love. After this, I shall wonder at nothing.

Sir Bril. What mortified countenances they both put on? [*Looks at them, and laughs.*

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Sir Bash. [*Walking up to* SIR BRILLIANT.] And I suppose you expect to have this lady?

Sir Bril. No doubt of it. This is the forerunner, I think. Hey, Lovemore?—Sir Bashful, this it is to be in luck. Ha, ha!

[*Laughs at them both.*

Love. *and* Sir Bash. [*Both forcing a laugh.*] Ha, ha!

Sir Bril. You both seem strangely piqued. ——Lovemore, what makes you so uneasy?

Love. You flatter yourself, and you wrong me—I—I—

[*Walks away.*

Sir Bash. He is a true friend: he is uneasy on my account.

[*Aside, and looking at* LOVEMORE.

Sir Bril. And, Sir Bashful, something has dashed your spirits. Do you repine at my success!

Sir Bash. I can't but say I do, Sir.

Sir Bril. Oh! very well; you are not disposed to be good company. *A l'honneur*, gentlemen; finish your money matters. Lovemore, where do you spend the evening?

Love. A good evening to you, Sir Brilliant: I am engaged. Business with Sir Bashful, you see——

Sir Bril. Well, don't let me be of inconvenience to you. Fare you well, gentlemen. Thou dear pledge of love! [*Looking at the buckles.*] thus let me clasp thee to my heart.—Sir Bashful, your servant. [*Exit.*

Sir Bash. What think you now, Mr. Lovemore?

Love. All unaccountable, Sir.

Sir Bash. By all that's false, I am gulled, cheated, and imposed upon. I am deceived, and dubbed a rank cuckold. It is too clear: she has given him the buckles, and I suppose my bank-notes have taken the same course.—Diamond buckles, and three hundred pounds, for Sir Brilliant! A reward for his merit!

Love. He is the favourite, and I have been working for him all this time.

Sir Bash. I now see through all her artifices. My resolution is fixed. If I can but get ocular demonstration of her guilt; if I can but get the means of proving to the whole world that she is vile enough to cuckold me, I shall then be happy.

Love. Why that will be some consolation!

Sir Bash. So it will: kind Heaven grant me that at least; make it plain that she dishonours me, and I am amply revenged.—Hark! I hear her coming. She shall know all I think, and all I feel. I have done with her for ever.

Love. [*Aside.*] Let me fly the impending storm. If I stay, detection and disgrace pursue me.—Sir Bashful I am sorry to see matters take this turn. I have done all in my power; and since there is no room to hope for success, I take my leave, and wish you a good night.

Sir Bash. No, no; you shall not leave me in this distress. You shall hear me tell her her own, and be a witness of our separation.

[*Holding him.*

Love. Excuse me: after what has passed, I shall never be able to endure the sight of her. Fare you well; I must be gone; good night, Sir Bashful. [*Struggling to go.*

Sir Bash. You are my best friend: I cannot part with you. [*Stands between him and the door.*] Stay and hear what she has to say for herself: you will see what a turn she will give to the business.

Love. [*Aside.*] What turn shall I give it?—Confusion! here she comes: I must weather the storm.

Enter LADY CONSTANT.

Lady Cons. After this behaviour, Mr. Lovemore, I am surprised, Sir, that you can think of staying a moment longer in this house.

Love. Madam, I——'sdeath! I have no invention to assist me at a pinch. [*Aside.*

Sir Bash. Mr. Lovemore is my friend, Madam; and I desire he will stay in my house as long as he pleases.—Hey, Lovemore!

[*Looks at him and smiles.*

Love. [*Aside.*] All must out, I fear.

Lady Cons. Your friend, Sir Bashful!—And do you authorise him to take this unbecoming liberty? Have you given him permission to send me a letter, so extravagant in the very terms of it?

Love. [*Aside.*] Ay, now 'tis coming, and impudence itself has not a word to say.

Sir Bash. I desired him to send that letter, Madam.

Love. Sir Bashful desired me, Ma'am.

[*Bowing respectfully.*

Sir Bash. I desired him.

Love. All at his request, Ma'am.

Lady Cons. And am I to be made your sport?—I wonder, Mr. Lovemore, that you would condescend to make yourself a party in so poor a plot. Do you presume upon a trifling mark of civility, which you persuaded me to accept of this morning? Do you come disguised under a mask of friendship to help this gentleman in his design against my honour and my happiness?

Love. [*Aside.*] Fairly caught, and nothing can bring me off.

Sir Bash. A mask of friendship!—He is a true friend, Madam: he sees how ill I am treated; and let me tell you, there is not a word of truth in that letter.

Love. Not a syllable of truth, Ma'am.—[*Aside.*] This will do; his own nonsense will save me.

Sir Bash. It was all done to try you, Madam.

Love. Nothing more, Ma'am; merely to try you.

Sir Bash. By way of experiment only; just to see how you would behave upon it.

Love. Nothing else was intended: all to try you, Ma'am.

Lady Cons. You have been both notably employed. The exploit is worthy of you. Your snare is spread for a woman; and if you had succeeded, the fame of so bright an action would add mightily to two such illustrious characters.

Sir Bash. A snare spread for her! Mark that, Mr. Lovemore; she calls it ensnaring.

Love. Ensnared to her own good. [*To* SIR BASHFUL.]—He has pleaded admirably for me.

[*Aside.*

Lady Cons. As to you, Sir Bashful, I have long ago ceased to wonder at your conduct; you have lost the power of surprising me: but when Mr. Lovemore becomes an accomplice in so mean a plot——

Sir Bash. I am in no plot, Madam, and nobody wants to ensnare you; do we, Lovemore?

Love. Sir Bashful knows that no harm was intended.

Sir Bash. Yes, I am in the secret, and my friend Lovemore meant no harm.

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Love. If the letter had succeeded, Sir Bashful knows there would have been no ill consequence.

Sir Bash. No harm in nature; but I now see how things are; and since your ladyship will listen to nothing for your own good, it is too plain, from all that has passed between us, that our tempers are by no means fitted for each other, and I am ready to part whenever you please; nay, I will part.

Lady Cons. And that is the only point in which we can agree, Sir.

Sir Bash. Had the letter been sent from another quarter, it would have met with a better reception: we know where your smiles are bestowed.

Lady Cons. Deal in calumny, Sir; give free scope to malice; I disdain your insinuations.

Sir Bash. The fact is too clear, and reproaches are now too late. This is the last of our conversing together; and you may take this by the way, you are not to believe one syllable of that letter.

Love. There is not a syllable of it deserves the least credit, Ma'am.

Sir Bash. It was all a mere joke, Madam: was not it, Lovemore?—And as to your being a fine woman, and as to any passion that any body has conceived for you, there was no such thing: you can witness for me, Lovemore; can't you?

Lady Cons. Oh! you are witnesses for one another.

Love. Sir Bashful knows the fairness of my intentions, and I know his.—[*Aside.*] He has acquitted me better than I expected, thanks to his absurdity.

Lady Cons. Go on, and aggravate your ill usage, gentlemen.

Sir Bash. It was all a bam, Madam, a scene we thought proper to act.—Let us laugh at her. [*Goes up to* LOVEMORE.

Love. With all my heart.—[*Aside.*] A silly blockhead! I can't help laughing at him. [*Laughing heartily.*

Sir Bash. [*Laughing with him.*] Ha, ha, ha! —all a bam; nothing else; a contrivance to make sport for ourselves—hey, Lovemore?

Lady Cons. This usage is insupportable. I shall not stay for an explanation. Two such worthy confederates!—Is my chair ready there? You may depend, Sir, that this is the last time you will see me in this house. [*Exit.*

Sir Bash. Agreed; a bargain, with all my heart. Lovemore, I have managed this well.

Love. Charmingly managed! I did not think you had so much spirit.

Sir Bash. I have found her out. The intrigue is too plain. She and Sir Brilliant are both detected.

Love. I never suspected that Sir Brilliant was the happy man. I wish I had succeeded, had it been only to mortify his vanity.

Sir Bash. And so do I: I wish it too. But never own the letter; deny it to the last.

Love. You may depend upon my secrecy.

Sir Bash. I am for ever obliged to you. A foolish woman! how she stands in her own light.

Love. Truly, I think she does. But since I have no interest with her ladyship, I shall now sound a retreat, and leave matters to your own discretion. Success attend you. [*Going.*

Sir Bash. You must not forsake me in this distress.

Love. Had your lady proved tractable, I should not have cared how long I had staid. But since things are come to this pass, I shall now go and see what kind of reception I am to meet with from Mrs. Lovemore.

Sir Bash. Don't let her know that you have a regard for her.

Love. Oh, no; I see the consequence.—[*Aside.*] Well off, this time; and, Madam Fortune, if I trust you again, you shall play me what prank you please. Sir Bashful, yours. [*Going.*

Sir Bash. A thousand thanks to you.—And, hark ye, if I can serve you with your lady——

Love. I am much obliged to you: but I shall endeavour to go on, without giving you the trouble of assisting me. And, do you hear? assure my Lady Constant, that I meant nothing but to serve your interest. [*Exit.*

Sir Bash. Rely upon my management. I can acquit you.—My Lady Constant! Lady Constant—Let me chase her from my thoughts: can I do it? Rage, fury, love—no more of love! I am glad she tore the letter. Odso! yonder it lies. It is only torn in two, and she may still piece the fragments together. I'll pick up the letter this moment: it shall never appear in evidence against me. As to Sir Brilliant, his motions shall be watched; I know how to proceed with Madam, and if I can but prove the fact, every body will say that I am ill used by her. [*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—An Apartment at MR. LOVEMORE'S.

Enter MRS. LOVEMORE, *elegantly dressed;* MUSLIN *following her.*

Mus. Why, to be sure, Ma'am, it is so for certain, and you are very much in the right of it.

Mrs. Love. I fancy I am: I see the folly of my former conduct. I am determined never to let my spirits sink into a melancholy state again.

Mus. Why, that's the very thing, Ma'am; the very thing I have been always preaching up to you. Did not I always say, see company, Ma'am, take your pleasure, and never break your heart for any man? This is what I always said.

Mrs. Love. And you have said enough: spare yourself the trouble now.

Mus. I always said so. And what did the world say? Heavens bless her for a sweet woman! and a plague go with him for an inhuman, barbarous, bloody——murdering brute.

Mrs. Love. Well, truce with your impertinence; your tongue runs on at such a rate.

Mus. Nay, don't be angry; they did say so indeed. But, dear heart, how every body will be overjoyed when they find you have plucked up a little! As for me, it gives me new life, to have so much company in the house, and such a racketing at the door with coaches and chairs, enough to hurry a body out of one's wits.—Lard, this is another thing, and you look quite like another thing, Ma'am, and that dress quite becomes you. I suppose, Ma'am, you will never wear your negligee again. It is not fit for you indeed, Ma'am. It might pass very well with some folks, Ma'am, but the like of you——

Mrs. Love. Will you never have done? Go and see who is coming up stairs.

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Enter MRS. BELLMOUR.

Mrs. Love. Mrs. Bellmour, I revive at the sight of you. Muslin, do you step, and do as I ordered you.

Mus. What the deuce can she be at now! [*Exit.*

Mrs. Bell. You see I am punctual to my time.—Well, I admire your dress of all things. It's mighty pretty.

Mrs. Love. I am glad you like it. But under all this appearance of gayety, I have at the bottom but an aching heart.

Mrs. Bell. Be ruled by me, and I'll answer for the event. Why really, now you look just as you should do.—Why neglect so fine a figure?

Mrs. Love. You are so obliging!

Mrs. Bell. And so true.——What was beautiful before, is now heightened by the additional ornaments of dress; and if you will but animate and inspire the whole with those graces of the mind which I am sure you possess, the impression cannot fail of being effectual upon all beholders; even upon the depraved mind of Mr. Lovemore.——You have not seen him since, have you?

Mrs. Love. He dined at home, but was soon upon the wing to his usual haunts.

Mrs. Bell. If he does but come home time enough, depend upon it, my plot will take.—And have you got together a good deal of company?

Mrs. Love. Yes, a tolerable party.

Mrs. Bell. That's right: show him that you will consult your own pleasure.

Mrs. Love. *A-propos*, as soon as I came home, I received a letter from Sir Brilliant, in a style of warmth and tenderness that would astonish you. He begs to see me again, and has something particular to communicate. I left it in my dressing room; you shall see it by and by: I took your advice, and sent him word he might come. The lure brought him hither immediately: he makes no doubt of his success with me.

Mrs. Bell. Well! two such friends as Sir Brilliant, and Mr. Lovemore, I believe never existed.

Mrs. Love. Their falsehood to each other is unparalleled. I left Sir Brilliant at the card-table: as soon as he can disengage himself, he will quit his company in pursuit of me. I forgot to tell you, my Lady Constant is here.

Mrs. Bell. Is she?

Mrs. Love. She is, and has been making the strangest discovery: Mr. Lovemore has had a design there too!

Mrs. Bell. Oh! I don't doubt him: but the more proof we have the better.

Mrs. Love. There is sufficient proof: you must know, Ma'am—[*A rap at the door.*] As I live and breathe, I believe this is Mr. Lovemore.

Mrs. Bell. If it is, every thing goes on as I could wish.

Mrs. Love. I hear his voice, it is he. How my heart beats!

Mrs. Bell. Courage, and the day's our own. He must not see me yet. Where shall I run?

Mrs. Love. In there, Ma'am. Make haste; I hear his step on the stairs.

Mrs. Bell. Success attend you. I am gone. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Love. I am frightened out of my senses. What the event may be I fear to think; but I must go through with it.

Enter LOVEMORE.

Mrs. Love. You are welcome home, Sir.

Love. Mrs. Lovemore, your servant. [*Without looking at her.*

Mrs. Love. It is somewhat rare to see you at home so early.

Love. I said I should come home, did not I? I always like to be as good as my word.—What could the widow mean by this usage? to make an appointment, and break it thus abruptly. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Love. He seems to muse upon it. [*Aside.*

Love. [*Aside.*] She does not mean to do so treacherous a thing as to jilt me? Oh, Lord! I am wonderfully tired. [*Yawns, and sinks into an armed chair.*

Mrs. Love. Are you indisposed, my dear?

Love. No, my love; I thank you, I am very well; a little fatigued only, with jolting over the stones, all the way into the city this morning. I have paid a few visits this afternoon.—Confoundedly tired.——Where's William?

Mrs. Love. Do you want any thing?

Love. Only my cap and slippers. I am not in spirits, I think. [*Yawns.*

Mrs. Love. You are never in spirits at home, Mr. Lovemore.

Love. I beg your pardon: I never am any where more cheerful. [*Stretching his arms.*] I wish I may die if I an't very happy at home,—very [*Yawns.*] very happy.

Mrs. Love. I can hear otherwise. I am informed that Mr. Lovemore is the promoter of mirth and good humour wherever he goes.

Love. Oh! no, you overrate me; upon my soul you do.

Mrs. Love. I can hear, Sir, that no person's company is so acceptable to the ladies; that your wit inspires every thing: you have your compliment for one, your smile for another, a whisper for a third, and so on, Sir: you divide your favours, and are every where, but at home, all whim, vivacity, and spirit.

Love. Ho, no! [*Laughing.*] how can you talk so? I swear I can't help laughing at the fancy. All whim, vivacity, and spirit! I shall burst my sides. How can you banter one so?——I divide my favours too!——Oh, Heavens! I can't stand this raillery! such a description of me!—I that am rather saturnine, of a serious cast, and inclined to be pensive: I can't help laughing at the oddity of the conceit.—Oh Lord! Oh Lord! [*Laughs.*

Mrs. Love. Just as you please, Sir. I see that I am ever to be treated with indifference. [*Walks across the stage.*

Love. [*Rises and walks a contrary way.*] I can't put this widow Bellmour out of my head. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Love. If I had done any thing to provoke this usage, this cold, determined contempt— [*Walking.*

Love. I wish I had done with that business entirely; but my desires are kindled, and must be satisfied. [*Aside.*

[*They walk for some time silently by each other.*

Mrs. Love. What part of my conduct gives you offence, Mr. Lovemore?

Love. Still harping upon that ungrateful string!—but pr'ythee don't set me a laughing again.——Offence!—nothing gives me offence, child!—you know I am very fond—[*Yawns and walks.*]—I like you of all things, and think you a most admirable wife; prudent, managing,

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—careless of your own person, and very attentive to mine;—not much addicted to pleasure,—grave, retired, and domestic; you govern your house, pay the tradesmen's bills, [*Yawns.*] scold the servants, and love your husband:—upon my soul, a very good wife!—as good a sort of a wife [*Yawns.*] as a body might wish to have.—Where's William? I must go to bed.

Mrs. Love. To bed so early! Had not you better join the company?

Love. I sha'n't go out to-night.

Mrs. Love. But I mean the company in the dining-room.

Love. Company in the dining room! [*Stares at her.*

Mrs. Love. Yes: I invited them to a rout.

Love. A rout in my house!—and you dressed out too!—What is all this?

Mrs. Love. You have no objection, I hope.

Love. Objection!—No, I like company, you know, of all things; I'll go and join them; who are they all?

Mrs. Love. You know 'em all; and there's your friend, Sir Brilliant.

Love. Is he there? I shall be glad to see him. But, pray, how comes all this about?

Mrs. Love. I intend to see company often.

Love. Do you?

Mrs. Love. Ay, and not look tamely on, while you revel luxuriously in a course of pleasure. I shall pursue my own plan of diversion.

Love. Do so, Ma'am: the change in your temper will not be disagreeable.

Mrs. Love. And so I shall, Sir, I assure you. Adieu to melancholy, and welcome pleasure, wit, and gayety. [*She walks about and sings.*

Love. What the devil has come over her? And what, in the name of wonder, does all this mean?

Mrs. Love. Mean, Sir!—It means, it means—how can you ask me what it means?—Well, to be sure, the sobriety of that question!—Do you think a woman of spirit can have leisure to tell her meaning, when she is all air, alertness, rapture, and enjoyment?

Love. She is mad!—Stark mad!

Mrs. Love. You're mistaken, Sir,—not mad, but in spirits, that's all. Am I too flighty for you?—Perhaps I am: you are of a saturnine disposition, inclined to think a little or so. Well, don't let me interrupt you: don't let me be of any inconvenience: that would be the unpolitest thing; a married couple to be interfering and encroaching on each other's pleasures. Oh, hideous! it would be Gothic to the last degree. Ha, ha, ha!

Love. [*Forcing a laugh.*] Ha, ha!—Ma'am, you—ha, ha! you are perfectly right.

Mrs. Love. Nay, but I don't like that laugh now; I positively don't like it. Can't you laugh out as you were used to do? For my part, I'm determined to do nothing else all the rest of my life.

Love. This is the most astonishing thing! Ma'am, I don't rightly comprehend——

Mrs. Love. Oh, Lud! Oh, Lud!—with that important face! Well, but come! what don't you comprehend?

Love. There is something in this treatment that I don't so well——

Mrs. Love. Oh! are you there, Sir? How quickly they who have no sensibility for the peace and happiness of others, can feel for themselves, Mr. Lovemore!—But that's a grave reflection, and I hate reflection.

Love. What has she got into her head? This sudden change, Mrs. Lovemore, let me tell you—

Mrs. Love. Nay, don't be frightened: there is no harm in innocent mirth, I hope: never look so grave upon it. I assure you, Sir, that though, on your part, you seem determined to offer constant indignities to your wife, and though the laws of retaliation would in some sort exculpate her, if when provoked to the utmost, exasperated beyond all enduring, she should, in her turn, make him know what it is to receive an injury in the tenderest point—

Love. Madam! [*Angrily.*

Mrs. Love. Well, well, don't be armed. I sha'n't retaliate: my own honour will secure you there; you may depend upon it.—Will you come and play a game at cards! Well, do as you like; you wont come? No, no, I see you wont—What say you to a bit of supper with us?—Nor that neither?—Follow your inclinations: it is not material what a body eats, you know; the company expects me; adieu, Mr. Lovemore, yours, yours. [*Exit, singing.*

Love. This is a frolic I never saw her in before!—Laugh all the rest of my life!—laws of retaliation!—an injury in the tenderest point!—the company expects me,—adieu! yours, yours!—[*Mimicking her.*] What the devil is all this? Some of her female friends have been tampering with her. So, so: I must begin to look a little sharp after Madam. I'll go this moment into the card-room, and watch whom she whispers with, whom she ogles with, and every circumstance that can lead to—— [*Going.*

Enter MUSLIN, *in a hurry.*

Mus. Madam, Madam,—here's your letter; I would not for all the world that my master——

Love. What, is she mad too? What's the matter, woman?

Mus. Nothing, Sir,—nothing: I wanted a word with my lady, that's all, Sir.

Love. You would not for the world that your master—What was you going to say?—what paper's that?

Mus. Paper, Sir!

Love. Paper, Sir! Let me see it.

Mus. Lord, Sir! how can you ask a body for such a thing? It's a letter to me, Sir, a letter from the country; a letter from my sister, Sir. She bids me to buy her a *shiver de frize* cap, and a sixteenth in the lottery; and tells me of a number she dreamed of, that's all, Sir, I'll put it up.

Love. Let me look at it. Give it me this moment. [*Reads.*] To MRS. LOVEMORE!—BRILLIANT FASHION. This is a letter from the country, is it?

Mus. That, Sir—that is—no, Sir,—no;—that's not sister's letter.—If you will give me that back, Sir, I'll show you the right one.

Love. Where did you get this?

Mus. Sir!

Love. Where did you get it? Tell me truth.

Mus. Dear heart, you fright a body so—in the parlour, Sir—I found it there.

Love. Very well! leave the room.

Mus. The devil fetch it, I was never so out in my politics in all my days. [*Exit.*

Love. A pretty epistle truly! [*Reads.*

'*When you command me, my dearest Mrs. Lovemore, never to touch again upon the subject*

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of love, you command an impossibility. You excite the flame, and forbid it to burn. Permit me once more to throw myself on my knees, and implore your compassion,'——Compassion with a vengeance on him!——'*Think you see me now, with tender, melting, supplicating eyes, languishing at your feet.'*——Very well, Sir,——'*Can you find it in your heart to persist in cruelty?—Grant me but access to you once more, and in addition to what I have already said this morning, I will urge such motives'*—Urge motives, will ye?—'*as will convince you, that you should no longer hesitate in gratitude to reward him, who here makes a vow of eternal constancy and love.*

BRILLIANT FASHION.

So, so, so! your very humble servant, Sir Brilliant Fashion!——This is your friendship for me, is it?—You are mighty kind indeed, Sir,—but I thank you as much as if you had really done me the favour: and, Mrs. Lovemore, I'm your humble servant too. She intends to laugh all the rest of her life! This letter will change her note. Yonder she comes along the gallery, and Sir Brilliant in full chase of her. They come this way. Could I but detect them both now! I'll step aside, and who knows but the devil may tempt them to their undoing. A polite husband I am: there's the coast clear for you, Madam. [*Exit.*

Enter MRS. LOVEMORE *and* SIR BRILLIANT.

Mrs. Love. I have already told you my mind, Sir Brilliant. Your civility is odious; your compliments fulsome; and your solicitations insulting.—I must make use of harsh language, Sir; you provoke it.

Sir Bril. Not retiring to solitude and discontent again, I hope, Madam! Have a care, my dear Mrs. Lovemore, of a relapse.

Mrs. Love. No danger, Sir: don't be too solicitous about me. Why leave the company! let me entreat you to return, Sir.

Sir Bril. By Heaven, there is more rapture in being one moment *vis-a-vis* with you, than in the company of a whole drawing-room of beauties. Round you are melting pleasures, tender transports, youthful loves, and blooming graces, all unfelt, neglected and despised, by a tasteless, cold, unimpassioned husband, while they might be all so much better employed to the purposes of ecstacy and bliss.

Mrs. Love. I am amazed, Sir, at this liberty.——What action of my life has authorized this assurance?——I desire, Sir, you will desist. Were I not afraid of the ill consequences that might follow, I should not hesitate a moment to acquaint Mr. Lovemore with your whole behaviour.

Sir Bril. She wont tell her husband!——A charming creature, and blessings on her for so convenient a hint. She yields by all my hope!—What shall I say to overwhelm her senses in a flood of nonsense! [*Aside.*

Go my heart's envoys, tender sighs make haste—
Still drink delicious poisons from the eye,—
Raptures and paradise
Pant on thy lip, and to thy heart be press'd.
[Forcing her all this time.

Enter MR. LOVEMORE.

Love. Hell and distraction! this is too much.

Sir Bril. What the devil's the matter now? [*Kneels down to buckle his shoe.*] This confounded buckle is always plaguing me. Lovemore I rejoice to see thee.

[*Looking at each other.*

Love. And have you the conndence to look me in the face?

Sir Bril. I was telling your lady, here, of the most whimsical adventure——

Love. Don't add the meanness of falsehood to the black attempt of invading the happiness of your friend. I did imagine, Sir, from the long intercourse that has subsisted between us, that you might have had delicacy enough, feeling enough, honour enough, Sir, not to meditate an injury like this.

Sir Bril. Ay, it's all over, I am detected. [*Aside.*] Mr. Lovemore, I feel that I have been wrong, and will not attempt a vindication of myself. We have been friends hitherto, and if begging your pardon for this rashness will any ways atone——

Love. No, Sir, nothing can atone. The provocation you have given me would justify my drawing upon you this instant, did not that lady, and this roof protect you.

Sir Bril. Harsh language to a friend——

Love. Friend, Sir Brilliant!

Sir Bril. If you will but hear me——

Love. Sir, I insist; I wont hear a word.

Sir Bril. I declare upon my honour——

Love. Honour! for shame, Sir Brilliant: honour and friendship are sacred words, and you profane them both.

Sir Bril. If imploring forgiveness of that lady—

Love. That lady! I desire you will never speak to that lady.

Sir Bril. Can you command a moment's patience?

Love. Sir, I am out of all patience: this must be settled between us: I have done for the present.

Enter SIR BASHFUL.

Sir Bash. Did not I hear loud words among you! I certainly did. What are you quarreling about?

Love. Read that, Sir Bashful. [*Gives him* SIR BRILLIANT'S *letter.*] Read that, and judge if I have not cause——

[SIR BASHFUL *reads to himself.*

Sir Bril. Hear but what I have to say—

Love. No, Sir, no; we shall find a fitter time. As for you, Madam, I am satisfied with your conduct. I was, indeed, a little alarmed, but I have been a witness of your behaviour, and I am above harbouring low suspicions.

Sir Bash. Upon my word, Mr. Lovemore, this is carrying the jest too far.

Love. It is the basest action a gentleman can be guilty of: and to a person who never injured him, still more criminal.

Sir Bash. Why, so I think. Sir Brilliant, [*To him aside.*] here take this letter, and read it to him, his own letter to my wife.

Sir Bril. Let me see it— [*Takes the letter.*

Sir Bash. 'Tis indeed, as you say, the vilest action a gentleman can be guilty of.

Love. An unparalleled breach of friendship.

Sir Bril. Not altogether so unparalleled: I believe it will not be found without a precedent—as for example—— [*Reads.*

'*To my* LADY CONSTANT——

'*Why should I conceal, my dear Madam, that your charms have awakened my tenderest passion?*'

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Love. Confusion!—my letter— [*Aside.*

Sir Bril. [Reading.] '*I long have loved you, long adored. Could I but flatter myself—*

[LOVEMORE *walks about uneasy;* SIR BRILLIANT *follows him.*

Sir Bash. There, Mr. Lovemore, the basest treachery!

Sir Bril. [Reads.] '*Could I but flatter myself with the least kind return.*'

Love. Confusion! let me seize the letter out of his hand. [*Snatches it from him.*

Sir Bash. An unparalleled breach of friendship, Mr. Lovemore.

Love. All a forgery, Sir; all a forgery.

Sir Bash. That I deny: it is the very identical letter my lady threw away with such indignation. She tore it in two, and I have pieced it together.

Love. A mere contrivance to varnish his guilt.

Sir Bril. Ha, ha! my dear Lovemore, we know one another. Have not you been at the same work with the widow Bellmour?

Love. The widow Bellmour!—If I spoke to her, it was to serve you, Sir.

Sir Bril. Are you sure of that?

Love. Po! I wont stay a moment longer among ye. I'll go into another room to avoid ye all. I know little or nothing of the widow Bellmour, Sir. [*Opens the door.*

Enter MRS. BELLMOUR.

Hell and destruction!—what fiend is conjured up here? Zoons! let me make my escape out of the house. [*Runs to the opposite door.*

Mrs. Love. I'll secure this pass: you must not go, my dear.

Love. 'Sdeath, Madam, give me way.

Mrs. Love. Nay, don't be in such a hurry, I want to introduce an acquaintance of mine to you.

Love. I desire, Madam—

Mrs. Bell. My Lord, my Lord Etheridge: I am heartily glad to see your Lordship. [*Taking hold of him.*

Mrs. Love. Do, my dear, let me introduce this lady to you. [*Turning him to her.*

Love. Here's the devil and all to do! [*Aside.*

Mrs. Bell. My Lord, this is the most fortunate encounter.

Love. I wish I was fifty miles off. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Love. Mrs. Bellmour, give me leave to introduce Mr. Lovemore to you.

[*Turning him to her.*

Mrs. Bell. No, my dear Ma'am, let me introduce Lord Etheridge to you. [*Pulling him.*] My Lord—

Sir Bril. In the name of wonder, what is all this?

Sir Bash. This is another of his intrigues blown up.

Mrs. Love. My dear Ma'am, you are mistaken: this is my husband.

Mrs. Bell. Pardon me, Ma'am, 'tis my Lord Etheridge.

Mrs. Love. My dear, how can you be so ill-bred in your own house?—Mrs. Bellmour, this is Mr. Lovemore.

Love. Are you going to toss me in a blanket, Madam?—call up the rest of your people, if you are.

Mrs. Bell. Pshaw! pr'ythee now, my Lord, leave off your humours. Mrs. Lovemore, this is my Lord Etheridge, a lover of mine, who has made proposals of marriage to me.

Love. Confusion! let me get rid of these two furies. [*Breaks away from them.*

Sir Bash. He has been tampering with her too, has he?

Mrs. Bell. [*Follows him.*] My Lord, I say, my Lord Etheridge, wont your Lordship know me?

Love. This is the most damnable accident! [*Aside.*

Mrs. Bell. I hope your Lordship has not forgot your appointment at my house this evening.

Love. I deserve all this. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Bell. Pray, my Lord, what have I done, that you treat me with this coldness? Come, come, you shall have a wife: I will take compassion on you.

Love. Damnation! I can't stand it. [*Aside.*

Sir Bash. Murder will out: murder will out.

Mrs. Bell. Come, cheer up, my Lord: what the deuce, your dress is altered! what's become of the star and ribbon? And so the gay, the florid, the *magnifique* Lord Etheridge dwindles down into plain Mr. Lovemore, the married man! Mr. Lovemore, your most obedient, very humble servant, Sir.

Love. I can't bear to feel myself in so ridiculous a circumstance. [*Aside.*

Sir Bash. He has been passing himself for a lord, has he?

Mrs. Bell. I beg my compliments to your friend, Mrs. Loveit: I am much obliged to you both for your very honourable designs.

[*Courtesying to him.*

Love. I was never so ashamed in all my life!

Sir Bril. So, so, so, all his pains were to hide the star from me. This discovery is a perfect cordial to my dejected spirits.

Mrs. Bell. Mrs. Lovemore, I cannot sufficiently acknowledge the providence that directed you to pay me a visit, though I was wholly unknown to you; and I shall henceforth consider you as my deliverer.

Love. So, it was she that fainted away in the closet, and be damned to her jealousy. [*Aside.*

Sir Bril. By all that's whimsical, an odd sort of an adventure this! My Lord, [*Advances to him.*] my Lord, my Lord Etheridge, as the man says in the play, 'Your Lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.'

Love. Now he comes upon me.—Oh, I'm in a fine situation. [*Aside.*

Sir Bril. My Lord, I hope that ugly pain in your Lordship's side is abated.

Love. Absurd and ridiculous. [*Aside.*

Sir Bril. There is nothing forming there, I hope, my Lord.

Love. I shall come to an explanation with you.

Sir Bril. The tennis-ball from Lord Racket's unlucky left hand.

Love. No more at present, Sir Brilliant. I leave you now to yourselves, and—[*Goes to the door in the back scene.*]—'sdeath, another fiend! I am beset by them.

Enter LADY CONSTANT.

No way to escape?

[*Attempts both stage-doors, and is prevented.*

Lady Cons. Mr. Lovemore, it is the luckiest thing in the world that you are come home.

Love. Ay, it is all over—all must come to light.

Lady Cons. I have lost every rubber, quite broke; four by honours against me every time. Do, Mr. Lovemore, lend me another hundred.

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Love. I would give a hundred pounds you were all in Lapland. [*Aside.*

Lady Cons. Mrs. Lovemore, let me tell you, you are married to the falsest man: he has deceived me strangely.

Mrs. Love. I begin to feel for him, and to pity his uneasiness.

Mrs. Bell. Never talk of pity; let him be probed to the quick.

Sir Bash. The case is pretty plain, I think now, Sir Brilliant.

Sir Bril. Pretty plain, upon my soul! Ha, ha!

Love. I'll turn the tables upon Sir Bashful, for all this—[*Takes* SIR BASHFUL'S *letter out of his pocket.*]—where's the mighty harm now in this letter?

Sir Bash. Where's the harm?

Love. [Reads.] '*I cannot, my dearest life, any longer behold*——

Sir Bash. Shame and confusion! I am undone. [*Aside.*

Love. Hear this, Sir Bashful.—'*The manifold vexations, of which, through a false prejudice, I am myself the occasion.*'

Lady Cons. What is all this?

Sir Bash. I am a lost man. [*Aside.*

Love. Mind, Sir Bashful.—'*I am therefore resolved, after many conflicts with myself, to throw off the mask, and frankly own a passion, which the fear of falling into ridicule has, in appearance, suppressed.*'

Sir Bash. 'Sdeath! I'll hear no more of it. [*Snatches at the letter.*

Love. No, Sir; I resign it here, where it was directed; and with it, these notes which Sir Bashful gave me for your use.

Lady Cons. It is his hand, sure enough.

Love. Yes, Madam, and those are his sentiments, which he explained to me more at large.

Lady Cons. [Reads.]—'*Accept the presents which I myself have sent you; money, attendance, equipage, and every thing else you shall command; and, in return, I shall only entreat you to conceal from the world that you have raised a flame in this heart, which will ever show me,*

Your admirer,

And your truly affectionate husband,

BASHFUL CONSTANT.

All. Ha, ha!

Sir Bril. So, so, so! he has been in love with his wife all this time, has he? Sir Bashful, will you go and see the new comedy with me?

Sir Bash. I shall blush through the world all the rest of my life. [*Aside.*

Sir Bril. Lovemore, don't you think it a base thing to invade the happiness of a friend? or to do him a clandestine wrong? or to injure him with the woman he loves?

Love. To cut the matter short with you, Sir, we have been traitors to each other; a couple of unprincipled, unreflecting profligates

Sir Bril. Profligates.

Love. Ay, both; we are pretty fellows indeed!

Mrs. Bell. I am glad to find you are awakened to a sense of your error.

Love. I am, Madam, and am frank enough to own it. I am above attempting to disguise my feelings, when I am conscious they are on the side of truth and honour. With the sincerest remorse, I ask your pardon.—I should ask pardon of my Lady Constant too, but the fact is, Sir Bashful threw the whole affair in my way; and, when a husband will be ashamed of loving a valuable woman, he must not be surprised, if other people take her case into consideration, and love her for him.

Sir Bril. Why, faith, that does in some sort make his apology.

Sir Bash. Sir Bashful, Sir Bashful! thou art ruined. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Bell. Well, Sir, upon certain terms, I don't know but I may sign and seal your pardon.

Love. Terms!——what terms?

Mrs. Bell. That you make due expiation of your guilt to that lady.

[*Pointing to* MRS. LOVEMORE.

Love. That lady, Ma'am!—That lady has no reason to complain.

Mrs. Love. No reason to complain, Mr. Lovemore?

Love. No, Madam, none; for whatever may have been my imprudences, they have had their source in your conduct.

Mrs. Love. In my conduct, Sir?

Love. In your conduct.—I here declare before this company, and I am above misrepresenting the matter; I here declare, that no man in England could be better inclined to domestic happiness, if you, Madam, on your part, had been willing to make home agreeable.

Mrs. Love. There, I confess, he touches me. [*Aside.*

Love. You could take pains enough before marriage; you could put forth all your charms; practise all your arts, and make your features please by rule; for ever changing, running an eternal round of variety; and all this to win my affections; but when you had won them, you did not think them worth your keeping; never dressed, pensive, silent, melancholy; and the only entertainment in my house was the dear pleasure of a dull conjugal *tête-à-tête;* and all this insipidity, because you think the sole merit of a wife consists in her virtue; a fine way of amusing a husband, truly!

Sir Bril. Upon my soul, and so it is— [*Laughing.*

Mrs. Love. Sir, I must own there is too much truth in what you say. This lady has opened my eyes, and convinced me there was a mistake in my former conduct.

Love. Come, come, you need say no more.—I forgive you; I forgive.

Mrs. Love. Forgive! I like that air of confidence, when you know that, on my side, it is, at worst, an error in judgment; whereas, on yours——

Mrs. Bell. Po! po! never stand disputing: you know each other's faults and virtues: you have nothing to do but mend the former, and enjoy the latter. There, there, kiss and friends. There, Mrs. Lovemore, take your reclaimed libertine to your arms.

Love. 'Tis in your power, Madam, to make a reclaimed libertine of me indeed.

Mrs. Love. From this moment it shall be our mutual study to please each other.

Love. A match with all my heart. I shall hereafter be ashamed only of my follies, but never be ashamed of owning that I sincerely love you.

Sir Bash. Sha'n't you be ashamed?

Love. Never, Sir.

Sir Bash. And will you keep me in countenance?

Love. I will.

Sir Bash. Give me your hand. I now forgive you all. My Lady Constant, I own the letter, I own the sentiments of it; [*Embraces her.*] and from this moment I take you to my

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heart.—Lovemore, zookers! you have made a man of me. Sir Brilliant, come; produce the buckles.

Lady Cons. If you hold in this humour, Sir Bashful, our quarrels are at an end.

Sir Bril. And now, I suppose, I must make restitution here—

[*Gives* LADY CONSTANT *the buckles.*

Sir Bash. Ay, ay, make restitution. Lovemore! this is the consequence of his having some tolerable phrase, and a person, Mr. Lovemore! ha, ha!—

Sir Bril. Why, I own the laugh is against me. With all my heart; I am glad to see my friends happy at last. Lovemore, may I presume to hope for pardon at that lady's hands?

[*Points to* MRS. LOVEMORE.

Love. My dear confederate in vice, your pardon is granted. Two sad libertines we have been. But come, give us your hand: we have used each other scurvily: for the future we will endeavour to atone for the errors of our past misconduct.

Sir Bril. Agreed; we will henceforward behave like men, who have not forgot the obligations of truth and honour.

Love. And now I congratulate the whole company, that this business has had so happy a tendency to convince each of us of our folly.

Mrs. Bell. Pray, Sir, don't draw me into a share of your folly.

Love. Come, come, my dear Ma'am, you are not without your share of it. This will teach you, for the future to be content with one lover at a time, without listening to a fellow you know nothing of, because he assumes a title, and spreads a fair report of himself.

Mrs. Bell. The reproof is just, I grant it.

Love. Come, let us join the company cheerfully, keep our own secrets, and not make ourselves the town-talk.

Sir Bash. Ay, ay; let us keep the secret.

Love. What, returning to your fears again! you will put me out of countenance, Sir Bashful.

Sir Bash. I have done.

Love. When your conduct is fair and upright, never be afraid of ridicule. Real honour and generous affection may bid defiance to all the small wits in the kingdom. In my opinion, were the business of this day to go abroad into the world, it might prove a very useful lesson: the men would see how their passions may carry them into the danger of wounding the bosom of a friend: and the ladies would learn that, after the marriage rites are performed, they ought not to suffer their powers of pleasing to languish away, but should still remember to sacrifice to the Graces.

To win a man, when all your pains succeed,
The WAY TO KEEP HIM *is a task indeed.*

[Exeunt omnes.

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THE DUENNA:

A COMIC OPERA,

IN THREE ACTS.

BY R. B. SHERIDAN, Esq.

REMARKS.

THE DUENNA is from the pen of the late Richard Brinsley Sheridan, Esq. and is therefore a lively, an amusing, and elegant Opera. There might have been more incidents, and more characters, if it had suited the humour of the celebrated author, at the time he wrote this Opera, to introduce them; but he was too indolent to undertake any thing that required labour or contrivance. He would not even be merry unless he could be easy and elegant with it. *The Duenna*, therefore, is like a few hours' conversation with a gentleman gifted by nature with extraordinary wit, but too well educated to make an ostentatious display of it. Incidents we should have had, if they had fallen in his way; but as they did not, *The Duenna* is an evening's entertainment, some parts of which approach to brilliancy, but none sink into insipidity.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	DRURY LANE, 1823.		DRURY LANE.
Don Jerome,	*Mr. Gattie.*	Lorenzo,	*Mr. Povey.*
Don Ferdinand,	*Mr. Horn.*	Lewis,	*Mr. Honner.*
Don Antonio,	*Mr. Melrose.*	Sancho,	*Mr. Douglas.*
Carlos,	*Mr. Braham.*	Clara,	*Miss Stephens.*
Isaac Mendoza,	*Miss Clara Fisher.*	Louisa	*Miss Povey.*
Lopez,	*Mr. W. H. Williams.*	Margaret, the Duenna,	*Mrs. Harlowe.*
Father Paul,	*Mr. Pope.*	Louisa's Maid,	*Miss Cooper.*
Lay Brother,	*Mr. Hughes.*	Clara's Maid	*Miss Phillips.*
Francis,	*Mr. Coveney.*		
Augustine,	*Mr. Read.*		

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Street.

Enter Lopez, *with a dark Lantern.*

Lopez. Past three o'clock! soh! a notable hour for one of my regular disposition, to be strolling like a bravo through the streets of Seville! Well, of all services, to serve a young lover is the hardest—not that I am an enemy to love; but my love and my master's differ strangely—Don Ferdinand is much too gallant to eat, drink, or sleep—now, my love gives me an appetite—then I am fond of dreaming of my mistress, and I love dearly to toast her—This cannot be done without good sleep and good liquor: hence my partiality to a feather bed and a bottle—what a pity, now, that I have not further time for reflections! but my master expects thee, honest Lopez, to secure his retreat from Donna Clara's window, as I guess—[*Music without.*]—hey! sure! I heare music! so, so! who have we here? Oh, Don Antonio, my master's friend, come from the masquerade, to serenade my young mistress, Donna Louisa, I suppose: soh! we shall have the old gentleman up presently—lest he should miss his son, I had best lose no time in getting to my post. [*Exit.*

Enter Antonio *and* Lorenzo, *with Masks and Music.*

Song.—Antonio.

Tell me, my lute, can thy soft strain
So gently speak thy master's pain?
So softly sing, so humbly sigh,
That though my sleeping love shall know,
Who sings—who sighs below,

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Her rosy slumbers shall not fly!
Thus may some vision whisper more
Than ever I dare speak before.

1 *Mask.* Antonio, your mistress will never wake, while you sing so dolefully; love, like a cradled infant, is lulled by a sad melody.

Ant. I do not wish to disturb her rest.

1 *Mask.* The reason is, because you know she does not regard you enough to appear, if you awakened her.

Ant. Nay, then, I'll convince you. [*Sings.*

The breath of morn bids hence the night,
Unveil those beauteous eyes my fair:
For till the dawn of love is there,
I feel no day, I own no light.

LOUISA—*Replies from a Window.*

Waking, I heard thy numbers chide,
Waking, the dawn did bless my sight,
'Tis Pœbus, sure, that wooes, I cried,
Who speaks in song, who moves in light.

DON JEROME—*From another Window.*

What vagabonds are these I hear,
Fiddling, fluting, rhyming, ranting,
Piping, scraping, whining, canting,
Fly, scurvy minstrels, fly!

TRIO.

Lou. Nay, pr'ythee, father, why so rough?
Ant. An humble lover I.
Jer. How durst you, daughter, lend an ear
To such deceitful stuff?
Quick from the window, fly!
Lou. Adieu, Antonio!
Ant. Must you go?
Lou. } *Ant.* } We soon, perhaps, may meet again;
For though hard fortune is our foe,
The god of love will fight for us.
Jer. Reach me the blunderbuss.
Ant. & *L.* The god of love, who knows our pain.
Jer. Hence, or these slugs are through your brain.

[*Exeunt* JEROME *and* LOUISA *from the Windows. Ex.* ANT. *and* LOR.

SCENE II.—*A Piazza.*

Enter FERDINAND *and* LOPEZ.

Lop. Truly, Sir, I think that a little sleep, once in a week, or so——

Ferd. Peace, fool, don't mention sleep to me.

Lop. No, no, Sir, I don't mention your low-bred, vulgar, sound sleep; but I can't help thinking that a gentle slumber, or half an hour's dozing, if it were only for the novelty of the thing—

Ferd. Peace, booby, I say!—Oh, Clara, dear, cruel, disturber of my rest!

Lop. And of mine too.

Ferd. 'Sdeath! to trifle with me at such a juncture as this—now to stand on punctilios——love me! I don't believe she ever did.

Lop. Nor I, either.

Ferd. Or is it, that her sex never know their desires for an hour together?

Lop. Ah, they know them oftener than they'll own them!

Ferd. Is there in the world so inconstant a creature as Clara?

Lop. I could name one.

Ferd. Yes; the tame fool who submits to her caprice.

Lop. I thought he couldn't miss it. [*Aside.*

Ferd. Is she not capricious, teazing, tyrannical, obstinate, perverse, absurd? ay, a wilderness of faults and follies; her looks are scorn, and her very smiles—'sdeath! I wish I hadn't mentioned her smiles! for she does smile such beaming loveliness, such fascinating brightness—Oh, death and madness! I shall die if I lose her.

Lop. Oh, those damned smiles have undone all.

AIR.—FERDINAND.

Could I her faults remember,
Forgetting every charm,
Soon would impartial Reason,
The tyrant Love disarm.
But when enraged I number
Each failing of her mind,
Love still suggests each beauty,
And sees—while Reason's blind.

Lop. Here comes Don Antonio, Sir.

Ferd. Well, go you home—I shall be there presently.

Lop. Ah, those cursed smiles. [*Exit.*

Enter ANTONIO.

Ferd. Antonio, Lopez tells me he left you chanting before our door—was my father waked?

Ant. Yes, yes; he has a singular affection for music, so I left him roaring at his barred window, like the print of Bajazet in the cage. And what brings you out so early?

Ferd. I believe I told you that to-morrow was the day fixed by Don Pedro and Clara's unnatural step-mother, for her to enter a convent, in order that her brat might possess her fortune; made desperate by this, I procured a key to the door, and bribed Clara's maid to leave it unbolted; at two this morning, I entered, unperceived, and stole to her chamber—I found her waking and weeping.

Ant. Happy Ferdinand!

Ferd. 'Sdeath hear the conclusion—I was rated as the most confident ruffian, for daring to approach her room at that hour of night.

Ant. Ay, ay, this was at first?

Ferd. No such thing; she would not hear a word from me, but threatened to raise her mother, if I did not instantly leave her.

Ant. Well, but at last?—

Ferd. At last! why, I was forced to leave the house, as I came in.

Ant. And did you do nothing to offend her?

Ferd. Nothing, as I hope to be saved—I believe, I might snatch a dozen or two of kisses.

Ant. Was that all? well, I think I never heard of such assurance!

Ferd. Zounds! I tell you, I behaved with the utmost respect.

Ant. Oh Lord, I don't mean you, but in her—but hark ye, Ferdinand, did you leave your key with them?

Ferd. Yes; the maid, who saw me out, took it from the door.

Ant. Then, my life for it, her mistress elopes after you.

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Ferd. Ay, to bless my rival, perhaps—I am in a humour to suspect every body—you loved her once, and thought her an angel as I do now.

Ant. Yes; I loved her, till I found she wouldn't love me, and then I discovered that she hadn't a good feature in her face.

AIR.

I ne'er could any lustre see
In eyes that would not look on me;
I ne'er saw nectar on a lip,
But where my own did hope to sip.
Has the maid who seeks my heart,
Cheeks of rose, untouch'd by art?
I will own the colour true,
When yielding blushes aid their hue.

Is her hand so soft and pure?
I must press it, to be sure;
Nor can I be certain then,
Till it, grateful, press again;
Must I, with attentive eye,
Watch her heaving bosom sigh?
I will do so, when I see
That heaving bosom sigh for me.

Besides, Ferdinand, you have full security in my love for your sister; help me there, and I can never disturb you with Clara.

Ferd. As far as I can, consistently with the honour of our family, you know I will; but there must be no eloping.

Ant. And yet, now, you would carry off Clara?

Ferd. Ah, that's a different case—we never mean that others should act to our sisters and wives, as we do to others.—But, to-morrow, Clara is to be forced into a convent.

Ant. Well, and am not I so unfortunately circumstanced? To-morrow, your father forces Louisa to marry Isaac, the Portuguese—but come with me, and we'll devise something, I warrant.

Ferd. I must go home.

Ant. Well, adieu!

Ferd. But, Antonio, if you did not love my sister, you have too much honour, and friendship to supplant me with Clara.

AIR.—ANTONIO.

Friendship is the bond of reason;
But if beauty disapprove,
Heaven dissolves all other treason,
In the heart that's true to love.
The faith which to my friend I swore,
As a civil oath I view;
But, to the charms which I adore,
'Tis religion to be true. [*Exit.*

Ferd. There is always a levity in Antonio's manner of replying to me on this subject that is very alarming—'Sdeath! if Clara should love him after all. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—A Room in DON JEROME'S *House.*

Enter LOUISA *and* DUENNA.

Lou. But, my dear Margaret, my charming Duenna, do you think we shall succeed?

Duen. I tell you again, I have no doubt on't; but it must be instantly put to the trial—Every thing is prepared in your room, and for the rest we must trust to fortune.

Lou. My father's oath was, never to see me till I had consented to——

Duen. 'Twas thus I overheard him say to his friend, Don Guzman, "I will demand of her to-morrow, once for all, whether she will consent to marry Isaac Mendoza; if she hesitates, I will make a solemn oath never to see or speak to her, till she returns to her duty."—These were his words.

Lou. And on his known obstinate adherence to what he has once said, you have formed this plan for my escape—But have you secured my maid in our interest?

Duen. She is a party in the whole; but remember, if we succeed, you resign all right and title in little Isaac, the Jew, over to me.

Lou. That I do with all my soul; get him, if you can, and I shall wish you joy, most heartily. He is twenty times as rich as my poor Antonio.

AIR.—LOUISA.

Thou canst not boast of fortune's store,
My love, while me they wealthy call,
But I was glad to find thee poor,
For, with my heart, I'd give thee all.
And then the grateful youth shall own,
I loved him for himself alone.

But when his worth my hand shall gain,
No word or look of mine shall show,
That I the smallest thought retain
Of what my bounty did bestow.
Yet still his grateful heart shall own,
I loved him for himself alone.

Duen. I hear Don Jerome coming—Quick, give me the last letter I brought you from Antonio—you know that is to be the ground of my dismission—I must slip out to seal it up, as undelivered. [*Exit.*

[JEROME *speaking within.*

Enter DON JEROME *and* FERDINAND.

Jer. What, I suppose, you have been serenading too! Eh, disturbing some peaceable neighbourhood with villanous catgut, and lascivious piping! Out on't! you set your sister, here, a vile example; but I come to tell you, Madam, that I'll suffer no more of these midnight incantations—these amorous orgies, that steal the senses in the hearing; as they say, Egyptian embalmers serve mummies, extracting the brain through the ears; however, there's an end of your frolics—Isaac Mendoza will be here presently, and to-morrow you shall marry him.

Lou. Never, while I have life.

Ferd. Indeed, Sir, I wonder how you can think of such a man for a son-in-law.

Jer. Sir, you are very kind, to favour me with your sentiments—and pray, what is your objection to him?

Ferd. He is a Portuguese, in the first place.

Jer. No such thing, boy, he has forsworn his country.

Lou. He is a Jew.

Jer. Another mistake, he has been a Christian these six weeks.

Ferd. Ay, he left his old religion for an estate, and has not had time to get a new one.

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Lou. But stands like a dead wall between church and synagogue, or like the blank leaves between the Old and New Testament.

Jer. Any thing more?

Ferd. But the most remarkable part of his character is his passion for deceit and tricks of cunning.

Lou. Though, at the same time, the fool predominates so much over the knave, that I am told he is generally the dupe of his own art.

Ferd. True, like an unskilful gunner, he usually misses his aim, and is hurt by the recoil of his own piece.

Jer. Any thing more?

Lou. To sum up all, he has the worst fault a husband can have—he's not my choice.

Jer. But you are his; and choice on one side is sufficient—two lovers should never meet in marriage—be you sour as you please, he is sweet-tempered, and for your good fruit, there's nothing like ingrafting on a crab. Any thing more?

Lou. I detest him as a lover, and shall ten times more as a husband.

Jer. I don't know that—marriage generally makes a great change—but, to cut the matter short, will you have him or not?

Lou. There is nothing else I could disobey you in.

Jer. Do you value your father's peace?

Lou. So much, that I will not fasten on him the regret of making an only daughter wretched.

Jer. Very well, Ma'am, then mark me—never more will I see or converse with you till you return to your duty—no reply—this and your chamber shall be your apartments; I never will stir out, without leaving you under lock and key, and when I'm at home no creature can approach you but through my library—we'll try who can be most obstinate—out of my sight—there remain till you know your duty. [*Pushes her out.*

Ferd. Surely, Sir, my sister's inclinations should be consulted in a matter of this kind, and some regard paid to Don Antonio, being my particular friend.

Jer. That, doubtless, is a very great recommendation—I certainly have not paid sufficient respect to it.

Ferd. There is not a man living I would sooner choose for a brother-in-law.

Jer. Very possible, and if you happen to have e'er a sister, who is not at the same time a daughter of mine, I'm sure I shall have no objection to the relationship—but at present, if you please, we'll drop the subject.

Ferd. Nay, Sir, 'tis only my regard for my sister makes me speak.

Jer. Then pray, Sir, in future, let your regard for your father make you hold your tongue.

Ferd. I have done, Sir—I shall only add a wish that you would reflect what at our age you would have felt, had you been crossed in your affection for the mother of her you are so severe to.

Jer. Why, I must confess I had a great affection for your mother's ducats, but that was all, boy—I married her for her fortune, and she took me in obedience to her father, and a very happy couple we were—we never expected any love from one another, and so we were never disappointed—if we grumbled a little now and then, it was soon over, for we were never fond enough to quarrel, and when the good woman died, why, why—I had as liere she had lived, and I wish every widower in Seville could say the same—I shall now go and get the key of this dressing-room—so, good son, if you have any lecture in support of disobedience to give your sister, it must be brief; so make the best of your time, d'ye hear? [*Exit.*

Ferd. I fear, indeed, my friend Antonio has little to hope for—however, Louisa, has firmness, and my father's anger will proably only increase her affection.—In our intercourse with the world, it is natural for us to dislike those who are innocently the cause of our distress; but in the heart's attachment, a woman never likes a man with ardour till she has suffered for his sake; [*Noise.*] soh! what bustle is here! between my father and the Duenna too—I'll e'en get out of the way. [*Exit.*

Enter Don Jerome *with a Letter, pulling in the* Duenna.

Jer. I'm astonished! I'm thunder-struck! here's treachery and conspiracy with a vengeance! you, Antonio's creature, and chief manager of this plot for my daughter's eloping! you, that I placed here as a scare-crow?

Duen. What?

Jer. A scare-crow—to prove a decoy-duck—what have you to say for yourself?

Duen. Well, Sir, since you have forced that letter from me, and discovered my real sentiments, I scorn to renounce them.—I am Antonio's friend, and it was my intention that your daughter should have served you as all such old tyrannical sots should be served.—I delight in the tender passions and would befriend all under their influence.

Jer. The tender passions! yes, they would become those impenetrable features!—why, thou deceitful hag! I placed thee as a guard to the rich blossoms of my daughter's beauty—I thought that dragon's front of thine would cry aloof to the sons of gallantry—steel traps and spring guns seemed writ in every wrinkle of it—but you shall quit my house this instant—the tender passions, indeed! go, thou wanton sybil, thou amorous woman of Endor, go!

Duen. You base, scurrilous, old—but I wont demean myself by naming what you are—yes, savage, I'll leave your den; but I suppose you don't mean to detain my apparel—I may have my things, I presume?

Jer. I took you, mistress, with your wardrobe on—what have you pilfered, heh?

Duen. Sir, I must take leave of my mistress, she has valuables of mine; besides, my cardinal and veil are in her room.

Jer. Your veil, forsooth! what, do you dread being gazed at? or are you afraid of your complexion? well, go take your leave, and get your veil and cardinal! soh! you quit the house within these five minutes—In—in—quick. [*Exit* Duenna.] Here was a precious plot of mischief!—these are the comforts daughters bring us!

Air.

If a daughter you have, she's the plague of your life,
No peace shall you know, though you've buried your wife,

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At twenty she mocks at the duty you taught her!
Oh, what a plague is an obstinate daughter!
Sighing and whining,
Dying and pining,
Oh, what a plague is an obstinate daughter!

When scarce in their teens, they have wit to perplex us,
With letters and lovers for ever they vex us,
While each still rejects the fair suitor you've brought her,
Oh, what a plague is an obstinate daughter!
Wrangling and jangling,
Flouting and pouting,
Oh, what a plague is an obstinate daughter!

Enter LOUISA, *dressed as the* DUENNA, *with Cardinal and Veil, seeming to cry.*

Jer. This way, mistress, this way—what, I warrant, a tender parting; soh! tears of turpentine down those deal cheeks—Ay, you may well hide your head—yes, whine till your heart breaks; but I'll not hear one word of excuse—so you are right to be dumb,—this way. [*Pushing her out. Exeunt.*

Enter DUENNA.

Duen. So, speed you well, sagacious Don Jerome! Oh, rare effects of passion and obstinacy—now shall I try whether I can't play the fine lady as well as my mistress, and if I succeed, I may be a fine lady for the rest of my life—I'll lose no time to equip myself. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.—The Court before DON JEROME'S *House.*

Enter DON JEROME *and* LOUISA

Jer. Come, mistress, there is your way—The world lies before you, so troop thou antiquated Eve, thou original sin—hold, yonder is some fellow skulking, perhaps it is Antonio—go to him, d'ye hear, and tell him to make you amends, and as he has got you turned away, tell him I say it is but just he should take you himself, go. [*Exit.* LOUISA.] Soh! I am rid of her, thank Heaven! and now I shall be able to keep my oath, and confine my daughter with better security. [*Exit.*

SCENE V.—The Piazza.

Enter CLARA *and her* MAID.

Maid. But where, Madam, is it you intend to go?

Cla. Any where to avoid the selfish violence of my mother-in-law, and Ferdinand's insolent importunity.

Maid. Indeed, Ma'am, since we have profited by Don Ferdinand's key, in making our escape, I think we had best find him, if it were only to thank him.

Cla. No—he has offended me exceedingly. [*Retire.*

Enter LOUISA.

Lou. So I have succeeded in being turned out of doors—but how shall I find Antonio? I dare not inquire for him, for fear of being discovered; I would send to my friend, Clara, but that I doubt her prudery would condemn me. [*Apart.*

Maid. Then suppose, Ma'am, you were to try if your friend, Donna Louisa would not receive you. [*Apart to* CLARA.

Cla. No, her notions of filial duty are so severe, she would certainly betray me. [*Apart.*

Lou. Clara is of a cold temper, and would think this step of mine highly forward. [*Apart.*

Cla. Louisa's respect for her father is so great, she would not credit the unkindness of mine. [*Apart.*

[LOUISA *turns, and sees* CLARA *and* MAID.

Lou. Ha! who are those? sure one is Clara—if it be, I'll trust her—Clara! [*Advances.*

Cla. Louisa! and in masquerade too!

Lou. You will be more surprised when I tell you, that I have run away from my father.

Cla. Surprised indeed! and I should certainly chide you most horridly, only that I have just run away from mine.

Lou. My dear Clara! [*Embrace.*

Cla. Dear sister truant! and whither are you going?

Lou. To find the man I love, to be sure—And, I presume, you would have no aversion to meet with my brother.

Cla. Indeed I should—he has behaved so ill to me, I don't believe I shall ever forgive him.

AIR.—CLARA.

When sable night, each drooping plant restoring,
Wept o'er the flowers her breath did cheer,
As some sad widow o'er her babe deploring,
Wakes its beauty with a tear;
When all did sleep, whose weary hearts did borrow
One hour from love and care to rest.
Lo! as I press'd my couch in silent sorrow,
My lover caught me to his breast;
He vow'd he came to save me
From those who would enslave me!
Then kneeling,
Kisses stealing,
Endless faith he swore;
But soon I chid him thence,
For had his fond pretence
Obtain'd one favour then,
And he had press'd again,
I fear'd my treacherous heart might grant him more.

Lou. Well, for all this, I would have sent him to plead his pardon, but that I would not yet awhile have him know of my flight. And where do you hope to find protection?

Cla. The Lady Abbess of the convent of St. Catherine is a relation and kind friend of mine—I shall be secure with her, and you had best go thither with me.

Lou. No; I am determined to find Antonio first; and, as I live, here comes the very man I will employ to seek him for me.

Cla. Who is he? he's a strange figure!

Lou. Yes; that sweet creature is the man whom my father has fixed on for my husband.

Cla. And will you speak to him? are you mad?

Lou. He is the fittest man in the world for my purpose—for, though I was to have married him to-morrow, he is the only man in Seville, who, I am sure, never saw me in his life.

Cla. And how do you know him?

Lou. He arrived but yesterday, and he was

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shown to me from the window, as he visited my father.

Cla. Well, I'll begone.

Lou. Hold, my dear Clara—a thought has struck me—will you give me leave to borrow your name, as I see occasion?

Cla. It will but disgrace you—but use it as you please—I dare not stay—[*Going.*]—but, Louisa, if you should see your brother, be sure you don't inform him, that I have taken refuge with the Dame Prior of the convent of St. Catherine, on the left hand side of the Piazza, which leads to the church of St. Anthony.

Lou. Ha, ha, ha! I'll be very particular in my directions where he may not find you.—[*Exeunt* CLARA *and* MAID.] So! my swain, yonder, has done admiring himself, and draws nearer. [*Retires.*

Enter ISAAC *and* CARLOS, ISAAC *with a Pocket-Glass.*

Isaac. [*Looking in the Glass.*] I tell you, friend Carlos, I will please myself in the habit of my chin.

Car. But, my dear friend, how can you think to please a lady with such a face?

Isaac. Why, what's the matter with the face? I think it is a very engaging face; and, I am sure, a lady must have very little taste, who could dislike my beard. [*Sees* LOUISA.] See now!—I'll die if here is not a little damsel struck with it already.

Lou. Signior, are you disposed to oblige a lady, who greatly wants your assistance? [*Unveils.*

Isaac. Egad, a very pretty black-eyed girl! she has certainly taken a fancy to me, Carlos—first, Ma'am, I must beg the favour of your name.

Lou. So! it's well I am provided. [*Aside.*] My name, Sir, is Donna Clara d'Almanza.

Isaac. What!—Don Guzman's daughter?—I'faith, I just now heard she was missing.

Lou. But sure, Sir, you have too much gallantry and honour to betray me, whose fault is love?

Isaac. So! a passion for me! poor girl!—Why, Ma'am, as for betraying you, I don't see how I could get any thing by it; so you may rely on my honour; but as for your love, I am sorry your case is so desperate.

Lou. Why so, Signior?

Isaac. Because I am positively engaged to another, an't I, Carlos?

Lou. Nay, but hear me.

Isaac. No, no; what should I hear for? It is impossible for me to court you in an honourable way; and, for any thing else, if I were to comply now, I suppose you have some ungrateful brother, or cousin, who would want to cut my throat for my civility—so, truly, you had best go home again.

Lou. Odious wretch! [*Aside.*] But, good Signior, it is Antonio d'Ercilla, on whose account I have eloped.

Isaac. How! what! it is not with me, then, that you are in love?

Lou. No, indeed, it is not.

Isaac. Then you are a forward, impertinent simpleton! and I shall certainly acquaint your father.

Lou. Is this your gallantry?

Isaac. Yet hold—Antonio d'Ercilla, did you say? egad, I may make something of this—Antonio d'Ercilla?

Lou. Yes; and, if ever you hope to prosper in love, you will bring me to him.

Isaac. By St. Iago and I will too—Carlos, this Antonio is one who rivals me (as I have heard) with Louisa—now, if I could hamper him with this girl, I should have the field to myself; hey, Carlos! A lucky thought, isn't it?

Car. Yes, very good—very good—

Isaac. Ah! this little brain is never at a loss—cunning Isaac! cunning rogue! Donna Clara, will you trust yourself awhile to my friend's direction?

Lou. May I rely on you, good Signior?

Car. Lady, it is impossible I should deceive you.

AIR.

Had I a heart for falsehood framed,
I ne'er could injure you;
For though your tongue no promise claim'd,
Your charms would make me true.
To you no soul shall bear deceit,
No stranger offer wrong;
But friends in all the aged you'll meet,
And lovers in the young.

But when they learn that you have bless'd
Another with your heart,
They'll bid aspiring passions rest,
And act a brother's part;
Then, lady, dread not here deceit,
Nor fear to suffer wrong;
For friends in all the aged you'll meet,
And brothers in the young.

Isaac. I'll conduct the lady to my lodgings, Carlos; I must haste to Don Jerome—perhaps you know Louisa, Ma'am. She is divinely handsome—isn't she?

Lou. You must excuse me not joining with you.

Isaac. Why, I have heard it on all hands.

Lou. Her father is uncommonly partial to her; but I believe you will find she has rather a matronly air.

Isaac. Carlos, this is all envy—you pretty girls never speak well of one another—hark ye, find out Antonio, and I'll saddle him with this scrape, I warrant! Oh, 'twas the luckiest thought!—Donna Clara, your very obedient—Carlos, to your post. [*Crosses the stage.*

DUET.

Isaac. My mistress expects me, and I must go to her,
Or how can I hope for a smile?
Lou. Soon may you return a prosperous wooer,
But think what I suffer the while:
Alone, and away from the man whom I love,
In strangers I'm forced to confide.
Isaac. Dear lady, my friend you may trust, and he'll prove,
Your servant, protector, and guide.

AIR—CARLOS.

Gentle maid, ah! why suspect me?
Let me serve thee—then reject me.
Can'st thou trust, and I deceive thee?
Art thou sad, and shall I grieve thee?
Gentle maid, ah! why suspect me?
Let me serve thee—then reject me.

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TRIO.

Lou. Never may'st thou happy be,
If in aught thou'rt false to me.

Isaac. Never may he happy be,
If in aught he's false to thee.

Car. Never may I happy be,
If in aught I'm false to thee.

Lou. Never may'st thou, &c.
Isaac. Never may he, &c.
Car. Never may I, &c.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Library in DON JEROME'S *House.*

Enter DON JEROME *and* ISAAC.

Jer. Ha, ha, ha! run away from her father! has she given him the slip? Ha, ha, ha! poor Don Guzman!

Isaac. Ay; and I am to conduct her to Antonio; by which means you see I shall hamper him so that he can give me no disturbance with your daughter—this is trap, isn't it? a nice stroke of cunning, heh?

Jer. Excellent! excellent! yes, yes, carry her to him, hamper him by all means, ha, ha, ha! poor Don Guzman! an old fool! imposed on by a girl!

Isaac. Nay, they have the cunning of serpents, that's the truth on't.

Jer. Psha! they are cunning only when they have fools to deal with—why don't my girl play me such a trick—let her cunning overreach my caution, I say—heh, little Isaac!

Isaac. True, true; or let me see any of the sex make a fool of me—No, no, egad, little Solomon, (as my aunt used to call me) understands tricking a little too well.

Jer. Ay, but such a driveller as Don Guzman.

Isaac. And such a dupe as Antonio.

Jer. True; sure never were seen such a couple of credulous simpletons; but come, 'tis time you should see my daughter—you must carry on the siege by yourself, friend Isaac.

Isaac. Sir, you'll introduce—

Jer. No—I have sworn a solemn oath not to see or speak to her till she renounces her disobedience; win her to that, and she gains a father and a husband at once.

Isaac. Gad, I shall never be able to deal with her alone; nothing keeps me in such awe as perfect beauty, now there is something consoling and encouraging in ugliness.

SONG.

Give Isaac the nymph who no beauty can boast,
But health and good humour to make her his toast,
If straight, I don't mind whether slender or fat,
And six feet or four—we'll ne'er quarrel for that.

Whate'er her complexion, I vow I don't care,
If brown, it is lasting, more pleasing if fair;
And though in her face I no dimples should see,
Let her smile, and each dell is a dimple to me.

Let her locks be the reddest that ever were seen,
And her eyes may be e'en any colour but green;
Be they light, gray, or black, their lustre and hue,
I swear I've no choice, only let her have two.

'Tis true I'd dispense with a throne on her back,
And white teeth, I own, are genteeler than black,
A little round chin too's a beauty, I've heard,
But I only desire she mayn't have a beard.

Jer. You will change your note, my friend, when you've seen Louisa.

Isaac. Oh, Don Jerome, the honour of your alliance.

Jer. Ay, but her beauty will affect you—she is, though I say it, who am her father, a very prodigy—there you will see features with an eye like mine—yes i'faith, there is a kind of wicked sparkling—something of a roguish brightness, that shows her to be my own.

Isaac. Pretty rogue!

Jer. Then, when she smiles, you'll see a little dimple in one cheek only; a beauty it is certainly, yet you shall not say which is prettiest, the cheek with the dimple, or the cheek without.

Isaac. Pretty rogue!

Jer. Then the roses on those cheeks are shaded with a sort of velvet down, that gives a delicacy to the glow of health.

Isaac. Pretty rogue!

Jer. Her skin pure dimity, yet more fair, being spangled here and there with a golden freckle.

Isaac. Charming, pretty rogue! pray, how is the tone of her voice?

Jer. Remarkably pleasing—but if you could prevail on her to sing, you would be enchanted—she is a nightingale—a Virginian nightingale, but come, come; her maid shall conduct you to her anti-chamber.

Isaac. Well, egad, I'll pluck up resolution, and meet her frowns intrepidly.

Jer. Ay! woo her briskly—win her, and give me a proof of your address, my little Solomon.

Isaac. But hold—I expect my friend Carlos to call on me here—if he comes will you send him to me?

Jer. I will—Lauretta, come—she'll show you to the room—what! do you droop? here's a mournful face to make love with! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—LOUISA'S *Dressing-Room.*

Enter MAID *and* ISAAC.

Maid. Sir, my mistress will wait on you presently.

Isaac. When she's at leisure—don't hurry her. [*Exit* MAID.] I wish I had ever practised a love scene—I doubt I shall make a poor figure—I couldn't be more afraid if I was going before the Inquisition—so! the door opens—yea, she's coming—the very rustling of her silk has a disdainful sound.

Enter DUENNA, *dressed as* LOUISA.

Now dar'n't I look round for the soul of me—her beauty will certainly strike me dumb if I do. I wish she'd speak first.

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Duen. Sir, I attend your pleasure.

Isaac. So! the ice is broke, and a pretty civil beginning too! hem! Madam—Miss—I'm all attention.

Duen. Nay, Sir, 'tis I who should listen, and you propose.

Isaac. Egad, this isn't so disdainful neither—I believe I may venture to look—no—I daren't—one glance of those roguish sparklers would fix me again.

Duen. You seem thoughtful, Sir—let me persuade you to sit down.

Isaac. So, so; she mollifies apace—she's struck with my figure! this attitude has had its effect.

Duen. Come, Sir, here's a chair.

Isaac. Madam, the greatness of your goodness overpowers me—that a lady so lovely should deign to turn her beauteous eyes on me so.

[*She takes his Hand, he turns and sees her.*

Duen. You seem surprised at my condescension.

Isaac. Why, yes, Madam, I am a little surprised at it.—Zounds! this can never be Louisa—she's as old as my mother! [*Aside.*

Duen. But former prepossessions give way to my papa's commands.

Isaac. [*Aside.*] Her papa! Yes, 'tis she then—Lord, lord; how blind some parents are!

Duen. Signior Isaac.

Isaac. Truly, the little damsel was right—she has rather a matronly air indeed! ah! 'tis well my affections are fixed on her fortune, and not her person.

Duen. Signior, wont you sit? [*She sits.*

Isaac. Pardon me, Madam, I have scarce recovered my astonishment at—your condescension, Madam—she has the devil's own dimples to be sure. [*Aside.*

Duen. I do not wonder, Sir, that you are surprised at my affability—I own, Signior, that I was vastly prepossessed against you, and being teased by my papa, I did give some encouragement to Antonio; but then, Sir, you were described to me as quite a different person.

Isaac. Ay, and so were you to me, upon my soul, Madam.

Duen. But when I saw you, I was never more struck in my life.

Isaac. That was just my case too, Madam: I was struck all on a heap, for my part.

Duen. Well, Sir, I see our misapprehension has been mutual—you expected to find me haughty and averse, and I was taught to believe you a little, black, snub-nosed fellow, without person, manners, or address.

Isaac. Egad, I wish she had answered her picture as well.

Duen. But, Sir, your air is noble—something so liberal in your carriage, with so penetrating an eye, and so bewitching a smile!

Isaac. Egad, now I look at her again, I don't think she is so ugly.

Duen. So little like a Jew, and so much like a gentleman!

Isaac. Well, certainly there is something pleasing in the tone of her voice.

Duen. You will pardon this breach of decorum in praising you thus, but my joy at being so agreeably deceived has given me such a flow of spirits!

Isaac. O, dear lady, may I thank those dear lips for this goodness? [*Kisses her.*] Why, she has a pretty sort of velvet down, that's the truth on't! [*Aside.*

Duen. O, Sir, you have the most insinuating manner, but indeed you should get rid of that odious beard—one might as well kiss a hedge-hog.

Isaac. Yes, Ma'am, the razor wouldn't be amiss—for either of us. [*Aside.*] Could you favour me with a song?

Duen. Willingly, Sir, though I am rather hoarse—ahem! [*Begins to sing.*

Isaac. Very like a Virginian nightingale—Ma'am, I perceive you're hoarse—I beg you will not distress—

Duen. Oh, not in the least distressed;—now, Sir.

SONG.

When a tender maid,
Is first assay'd,
By some admiring swain,
How her blushes rise,
If she meets his eyes,
While he unfolds his pain:
If he takes her hand, she trembles quite,
Touch her lips, and she swoons outright,
While a pit a pat, &c.
Her heart avows her fright.

But in time appear,
Fewer signs of fear,
The youth she boldly views;
If her hand he grasps,
Or her bosom clasps,
No mantle blush ensues.
Then to church well pleased the lovers move,
While her smiles her contentment prove,
And a pit a pat, &c.
Her heart avows her love.

Isaac. Charming, Ma'am! Enchanting! and, truly, your notes put me in mind of one that's very dear to me; a lady, indeed, whom you greatly resemble!

Duen. How! is there, then, another so dear to you?

Isaac. O, no, Ma'am, you mistake; it was my mother, I meant.

Duen. Come, Sir, I see you are amazed and confounded at my condescension, and know not what to say.

Isaac. It is very true, indeed, Ma'am; but it is a judgment, I look on it as a judgment on me, for delaying to urge the time when you'll permit me to complete my happiness, by acquainting Don Jerome with your condescension.

Duen. Sir, I must frankly own to you, that I can never be yours with my papa's consent.

Isaac. Good lack! how so?

Duen. When my father in his passion, swore he would never see me again till I acquiesced in his will, I also made a vow, that I would never take a husband from his hand; nothing shall make me break that oath: but if you have spirit and contrivance enough to carry me off without his knowledge, I'm yours.

Isaac. Hum!

Duen. Nay, Sir, if you hesitate——

Isaac. I'faith, no bad whim this—if I take her at her word, I shall secure her fortune, and avoid making any settlement in return; thus, I shall not only cheat the lover, but the father too—Oh, cunning rogue, Isaac! Ay, ah, let this little brain alone——Egad, I'll take her in the mind. [*Aside.*

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Duen. Well, Sir, what's your determination?

Isaac. Madam, I was dumb only from rapture—I applaud your spirit, and joyfully close with your proposal; for which, thus, let me, on this lily hand, express my gratitude.

Duen. Well, Sir, you must get my father's consent to walk with me in the garden. But by no means inform him of my kindness to you.

Isaac. No, to be sure, that would spoil all: but, trust me, when tricking is the word—let me alone for a piece of cunning; this very day you shall be out of his power.

Duen. Well, I leave the management of it all to you; I perceive plainly, Sir, that you are not one that can be easily outwitted.

Isaac. Egad, you're right, Madam—you're right, i'faith.

Enter MAID.

Maid. Here's a gentleman at the door, who beg's permission to speak with Signior Isaac.

Isaac. A friend of mine, Ma'am, and a trusty friend—let him come in. [*Exit* MAID.] He is one to be depended on, Ma'am.

Enter CARLOS.

So, coz. [*Aside.*

Car. I have left Donna Clara at your lodgings—but can no where find Antonio.

Isaac. Well, I will search him out myself—Carlos, you rogue, I thrive, I prosper.

Car. Where is your mistress?

Isaac. There, you booby, there she stands.

Car. Why, she's damned ugly!

Isaac. Hush! [*Stops his mouth.*

Duen. What is your friend saying, Signior?

Isaac. Oh, Ma'am, he is expressing his raptures at such charms as he never saw before, eh, Carlos?

Car. Ay, such as I never saw before, indeed!

Duen. You are a very obliging gentleman—well, Signior Isaac, I believe we had better part for the present. Remember our plan.

Isaac. Oh, Ma'am, it is written in my heart, fixed as the image of those divine beauties—adieu, idol of my soul!—yet once more permit me— [*Kisses her.*

Duen. Sweet, courteous Sir, adieu!

Isaac. Your slave eternally—Come, Carlos, say something civil at taking leave.

Car. I'faith, Isaac, she is the hardest woman to compliment I ever saw; however, I'll try something I had studied for the occasion.

SONG.

Ah! sure a pair was never seen,
So justly form'd to meet by nature;
The youth excelling so in mien,
The maid in every grace of feature.
Oh, how happy are such lovers,
When kindred beauties each discovers,
For surely she
Was made for thee,
And thou to bless this lovely creature.

So mild your looks, your children thence,
Will early learn the task of duty,
The boys with all their father's sense,
The girls with all their mother's beauty.
Oh! how happy to inherit
At once such graces and such spirit!
Thus while you live
May fortune give
Each blessing equal to your merit.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—A Library.

JEROME *and* FERDINAND *discovered.*

Jer. Object to Antonio? I have said it: his poverty, can you acquit him of that?

Ferd. Sir, I own he is not over rich; but he is of as ancient and honourable a family as any in the kingdom.

Jer. Yes, I know the beggars are a very ancient family in most kingdoms; but never in great repute, boy.

Ferd. Antonio, Sir, has many amiable qualities.

Jer. But he is poor; can you clear him of that, I say? Is he not a gay, dissipated rake, who has squandered his patrimony?

Ferd. Sir, he inherited but little; and that, his generosity, more than his profuseness, has stripped him of; but he has never sullied his honour, which, with his title, has outlived his means.

Jer. Pshaw! you talk like a blockhead; nobility, without an estate, is as ridiculous as gold-lace on a frieze coat.

Ferd. This language, Sir, would better become a Dutch, or English trader, than a Spaniard.

Jer. Yes; and those Dutch and English traders, as you call them, are the wiser people. Why, booby, in England they were formerly as nice, as to birth and family, as we are: but they have long discovered what a wonderful purifier gold is; and now, no one regards pedigree in any thing but a horse—Oh, here comes Isaac! I hope he has prospered in his suit.

Ferd. Doubtless that agreeable figure of his must have helped his suit surprisingly.

Jer. How now? [FERDINAND *walks aside.*

Enter ISAAC.

Well, my friend, have you softened her?

Isaac. Oh, yes; I have softened her.

Jer. What, does she come to?

Isaac. Why, truly, she was kinder than I expected to find her.

Jer. And the dear little angel was civil, hey?

Isaac. Yes, the pretty little angel was very civil.

Jer. I'm transported to hear it.

Isaac. Ay, and if all the family were transported it would not signify. [*Aside.*

Jer. Well and you were astonished at her beauty, hey?

Isaac. I was astonished, indeed! pray, how old is Miss?

Jer. How old? let me see—eight and twelve—she is twenty.

Isaac. Twenty?

Jer. Ay, to a month.

Isaac. Then, upon my soul, she is the oldest looking girl of her age in Christendom!

Jer. Do you think so? but, I believe, you will not see a prettier girl.

Isaac. Here and there one.

Jer. Louisa has the family face.

Isaac. Yes, 'egad, I should have taken it for a family face, and one that has been in the family some time too. [*Aside.*

Jer. She has her father's eyes.

Isaac. Truly, I should have guessed them to

have been so—If she had her mother's spectacles, I believe she would not see the worse.

[*Aside.*

Jer. Her aunt, Ursula's nose, and her grandmother's forehead, to a hair.

Isaac. Ay, 'faith, and her grandfather's chin to a hair. [*Aside.*

Jer. Well, if she was but as dutiful as she's handsome—and hark ye, friend Isaac, she is none of your made-up beauties—her charms are of the lasting kind.

Isaac. I'faith, so they should—for if she be but twenty now, she may double her age, before her years will overtake her face.

Jer. Why, zounds, Master Isaac! you are not sneering, are you?

Isaac. Why now, seriously, Don Jerome, do you think your daughter handsome?

Jer. By this light, she's as handsome a girl as any in Seville.

Isaac. Then, by these eyes, I think her as plain a woman as ever I beheld.

Jer. By St. Iago, you must be blind.

Isaac. No, no: 'tis you are partial.

Jer. How! have I neither sense nor taste? If a fair skin, fine eyes, teeth of ivory, with a lovely bloom, and a delicate shape—if these, with a heavenly voice, and a world of grace, are not charms, I know not what you call beautiful.

Isaac. Good lack, with what eyes a father sees!—As I have life, she is the very reverse of all this; as for the dimity skin you told me of, I swear, 'tis a thorough nankeen as ever I saw! for her eyes, their utmost merit is not squinting—for her teeth, where there is one of ivory, its neighbour is pure ebony, black and white alternately, just like the keys of a harpsichord. Then, as to her singing, and heavenly voice—by this hand, she has a shrill, cracked pipe, that sounds, for all the world like a child's trumpet.

Jer. Why, you little Hebrew scoundrel, do you mean to insult me? out of my house, I say!

Ferd. Dear Sir, what's the matter?

Jer. Why, this Israelite here has the impudence to say your sister's ugly.

Ferd. He must be either blind or insolent.

Isaac. So, I find they are all in a story.—'Egad, I believe I have gone too far!

Ferd. Sure, Sir, there must be some mistake; it can't be my sister whom he has seen.

Jer. 'Sdeath! you are as great a fool as he! what mistake can there be? did not I lock up Louisa, and hav'n't I the key in my own pocket? And didn't her maid show him into the dressing-room? and yet you talk of a mistake; no, the Portuguese meant to insult me—and, but that this roof protects him, old as I am, this sword should do me justice.

Isaac. I must get off as well as I can—her fortune is not the less handsome.

DUET.

Isaac. Believe me, good Sir, I ne'er meant to offend,
My mistress I love, and I value my friend:
To win her, and wed her, is still my request,
For better, for worse, and I swear I don't jest.

Jer. Zounds! you'd best not provoke me, my rage is so high—

Isaac. Hold him fast, I beseech you, his rage is so high—
Good Sir, you're too hot, and this place I must fly.

Jer. You're a knave and a sot, and this place you'd best fly.

Isaac. Don Jerome, come now, let us lay aside all joking, and be serious.

Jer. How?

Isaac. Ha, ha, ha! I'll be hanged if you hav'n't taken my abuse of your daughter seriously.

Jer. You meant it so, did not you?

Isaac. O mercy, no! a joke—just to try how angry it would make you.

Jer. Was that all, i'faith. I didn't know you had been such a wag, ha, ha, ha! By St. Iago! you made me very angry though—well, and you do think Louisa handsome?

Isaac. Handsome! Venus de Medicis was a sybil to her.

Jer. Give me your hand, you little jocose rogue—Egad, I thought we had been all off.

Ferd. So! I was in hopes this would have been a quarrel; but I find the Jew is too cunning.

Jer. Ay this gust of passion has made me dry—I am seldom ruffled—order some wine in the next room—let us drink the poor girl's health—poor Louisa! ugly, heh! Ha, ha, ha! 'Twas a very good joke, indeed!

Isaac. And a very true one, for all that.

Jer. And, Ferdinand, I insist upon your drinking success to my friend.

Ferd. Sir, I will drink success to my friend, with all my heart.

Jer. Come, little Solomon, if any sparks of anger had remained, this would be the only way to quench them.

TRIO.

A bumper of good liquour
Will end a contest quicker
Than justice, judge, or vicar.
So fill a cheerful glass,
And let good humour pass.
But if more deep the quarrel,
Why, sooner drain the barrel,
Than be the hateful fellow,
That's crabb'd when he is mellow,
A bumper, &c.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—ISAAC'S *Lodgings.*

Enter LOUISA.

Lou. Was ever truant daughter so whimsically circumstanced as I am! I have sent my intended husband to look after my lover—the man of my father's choice is gone to bring me the man of my own—but how dispiriting is this interval of expectation!

Enter CARLOS.

So, friend, is Antonio found?

Car. I could not meet with him, lady; but I doubt not, my friend Isaac will be here with him presently.

Lou. Oh, shame! you have used no diligence—Is this your courtesy to a lady, who has trusted herself to your protection.

Car. Indeed, Madam, I have not been remiss.

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Lou. Well, well; but if either of you had known how each moment of delay weighs upon the heart of her who loves, and waits the object of her love, oh, ye would not then have trifled thus!

Car. Alas, I know it well!

Lou. Were you ever in love, then?

Car. I was, lady: but while I have life, will never be again.

Lou. Was your mistress so cruel?

Car. If she had always been so, I should have been happier.

SONG.

O, had my love ne'er smiled on me,
I ne'er had known such anguish;
But think how false, how cruel she,
To bid me cease to languish.
To bid me hope her hand to gain,
Breathe on a flame half perish'd;
And then with cold and fix'd disdain,
To kill the hope she cherish'd.

Not worse his fate, who on a wreck,
That drove as winds did blow it;
Silent had left the shatter'd deck,
To find a grave below it.
Then land was cried—no more resign'd,
He glow'd with joy to hear it;
Not worse his fate, his wo to find,
The wreck must sink ere near it.

Lou. As I live, here is your friend coming with Antonio—I'll retire for a moment to surprise him. [*Exit.*

Enter ISAAC *and* ANTONIO.

Ant. Indeed, my good friend, you must be mistaken Clara D'Almanza in love with me, and employ you to bring me to meet her! It is impossible!

Isaac. That you shall see in an instant—Carlos, where is the lady? [CARLOS *points to the door in the middle scene.*] In the next room, is she?

Ant. Nay, if that lady is really here, she certainly wants me to conduct her to a dear friend of mine, who has long been her lover.

Isaac. Pshaw! I tell you 'tis no such thing—you are the man she wants, and nobody but you. Here's ado to persuade you to take a pretty girl that's dying for you!

Ant. But I have no affection for this lady.

Isaac. And you have for Louisa, hey? but take my word for it, Antonio, you have no chance there—so you may as well secure the good that offers itself to you.

Ant. And could you reconcile it to your conscience, to supplant your friend?

Isaac. Pish! Conscience has no more to do with gallantry, than it has with politics—why, you are no honest fellow, if love can't make a rogue of you—so come, do go in, and speak to her at last.

Ant. Well, I have no objection to that.

Isaac. [*Opens the Door.*] There—there she is—yonder by the window—get in, do—[*Pushes him in, and half shuts the Door.*] Now, Carlos, now I shall hamper him, I warrant—stay, I'll peep how they go on—'egad, he looks confoundedly posed—now she's coaxing him—see, Carlos, he begins to come to—ay, ay, he'll soon forget his conscience.

Car. Look—now they are both laughing!

Isaac. Ay, so they are—yes, yes, they are laughing at that dear friend he talked of—ay, poor devil, they have outwitted him.

Car. Now he's kissing her hand.

Isaac. Yes, yes, 'faith, they're agreed—he's caught, he's entangled—my dear Carlos, we have brought it about. Oh, this little cunning head! I'm a Machiavel—a very Machiavel.

Car. I hear somebody inquiring for you—I'll see who it is. [*Exit.*

Enter ANTONIO *and* LOUISA.

Ant. Well, my good friend, this lady has so entirely convinced me of the certainty of your success at Don Jerome's, that I now resign my pretensions there.

Isaac. You never did a wiser thing, believe me—and as for deceiving your friend, that's nothing at all—tricking is all fair in love, isn't it, Madam!

Lou. Certainly, Sir, and I am particularly glad to find you are of that opinion.

Isaac. O lud! yes, Ma'am—let any one outwit me, that can, I say—but here let me join your hands——there, you lucky rogue! I wish you happily married, from the bottom of my soul!

Lou. And I am sure if you wish it, no one else should prevent it.

Isaac. Now, Antonio, we are rivals no more; so let us be friends, will you?

Ant. With all my heart, Isaac.

Isaac. It is not every man, let me tell you, that would have taken such pains, or been so generous to a rival.

Ant. No, 'faith; I don't believe there's another besides yourself in all Spain.

Isaac. Well, but you resign all pretensions to the other lady?

Ant. That I do, most sincerely.

Isaac. I doubt you have a little hankering there still.

Ant. None in the least, upon my soul.

Isaac. I mean after her fortune.

Ant. No, believe me——You are heartily welcome to every thing she has.

Isaac. Well, 'faith, you have the best of the bargain, as to beauty, twenty to one—now I'll tell you a secret—I am to carry off Louisa this very evening.

Lou. Indeed!

Isaac. Yes, she has sworn not to take a husband from her father's hand—so, I've persuaded him to trust her to walk with me in the garden, and then we shall give him the slip.

Lou. And is Don Jerome to know nothing of this?

Isaac. O lud, no! there lies the jest—Don't you see that, by this step, I overreach him? I shall be entitled to the girl's fortune, without settling a ducat on her, ha, ha, ha! this is trap!—I'm a cunning dog, an't I? A sly little villain, eh?

Ant. Ha, ha, ha! you are indeed!

Isaac. Roguish, you'll say, but keen, eh?—devilish keen?

Ant. So you are indeed—keen—very keen.

Isaac. And what a laugh we shall have at Don Jerome's, when the truth comes out, heh?

Lou. Yes, I'll answer for it, we shall have a good laugh when the truth comes out, ha, ha, ha!

Enter CARLOS.

Car. Here are the dancers come to practise

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the fandango, you intended to have honoured Donna Louisa with.

Isaac. O, I sha'n't want them, but as I must pay them, I'll see a caper for my money—will you excuse me?

Lou. Willingly.

Isaac. Here's my friend, whom you may command for any services. Madam, your most obedient—Antonio, I wish you all happiness. —Oh, the easy blockhead! what a tool I have made of him!—This was a master-piece. [*Aside.*

[Exit.

Lou. Carlos, will you be my guard again, and convey me to the convent of St. Catherine?

Ant. Why, Louisa—why should you go there?

Lou. I have my reasons, and you must not be seen to go with me; I shall write from thence to my father; perhaps, when he finds what he has driven me to, he may relent.

Ant. I have no hope from him—O Louisa! in these arms should be your sanctuary.

Lou. Be patient but for a little while—my father cannot force me from thence. But let me see you there before evening and I will explain myself.

Ant. I shall obey.

Lou. Come, friend—Antonio, Carlos has been a lover himself.

Ant. Then he knows the value of his trust.

Car. You shall not find me unfaithful.

TRIO.

Soft pity never leaves the gentle breast,
Where love has been received a welcome guest;
As wandering saints poor huts have sacred made,
He hallows every heart he once has sway'd;
And when his presence we no longer share,
Still leaves compassion as a relic there.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Library.

Enter JEROME *and* SERVANT.

Jer. Why, I never was so amazed in my life! Louisa gone off with Isaac Mendoza! what! steal away with the very man whom I wanted her to marry—elope with her own husband, as it were—it is impossible!

Serv. Her maid says, Sir, they had your leave to walk in the garden, while you was abroad—The door by the shrubbery was found open, and they have not been heard of since.

[*Exit.*

Jer. Well, it is the most unaccountable affair! 'sdeath! there is certainly some infernal mystery in it, I can't comprehend!

Enter SERVANT, *with a Letter.*

Serv. Here is a letter, Sir, from Signior Isaac. [*Exit.*

Jer. So, so, this will explain—ay, Isaac Mendoza—let me see— [*Reads.*

'*Dearest Sir,*

'*You must, doubtless, be much surprised at my flight with your daughter*'—Yes, 'faith, and well I may—'*I had the happiness to gain her heart at our first interview*'—The devil you had!—'*But she having unfortunately made a vow not to receive a husband from your hands, I was obliged to comply with her whim*'—So, so! —'*We shall shortly throw ourselves at your feet, and I hope you will have a blessing ready for one, who will then be*

'*Your son-in-law,*

'ISAAC MENDOZA.'

A whim, hey? Why, the devil's in the girl, I think! This morning, she would die sooner than have him, and before evening she runs away with him!—Well, well, my will's accomplished—let the motive be what it will—and the Portuguese, sure, will never refuse to fulfil the rest of the article.

Enter Second SERVANT, *with a Letter.*

Serv. Sir, here's a man below, who says he brought this from my young lady, Donna Louisa. [*Exit.*

Jer. How! yes, it is my daughter's hand, indeed! Lord, there was no occasion for them both to write; well, let's see what she says— [*Reads.*

'*My dearest Father,*

'*How shall I entreat your pardon for the rash step I have taken—how confess the motive?*'—Pish! hasn't Isaac just told me the motive?—one would think they weren't together when they wrote—'*If I have a spirit too resentful of ill usage, I have also a heart as easily affected by kindness*'—So, so, here the whole matter comes out! her resentment for Antonio's ill usage has made her sensible of Isaac's kindness—yes, yes, it is all plain enough—well—'*I am not married yet, though with a man, I am convinced adores me*'—Yes, yes, I dare say Isaac is very fond of her—'*But I shall anxiously expect your answer, in which, should I be so fortunate as to receive your consent, you will make completely happy,*

'*Your ever affectionate daughter,*

'LOUISA.'

My consent? to be sure she shall have it!—'egad I was never better pleased—I have fulfilled my resolution—I knew I should—Oh, there is nothing like obstinacy——Lewis!

Enter SERVANT.

Let the man who brought the last letter wait; and get me a pen and ink below. I am impatient to set poor Louisa's heart at rest—hollo! Lewis! Sancho!

Enter SERVANTS.

See, that there be a noble supper provided in the saloon to-night—serve up my best wines, and let me have music, d'ye hear?

Serv. Yes, Sir. [*Exeunt.*

Jer. And order all my doors to be thrown open—admit all guests, with masks or without masks——I'faith, we'll have a night of it—And I'll let them see how merry an old man can be.

SONG.

Oh, the days when I was young,
When I laugh'd in fortune's spite,
Talk'd of love the whole day long,
And with nectar crown'd the night!

Then it was, old father Care,
Little reck'd I of thy frown,
Half thy malice youth could bear,
And the rest a bumper drown.

Truth, they say, lies in a well,
Why, I vow, I ne'er could see,
Let the water-drinkers tell,
There it always lay for me.
For when sparkling wine went round,
Never saw I falsehood's mask,
But still honest truth I found,
In the bottom of each flask.

True, at length my vigour's flown,
I have years to bring decay;
Few the locks, that now I own,
And the few I have are gray.
Yet, old Jerome, thou mayst boast,
While thy spirits do not tire,
Still beneath thy age's frost
Glows a spark of youthful fire. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—The New Piazza.

Enter FERDINAND *and* LOPEZ.

Ferd. What, could you gather no tidings of her? Nor guess where she was gone? O Clara! Clara!

Lop. In truth, Sir, I could not.—That she was run away from her father, was in every body's mouth,—and that Don Guzman was in pursuit of her was also a very common report—where she was gone, or what was become of her, no one could take upon them to say.

Ferd. 'Sdeath and fury, you blockhead! she can't be out of Seville.

Lop. So I said to myself, Sir—'Sdeath and fury, you blockhead, says I, she can't be out of Seville—Then some said, she had hanged herself for love; and others have it, Don Antonio had carried her off.

Ferd. 'Tis false, scoundrel! no one said that.

Lop. Then I misunderstood them, Sir.

Ferd. Go, fool, get home, and never let me see you again, till you bring me news of her. [*Exit* LOPEZ.] Oh, how my fondness for this ungrateful girl has hurt my disposition!

Enter ISAAC.

Isaac. So, I have her safe, and have only to find a priest to marry us. Antonio now may marry Clara, or not, if he pleases!

Ferd. What! what was that you said of Clara?

Isaac. Oh! Ferdinand! my brother-in-law, that shall be, who thought of meeting you!

Ferd. But what of Clara?

Isaac. I' faith, you shall hear.—This morning, as I was coming down, I met a pretty damsel, who told me her name was Clara D'Almanza, and begged my protection.

Ferd. How?

Isaac. She said she had eloped from her father, Don Guzman, but that love for a young gentleman in Seville was the cause.

Ferd. Oh, Heavens! did she confess it?

Isaac. Oh, yes, she confessed at once—but then, says she, my lover is not informed of my flight, nor suspects my intention.

Ferd. Dear creature! no more I did indeed! Oh, I am the happiest fellow!—[*Aside.*] Well, Isaac!

Isaac. Why, then she entreated me to find him out for her, and bring him to her.

Ferd. Good Heavens, how lucky!—Well, come along, let's lose no time. [*Pulling him.*

Isaac. Zooks! where are we to go?

Ferd. Why, did any thing more pass?

Isaac. Any thing more! yes; the end on't was, that I was moved with her speeches, and complied with her desires.

Ferd. Well, and where is she?

Isaac. Where is she? why, don't I tell you, I complied with her request, and left her safe in the arms of her lover.

Ferd. 'Sdeath, you trifle with me!—I have never seen her.

Isaac. You! O lud, no!—how the devil should you? 'Twas Antonio she wanted: and with Antonio I left her.

Ferd. Hell and madness! [*Aside.*] What, Antonio d'Ercilla?

Isaac. Ay, ay, the very man; and the best part of it was, he was shy of taking her at first—He talked a good deal about honour, and conscience, and deceiving some dear friend: but, Lord, we soon overruled that.

Ferd. You did?

Isaac. Oh, yes, presently—such deceit, says he—Pish! says the lady, tricking is all fair in love—but then, my friend, says he—Pshaw! damn your friend, says I.—So, poor wretch, he has no chance—no, no; he may hang himself as soon as he pleases.

Ferd. I must go, or I shall betray myself.

Isaac. But stay, Ferdinand, you ha'n't heard the best of the joke.

Ferd. Curse on your joke.

Isaac. Good lack! what's the matter now? I thought to have diverted you.

Ferd. Be rack'd! tortured! damned——

Isaac. Why, sure you are not the poor devil of a lover, are you? I' faith, as sure as can be, he is—This is a better joke than t'other, ha, ha, ha!

Ferd. What, do you laugh? you vile mischievous varlet? [*Collars him.*] But that you're beneath my anger, I'd tear your heart out. [*Throws him from him.*

Isaac. O mercy! here's usage for a brother-in-law!

Ferd. But hark ye, rascal! tell me directly where these false friends are gone, or, by my soul—— [*Draws.*

Isaac. For Heaven's sake, now, my dear brother-in-law, don't be in a rage—I'll recollect as well as I can.

Ferd. Be quick then!

Isaac. I will, I will—but people's memories differ—some have a treacherous memory—now mine is a cowardly memory—it takes to its heels, at sight of a drawn sword, it does, i'faith: and I could as soon fight as recollect.

Ferd. Zounds! tell me the truth, and I wont hurt you.

Isaac. No, no, I know you wont, my dear brother-in-law—but that ill-looking thing there—

Ferd. What, then, you wont tell me?

Isaac. No, no, I know you wont, my dear brother-in-law—but why need you listen, sword in hand?

Ferd. Why there! [*Puts up.*] Now.

Isaac. Why then, I believe they are gone to—that is, my friend Carlos told me, he had left Donna Clara—dear Ferdinand, keep your hands off—at the convent of St. Catherine.

Ferd. St. Catherine!

Isaac. Yes; and that Antonio was to come to her there.

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Ferd. Is this the truth?

Isaac. It is indeed—and all I know, as I hope for life.

Ferd. Well, coward, take your life—'Tis that false, dishonourable Antonio, who shall feel my vengeance.

Isaac. Ay, ay, kill him—cut his throat, and welcome.

Ferd. But, for Clara—infamy on her! she is not worth my resentment.

Isaac. No more she is, my dear brother-in-law.—I'faith, I would not be angry about her—she is not worth it, indeed.

Ferd. 'Tis false! she is worth the enmity of princes.

Isaac. True, true, so she is; and I pity you exceedingly for having lost her.

Ferd. 'Sdeath, you rascal! how durst you talk of pitying me!

Isaac. Oh, dear brother-in-law, I beg pardon, I don't pity you in the least, upon my soul.

Ferd. Get hence, fool, and provoke me no further; nothing but your insignificance saves you.

Isaac. I'faith, then my insignificance is the best friend I have.—I'm going, dear Ferdinand—What a cursed hot-headed bully it is!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—The Garden of the Convent.

Enter LOUISA *and* CLARA.

Lou. And you really wish my brother may not find you out?

Cla. Why else have I concealed myself under this disguise?

Lou. Why, perhaps, because the dress becomes you; for you certainly don't intend to be a nun for life.

Cla. If, indeed, Ferdinand had not offended me so last night.

Lou. Come, come, it was his fear of losing you made him so rash.

Cla. Well, you may think me cruel—but I swear, if he were here this instant, I believe I should forgive him.

SONG.—CLARA.

By him we love offended,
How soon our anger flies!
One day apart, 'tis ended,
Behold him, and it dies.

Last night, your roving brother,
Enraged I bade depart,
And sure his rude presumption
Deserved to lose my heart.

Yet, were he now before me,
In spite of injured pride,
I fear my eyes would pardon
Before my tongue could chide.

Lou. I protest, Clara, I shall begin to think you are seriously resolved to enter on your probation.

Cla. And, seriously, I very much doubt whether the character of a nun would not become me best.

Lou. Why, to be sure, the character of a nun is a very becoming one at a masquerade but no pretty woman, in her senses, ever thought of taking the veil for above a night

Cla. Yonder I see your Antonio is returned—I shall only interrupt you; ah, Louisa, with what happy eagerness you turn to look for him!

[*Exit.*

Enter ANTONIO.

Ant. Well, my Louisa, any news since I left you?

Lou. None—the messenger is not yet returned from my father.

Ant. Well, I confess, I do not perceive what we are to expect from him.

Lou. I shall be easier, however, in having made the trial; I do not doubt your sincerity, Antonio; but there is a chilling air around poverty, that often kills affection, that was not nursed in it. If we would make love our household god, we had best secure him a comfortable roof.

SONG.—ANTONIO.

How oft, Louisa, hast thou told,
Nor wilt thou the fond boast disown,
Thou wouldst not lose Antonio's love,
To reign the partner of a throne.
And by those lips, that spoke so kind,
And by that hand I've press'd to mine,
To be the lord of wealth and power,
By Heavens, I would not part with thine!

Then how, my soul, can we be poor,
Who own what kingdoms could not buy?
Of this true heart thou shalt be queen,
In serving thee, a monarch I.
Thus uncontroll'd, in mutual bliss,
And rich in love's exhaustless mine,
Do thou snatch treasures from my lips,
And I'll take kingdoms back from thine.

Enter MAID, *with a Letter.*

Lou. My father's answer, I suppose.

Ant. My dearest Louisa, you may be assured, that it contains nothing but threats and reproaches.

Lou. Let us see, however.—[Reads.] "*Dearest daughter, make your lover happy; you have my full consent to marry as your whim has chosen, but be sure come home and sup with your affectionate father.*"

Ant. You jest, Louisa!

Lou. [*Gives him the Letter.*] Read—read.

Ant. 'Tis so, by Heavens!—sure there must be some mistake; but that's none of our business.—Now, Louisa, you have no excuse for delay.

Lou. Shall we not then return and thank my father?

Ant. But first let the priest put it out of his power to recall his word.—I'll fly to procure one.

Lou. Nay, if you part with me again, perhaps you may lose me.

Ant. Come then—there is a friar of a neighbouring convent is my friend: you have already been diverted by the manners of a nunnery, let us see whether there is less hypocrisy among the holy fathers

Lou. I'm afraid not, Antonio—for in religion, as in friendship, they who profess most are ever the least sincere.

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Enter CLARA.

Cla. So, yonder they go, as happy as a mutual and confessed affection can make them, while I am left in solitude. Heigho! love may perhaps excuse the rashness of an elopement from one's friend, but I am sure nothing but the presence of the man we love can support it—Ha! what do I see! Ferdinand, as I live! how could he gain admission—by potent gold, I suppose, as Antonio did—How eager and disturbed he seems—he shall not know me as yet. [*Draws her Veil.*

Enter FERDINAND.

Ferd. Yes, those were certainly they—my information was right. [*Going.*

Cla. [*Stops him.*] Pray, Signior, what is your business here?

Ferd. No matter—no matter—Oh, they stop—[*Looks out.*] Yes, that is the perfidious Clara, indeed!

Cla. So, a jealous error—I'm glad to see him so moved. [*Aside.*

Ferd. Her disguise can't conceal her—No, no, I know her too well.

Cla. Wonderful discernment! but, Signior—

Ferd. Be quiet, good nun, don't tease me—By Heavens, she leans upon his arm, hangs fondly on it! O woman! woman!

Cla. But, Signior, who is it you want?

Ferd. Not you, not you, so pr'ythee don't tease me. Yet pray stay—gentle nun, was it not Donna Clara D'Almanza just parted from you?

Cla. Clara D'Almanza, Signior, is not yet out of the garden.

Ferd. Ay, ay, I knew I was right—And pray is not that gentleman, now at the porch with her, Antonio d'Ercilla?

Cla. It is, indeed, Signior.

Ferd. So, so; now but one question more—can you inform me for what purpose they have gone away?

Cla. They are gone to be married, I believe.

Ferd. Very well—enough—now if I don't mar their wedding! [*Exit.*

Cla. [*Unveils.*] I thought jealousy had made lovers quick-sighted, but it has made mine blind—Louisa's story accounts to me for this error, and I am glad to find I have power enough over him to make him so unhappy. But why should not I be present at his surprise when undeceived? When he's through the porch, I'll follow him; and, perhaps, Louisa shall not singly be a bride.

SONG.

Adieu, thou dreary pile, where never dies
The sullen echo of repentant sighs:
Ye sister mourners of each lonely cell,
Inured to hymns and sorrow, fare ye well;
For happier scenes I fly this darksome grove,
To saints a prison, but a tomb to love.
[*Exit.*

SCENE IV.—A Court before the Priory.

Enter ISAAC, *crossing the Stage, and* ANTONIO.

Ant. What, my friend Isaac!

Isaac. What, Antonio! wish me joy! I have Louisa safe.

Ant. Have you?—I wish you joy with all my soul.

Isaac. Yes, I am come here to procure a priest to marry us.

Ant. So, then we are both on the same errand, I am come to look for Father Paul.

Isaac. Hah! I am glad on't—but i'faith, he must tack me first, my love is waiting.

Ant. So is mine—I left her in the porch.

Isaac. Ay, but I am in haste to get back to Don Jerome.

Ant. And so am I, too.

Isaac. Well, perhaps he'll save time, and marry us both together—or I'll be your father, and you shall be mine. Come along—but you're obliged to me for all this.

Ant. Yes, yes. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—A Room in the Priory.

FRIARS *at the Table drinking.*

GLEE AND CHORUS.

This bottle's the sun of our table,
His beams are rosy wine;
We, planets, that are not able,
Without his help to shine.
Let mirth and glee abound,
You'll soon grow bright,
With borrow'd light,
And shine as he goes round.

Paul. Brother Francis, toss the bottle about, and give me your toast.

Fran. Have we drank the abbess of St. Ursuline?

Paul. Yes, yes; she was the last.

Fran. Then I'll give you the blue-eyed nun of St. Catherine's.

Paul. With all my heart. [*Drinks.*] Pray, brother Augustine, were there any benefactions left in my absence?

Fran. Don Juan Corduba has left a hundred ducats, to remember him in our masses.

Paul. Has he! let them be paid to our wine-merchant, and we'll remember him in our cups, which will do just as well. Any thing more?

Aug. Yes; Baptista, the rich miser, who died last week, has bequeathed us a thousand pistoles, and the silver lamp he used in his own chamber, to burn before the image of St. Anthony.

Paul. 'Twas well meant, but we'll employ his money better—Baptista's bounty shall light the living, not the dead.—St. Anthony is not afraid to be left in the dark, though he was—See who's there.

[*A knocking,* FRANCIS *goes to the door and opens it.*

Enter PORTER.

Por. Here's one without in pressing haste to speak with Father Paul!

Fran. Brother Paul!

[PAUL *comes from behind a Curtain, with a Glass of Wine, and in his hand a piece of Cake.*

Paul. Here! how durst you, fellow, thus abruptly break in upon our devotions?

Por. I thought they were finished.

Paul. No, they were not—were they, Brother Francis?

Fran. Not by a bottle each.

Paul. But neither you nor your fellows mark how the hours go—no, you mind nothing but the gratifying of your appetites; ye eat and

swill, and sleep, and gormandize, and thrive, while we are wasting in mortification.

Por. We ask no more than nature craves.

Paul. 'Tis false, ye have more appetites than hairs! and your flushed, sleek, and pampered appearance, is the disgrace of our order—out on't if you are hungry, can't you be content with the wholesome roots of the earth; and if you are dry, isn't there the crystal spring? [*Drinks.*] Put this away. [*Gives the Glass.*] and show me where I'm wanted. [PORTER *drains the Glass*—PAUL, *going, turns.*] So, you would have drank it, if there had been any left. Ah, glutton, glutton! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.—The Court before the Priory.

Enter ISAAC *and* ANTONIO.

Isaac. A plaguy while coming, this same Father Paul—He's detained at vespers, I suppose, poor fellow.

Ant. No, here he comes.

Enter PAUL.

Good Father Paul, I crave your blessing.

Isaac. Yes, good Father Paul, we are come to beg a favour.

Paul. What is it, pray?

Isaac. To marry us good father Paul; and in truth thou dost look the very priest of Hymen.

Paul. In short, may be called so; for I deal in repentance and mortification.

Isaac. No, no, thou seemest an officer of Hymen, because thy presence speaks content and good humour.

Paul. Alas! my appearance is deceitful. Bloated I am, indeed! for fasting is a windy recreation, and it hath swoln me like a bladder.

Ant. But thou hast a good fresh colour in thy face, Father; rosy, i'faith.

Paul. Yes, I have blushed for mankind, till the hue of my shame is as fixed as their vices.

Isaac. Good man!

Paul. And I have laboured too, but to what purpose? they continue to sin under my very nose.

Isaac. Efecks, Father, I should have guessed as much, for your nose seems to be put to the blush more than any other part of your face.

Paul. Go, you're a wag.

Ant. But, to the purpose, Father—will you officiate for us?

Paul. To join young people thus clandestinely is not safe: and, indeed, I have in my heart many weighty reasons against it.

Ant. And I have in my hand many weighty reasons for it. Isaac, hav'n't you an argument or two in our favour about you?

Isaac. Yes, yes; here is a most unanswerable purse.

Paul. For shame! you make me angry: you forget who I am, and when importunate people have forced their trash—ay, into this pocket, here—or into this—why, then the sin was theirs. [*They put Money into his pockets.*] Fie, now how you distress me! I would return it, but that I must touch it that way, and so wrong my oath.

Ant. Now then, come with us.

Isaac. Ay, now give us your title to joy and rapture.

Paul. Well, when your hour of repentance comes, don't blame me.

Ant. No bad caution to my friend Isaac. [*Aside.*] Well, well, Father, do you do your part, and I'll abide the consequence.

Isaac. Ay, and so will I. [*They are going.*

Enter LOUISA, *running.*

Lou. O, Antonio, Ferdinand is at the porch, and inquiring for us.

Isaac. Who? Don Ferdinand! he's not inquiring for me, I hope.

Ant. Fear not, my love, I'll soon pacify him.

Isaac. Egad, you wont—Antonio, take my advice and run away: this Ferdinand is the most unmerciful dog! and has the cursedest long sword!—and, upon my soul, he comes on purpose to cut your throat.

Ant. Never fear, never fear.

Isaac. Well, you may stay if you will; but I'll get some one to marry me; for by St. Iago, he shall never marry me again, while I am master of a pair of heels. [*Runs out.*

Enter FERDINAND; LOUISA *veils.*

Ferd. So, Sir, I have met with you at last.

Ant. Well, Sir.

Ferd. Base, treacherous man! whence can a false, deceitful soul, like yours, borrow confidence to look so steadily on the man you've injured?

Ant. Ferdinand, you are too warm:—'tis true you find me on the point of wedding one I love beyond my life; but no argument of mine prevailed on her to elope—I scorn deceit, as much as you—By Heaven I knew not she had left her father's, till I saw her.

Ferd. What a mean excuse! You have wronged your friend then, for one whose wanton forwardness anticipated your treachery—of this, indeed your Jew pander informed me; but let your conduct be consistent, and since you have dared to do a wrong, follow me, and show you have a spirit to avow it.

Lou. Antonio, I perceive his mistake—leave him to me.

Paul. Friend, you are rude, to interrupt the union of two willing hearts.

Ferd. No, meddling priest, the hand he seeks is mine.

Paul. If so, I'll proceed no further. Lady, did you ever promise this youth your hand!

[*To* LOUISA, *who shakes her Head.*

Ferd. Clara, I thank you for your silence—I would not have heard your tongue avow such falsity; be't your punishment to remember, I have not reproached you.

Enter CLARA.

Cla. What mockery is this?

Ferd. Antonio, you are protected now, but we shall meet.

[*Going* CLARA *holds one arm, and* LOUISA *the other.*

DUET.

Lou. Turn thee round, I pray thee,
Calm a while thy rage.
Cla. I must help to stay thee,
And thy wrath assuage,
Lou. Couldst thou not discover
One so dear to thee?

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Cla. Canst thou be a lover,
And thus fly from me?
[*Both unveil.*

Ferd. How's this! my sister! Clara too—I'm confounded.

Lou. 'Tis even so, good brother.

Paul. How! what impiety! Did the man want to marry his own sister?

Lou. And aren't you ashamed of yourself, not to know your own sister?

Clara. To drive away your own mistress—

Lou. Don't you see how jealousy blinds people?

Cla. Ay, and will you ever be jealous again?

Ferd. Never—never—you, sister, I know will forgive me—but how, Clara, shall I presume——

Cla. No, no, just now you told me not to tease you. "Who do you want, good Signior?" "Not you, not you." Oh, you blind wretch! but swear never to be jealous again, and I'll forgive you.

Ferd. By all—

Cla. There, that will do—you'll keep the oath just as well. [*Gives her hand.*

Lou. But, brother, here is one, to whom some apology is due.

Ferd. Antonio, I am ashamed to think—

Ant. Not a word of excuse, Ferdinand—I have not been in love myself without learning that a lover's anger should never be resented—but come—let us retire with this good Father, and we'll explain to you the cause of this error.

GLEE AND CHORUS.

Oft does Hymen smile to hear
Wordy vows of feign'd regard;
Well he knows when they're sincere:
Never slow to give reward;
For his glory is to prove
Kind to those who wed for love.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII.—A Grand Saloon.

Enter DON JEROME, SERVANTS, *and* LOPEZ.

Jer. Be sure now let every thing be in the best order—let all my servants have on their merriest faces—but tell them to get as little drunk as possible, till after supper. So, Lopez, where's your master? sha'n't we have him at supper?

Lop. Indeed, I believe not, Sir—he's mad, I doubt; I'm sure he has frighted me from him.

Jer. Ay, ay, he's after some wench, I suppose? a young rake! Well, well, we'll be merry without him.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Sir, here is Signior Isaac.

Enter ISAAC.

Jer. So, my dear son-in-law—there, take my blessing and forgiveness.—But where's my daughter? where's Louisa?

Isaac. She's without, impatient for a blessing, but almost afraid to enter.

Jer. Oh, fly and bring her in. [*Exit* ISAAC.] Poor girl, I long to see her pretty face.

Isaac. [*Without.*] Come, my charmer, my trembling angel!

Enter ISAAC *and* DUENNA; DON JEROME *runs to meet them; she kneels.*

Jer. Come to my arms, my—[*Starts back.*] Why, who the devil have we here?

Isaac. Nay, Don Jerome, you promised her forgiveness: see how the dear creature droops!

Jer. Droops indeed! Why, gad take me, this is old Margaret—but where's my daughter, where's Louisa?

Isaac. Why, here before your eyes—nay, don't be abashed, my sweet wife!

Jer. Wife with a vengeance! Why, zounds, you have not married the Duenna!

Duen. [*Kneeling.*] O dear papa! you'll not disown me, sure!

Jer. Papa! papa! Why, zounds, your impudence is as great as your ugliness!

Isaac. Rise, my charmer, go throw your snowy arms about his neck, and convince him you are——

Duen. Oh, Sir, forgive me! [*Embraces him.*

Jer. Help! murder!

Serv. What's the matter, Sir?

Jer. Why, here, this damned Jew has brought an old harridan to strangle me.

Isaac. Lord, it is his own daughter, and he is so hard-hearted he wont forgive her.

Enter ANTONIO *and* LOUISA; *they kneel.*

Jer. Zounds and fury! what's here now! who sent for you, Sir, and who the devil are you?

Ant. This lady's husband, Sir.

Isaac. Ay, that he is, I'll be sworn; for I left them with the priest, and was to have given her away.

Jer. You were?

Isaac. Ay; that's my honest friend, Antonio; and that's the little girl I told you I had hampered him with.

Jer. Why, you are either drunk or mad—this is my daughter.

Isaac. No, no; 'tis you are both drunk and mad, I think—here's your daughter.

Jer. Hark ye, old iniquity, will you explain all this, or not?

Duen. Come then, Don Jerome, I will—though our habits might inform you all—look on your daughter, there, and on me.

Isaac. What's this I hear?

Duen. The truth is, that in your passion this morning, you made a small mistake: for you turned your daughter out of doors, and locked up your humble servant.

Isaac. O lud! O lud! here's a pretty fellow, to turn his daughter out of doors, instead of an old Duenna.

Jer. And, O lud! O lud! here's a pretty fellow, to marry an old Duenna instead of my daughter—but how came the rest about?

Duen. I have only to add, that I remained in your daughter's place, and had the good fortune to engage the affections of my sweet husband here.

Isaac. Her husband! why, you old witch, do you think I'll be your husband now? this is a trick, a cheat, and you ought all to be ashamed of yourselves.

Ant. Hark ye, Isaac, do you dare to complain of tricking?—Don Jerome, I give you my word, this cunning Portuguese has brought all this upon himself, by endeavouring to overreach you, by getting your daughter's fortune, without making any settlement in return.

Jer. Overreach me!

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Lou. 'Tis so, indeed, Sir, and we can prove it to you.

Jer. Why, gad take me, it must be so, or he could never have put up with such a face as Margaret's—so, little Solomon, I wish you joy of your wife, with all my soul.

Lou. Isaac, tricking is all fair in love—let you alone for the plot.

Ant. A cunning dog, ar'n't you? A sly little villain, heh?

Lou. Roguish, perhaps; but keen, devilish keen.

Jer. Yes, yes; his aunt always called him little Solomon.

Isaac. Why, the plagues of Egypt upon you all!—but do you think I'll submit to such an imposition?

Ant. Isaac, one serious word—you'd better be content as you are; for, believe me, you will find, that, in the opinion of the world, there is not a fairer subject for contempt and ridicule, than a knave become the dupe of his own art.

Isaac. I don't care—I'll not endure this—Don Jerome, 'tis you have done this—you would be so cursed positive about the beauty of her you locked up, and all the time, I told you she was as old as my mother, and as ugly as the devil.

Duen. Why, you little insignificant reptile!

Jer. That's right; attack him, Margaret.

Duen. Dares such a thing as you pretend to talk of beauty?—A walking rouleau!—a body that seems to owe all its consequence to the dropsy?—a pair of eyes like too dead beetles in a wad of brown dough! a beard like an artichoke, with dry, shrivelled jaws, that would disgrace the mummy of a monkey!

Jer. Well done, Margaret!

Duen. But you shall know that I have a brother, who wears a sword, and if you don't do me justice——

Isaac. Fire seize your brother, and you too! I'll fly to Jerusalem, to avoid you.

Duen. Fly where you will, I'll follow you.

Jer. Throw your snowy arms about him, Margaret. [*Exeunt* ISAAC *and* DUENNA.]—But, Louisa, are you really married to this modest gentleman?

Lou. Sir, in obedience to your commands, I gave him my hand within this hour.

Jer. My commands!

Ant. Yes, Sir; here is your consent, under your own hand.

Jer. How! would you rob me of my child by a trick, a false pretence? and do you think to get her fortune by the same means? Why, 'slife, you are as great a rogue as Isaac?

Ant. No, Don Jerome: though I have profited by this paper, in gaining your daughter's hand, I scorn to obtain her fortune by deceit. There, Sir, [*Gives a Letter.*] Now give her your blessing for a dower, and all the little I posses shall be settled on her in return. Had you wedded her to a prince, he could do no more.

Jer. Why, gad take me, but you are a very extraordinary fellow! But have you the impudence to suppose no one can do a generous action but yourself? Here, Louisa, tell this proud fool of yours, that he's the only man I know that would renounce your fortune; and, by my soul, he's the only man in Spain that's worthy of it. There, bless you both: I'm an obstinate old fellow when I'm in the wrong; but you shall now find me as steady in the right.

Enter FERDINAND *and* CLARA.

Another wonder still! why, Sirrah! Ferdinand, you have not stole a nun, have you?

Ferd. She is a nun in nothing but her habit, Sir—look nearer, and you will perceive 'tis Clara D'Almanza, Don Guzman's daughter; and with pardon for stealing a wedding, she is also my wife.

Jer. Gadsbud, and a great fortune.—Ferdinand, you are a prudent young rogue, and I forgive you; and, ifecks, you're a pretty little damsel. Give your father-in-law a kiss, you smiling rogue.

Cla. There, old gentleman: and now mind you behave well to us.

Jer. Ifecks, those lips ha'n't been chilled by kissing beads—'Egad, I believe I shall grow the best humoured fellow in Spain—Lewis! Sancho! Carlos! d'ye hear? are all my doors thrown open? Our children's weddings are the only holidays our age can boast; and then we drain with pleasure the little stock of spirits time has left us. [*Music within.*] But see, here come our friends and neighbours!

Enter MASQUERADERS, *from the back of the Stage.*

And, 'ifaith, we'll make a night on't, with wine, and dance, and catches—then old and young shall join us.

FINALE.

Jer. Come now for jest and smiling,
Both old and young beguiling,
Let us laugh and play, so blythe and gay,
Till we banish care away.

Lou. Thus crown'd with dance and song,
The hours shall glide along,
With a heart at ease, merry, merry glees,
Can never fail to please.

Ferd. Each bride with blushes glowing,
Our wine as rosy flowing,
Let us laugh and play, so blythe and gay,
Till we banish care away.

Ant. Then healths to every friend,
The night's repast shall end,
With a heart at ease, merry, merry glees,
Can never fail to please.

Cla. Nor, while we are so joyous,
Shall anxious fear annoy us,
Let us laugh and play, so blythe and gay,
Till we banish care away.

Jer. For generous guests like these,
Accept the wish to please,
So we'll laugh and play, so blythe and gay,
Your smiles drive care away.

[*Exeunt.*

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XIMENA;

OR,

THE HEROIC DAUGHTER:

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY COLLEY CIBBER, Esq.

REMARKS.

IT will scarcely be necessary to add more to the above title, than that this play is a translation from the Cid of Corneille.—A Drama, which has so frequently been the subject of critical investigation, leaves to the observer, upon its being rendered into another language, little beyond remark upon the diction, and the sufficiency of its adaptation to British audiences.

Cibber, in the two last Acts, has added something to the intrigue of the business—for the scenes which he admitted to be finely *natural* in the original, he yet conceived defective in contrivance.—His alterations disturb the rude dignity of the original.

In a strange Dedication, which we shall not suffer now to sully the fame of our *comic* Colley, he was weak enough to treat Steele as an *Eagle*, and Addison as a *Wren*.—Such profanation he was afterwards wise enough to retrench. We spare his memory the opprobrium of seeing it here.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	COVENT-GARDEN.
Don Ferdinand, King of Castile,	*Mr. Hull.*
Don Alvarez, his late general, and father of Don Carlos,	*Mr. Bensley.*
Don Gormaz, Count of Gormaz, the present general, and father of Ximena,	*Mr. Clarke.*
Don Carlos, in love with Ximena,	*Mr. Smith.*
Don Sanchez, his secret rival, though lately betrothed to Belzara,	*Mr. Savigny.*
Don Alonzo, an Officer,	*Mr. Wroughton.*
Don Garcia, ditto,	
A Page,	
Ximena, daughter to Gormaz,	*Mrs. Yates.*
Belzara, her friend, forsaken by Don Sanchez,	*Mrs. Mattocks.*

Scene.—The Royal Palace in Seville.

PROLOGUE.

As oft, in form'd assemblies of the fair,
The strait-laced prude will no loose passion bear,
Beyond set bounds no lover must address,
But secret flame in distant sighs express;
Yet if by chance some gay coquette sails in,
A joyous murmur breaks the silent scene,
Each heart relieved by her enlivening fire,
Feels easy hope and unconfined desire;
Then shuddering prudes with secret envy burn,
And treat the fops they could not catch, with scorn——
So plays are valued; not confined to rules,
Those prudes, the critics, call them feasts for fools;
And if an audience 'gainst those rules is warm'd,
Or by the lawless force of genius charm'd,
Their whole confederate body is alarm'd:
Then every feature's false, though ne'er so taking,
The heart's deceived, though 'tis with pleasure aching,
They'll prove your charmer's not agreeable:
Thus fared it with the Cid of famed Corneille.

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In France 'twas charged with faults were past enduring,
But still had beauties that were so alluring,
It raised the envy of the grave Richlieu,
And, spite of his remarks, cramm'd houses drew;
Of this assertion, if the truth you'll know,
Two lines will prove it from the great Boileau:
En vain contre le Cid *un ministre se ligue,*
Tout Paris *pour* Chimene *a les yeux de* Rodrigue.
In vain against the Cid the statesman arms,
Paris, with Rodrick, feels Ximena's charms.
This proves, when passion truly wrought appears,
In plays imperfect, 'twill command your tears:
Yet think not, from what's said, we rules despise,
To raise your wonder from absurdities.
As France improved it from the Spanish pen,
We hope, now British, 'tis improved again:
And though lost tragedy has long seem'd dead,
Yet having lately raised her awful head,
To-night, with pains and cost, we humbly strive
To keep the spirit of that taste alive:
But if, like Phæton, in Corneille's car,
Th' unequal muse unhappily should err,
At least you'll own from glorious heights she fell,
And there's some merit in attempting well.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Enter ALVAREZ *and* CARLOS.

Alv. Alliance! ha! and with the race of Gormaz! [thou?
My mortal foe! The king enjoins it, saidst
Let me not think thou couldst descend to ask it.
Take heed, my son, nor let the daughter's eyes
Succeed in what the father's sword has fail'd;
Since I to age have stood his hate unmoved,
Be not thou vanquish'd by her female wiles,
Nor stain thy honour with insulted love.
Car. O, taint not with so hard a thought her virtues, [tions:
Which she has proved sincere, from obliga-
'Tis to her suit I owe my late advancement.
You know, my lord, the fortune of this sword
Redeem'd her from the Moors, when late their captive;
For which, at her return to court, she swell'd
The action with such praises to the king,
He bade her name the honours could reward it:
She, conscious of our houses' hate, surprised,
And yet disdaining that her heart should fall
In thanks below the benefit received,
Warm'd with th' occasion, begg'd his royal favour [father,
Would rank me in the field, the next her
The king complied, and with a smile insisted,
That from her own fair hand I should receive
The grace. This forced me then to visit her:
To say what follow'd from our interview,
Might tire, at least, if not offend your ear.
Alv. Not so, my Carlos, but proceed.
Car. In brief;
The queen, who now in highest favour holds
The fair Ximena, soon perceived our passion,
Approved and cherish'd it; our houses' discord,
She knew of old, had often shook the state;
Whereon she kindly to the king proposed
This happy union, as the sole expedient
To cure those wounds, and fortify his throne:
Nay, she, Ximena, if I knew her thoughts,
Chiefly to that regard resigns her heart.
Oh! she disclaims, contemns her beauty's power,
And builds no merit but on stable virtue.
Alv. If so, I should indeed applaud her spirit.
Car. Oh! had you search'd her soul like me, you would
Repose your life, your fame, upon her truth.
Alv. On thee, at least, I'm sure I may; I know
Thou lov'st thy honour equal to Ximena,
And to that guard I dare commit thy love,
Keep but that union sacred——
Car. When I break it,
May your displeasure, and Ximena's scorn,
Unite their force to torture me with shame:—
But see, she comes! her eye, my lord, has reach'd you.

Enter XIMENA.

Mark her concern, the softness of her fear,
O'ercast with doubt and diffidence to meet you;
One gentle word from you would chase the cloud,
And let forth all the lustre of her soul.
Alv. Hail, fair Ximena! beauteous brightness, hail!
Propitious be this meeting to us all.
With equal joy and wonder I survey thee.
How lovely's virtue in so bright a form!
Thy father's fierceness all is lost in thee;
Well have thy eyes reproach'd our houses' jars, [peace;
And calm'd the tempests that have wreck'd our
What we with false resentments but inflamed,
Thy nobler virtues have appeased with honour.
Xim. These praises from another mouth, my lord, [shame;
Might die these glowing cheeks with crimson
But as they flow thus kindly from Alvarez,
From the heroic sire of my deliverer,
As you bestow 'em, my exulting heart, [sound;
Though undeserved receives with joy the
But for those virtues you ascribe to me,
Alas! they are but copied all from thence;
Carlos, I saw, was brave, victorious, great,
Compassionate——I am, at best, but grateful—
Could I be less reduced with obligations?
Could I retain our houses' ancient hate,
When Carlos' deeds so greatly had forgot it?
If Heaven had will'd our feuds should never end, [me:
It would have chose some other arm to save
But if its kinder providence decrees,
Ximena's yielded heart should cure those ills,
And bind our passions in the chains of peace;
Be witness that, all gracious Heaven, I've gain'd
The end, the haven of my hopes on earth,
And fill'd the proudest sails of my ambition.
Alv. O, Carlos, Carlos, we are both subdued!
Where can such heavenly sweetness find a foe?
What Gormaz may resolve, his heart can tell,
But mine no longer can resist such virtue;
His pride perhaps may triumph o'er my weakness,
And wrong Ximena to insult Alvarez!

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Be mine that shame, but then be mine this glory, [*He joins their hands.*
That I surrender to his daughter's merit
All that her heart demands, or mine can give:
If he's obdurate, let her wrongs reproach him.

Enter SANCHEZ *and* ALONZO *observing them.*

No thanks, my fair; for both or neither are
Obliged: whatever may be due to me,
Let love and mutual gratitude repay.
San. Death to my eyes! Alvarez joins their hands! [*Aside.*
Alon. Forbear! is this a time for jealousy? [*Aside.*
San. Thou, that hast patience, then, relieve my torture. [*Aside.*
Car. Oh, Ximena! how my heart's oppress'd with shame——
Thou giv'st me a confusion equal to
My joy; I yet am laggard in my duty;
I must despair to reach with equal virtues
Dread Gormaz' heart, as thou hast touch'd Alvarez'.
Xim. That hope we must to Providence resign.
The king intends this day to sound his temper,
Which, though severe, I know is generous,
In honour great, as in resentments warm,
Fierce to the proud, but to the gentle yielding;
The goodness of Alvarez must subdue him.
Alon. My lord, I heard the king inquiring for you:
Alv. Sir, I attend his Majesty—I thank you.
Xim. Saw you the count, my father, in the presence?
Alon. Madam, I left him with the king this instant,
Withdrawn to the window, and in conference.
Xim. 'Twas his command I should attend him there.
Alv. Come, fair Ximena, if thy father's ear
Inclines, like mine, unprejudiced to hear;
His hate, subdued, will public good regard,
And crown thy virgin virtues with reward.
[*Exeunt* ALV. CAR. XIM.
San. Help me, Alonzo, help me, or I sink;
Th' oppression is too great for Nature's frame,
And all my manhood reels beneath the load.
O, rage! O, torment of successless love!
Alon. Alas! I warn'd you of this storm before,
Yet you, incredulous and deaf, despised it;
But, since your hopes are blasted in their bloom,
Since vow'd Ximena never can be yours,
Forget the folly, and resume your reason;
Recover to your vows your love betroth'd,
Return to honour, and the wrong'd Belzara.
San. Why dost thou still obstruct my happiness,
And thwart the passion that has seized my soul?
A friend should help a friend in his extremes,
And not create, but dissipate his fears.
'Tis true, I see Ximena's heart is given,
But then her person's in a father's power:
He, I've no cause to fear, will slight my offers.
Thou know'st the aversion that he bears Alvarez [bour:
Bars like a rock her wishes from their har-
While Carlos has a fear, shall I despair?
Has not the count his passions too to please,
And will he starve his hate to feed her love?
May I not hope he rather may embrace
The fair occasion of my timely vows,
To torture Carlos with a sure despair,
And force Ximena to assist his triumph?
Nay, she, perhaps, when his commands are fix'd,
In pride of virtue, may resist her love,
Suppress the passion, and resign to duty.
Alon. Why will you tempt such seas of wild disquiet,
When honour courts you in a calm to joy?
Belzara's charms are yielded to your hopes,
Contracted to your vows, and warm'd to love:
Ximena scarce has knowledge of your flame,
Without reproach she racks you with despair,
And must be perjured could her heart relieve you.
San. Let her relieve me, I'll forgive the guilt,
Forget it, smother in her arms the thought,
And drown the charming falsehood in the joy.
Alon. What wild extravagance of youthful heat [reason?
Obscures your honour, and destroys your
San. I am not of that lifeless mould of men,
That plod the beaten road of virtuous love;
With me 'tis joyous, beauty gives desire,
Desire by nature gives instinctive hope;
The phœnix, woman, sets herself on fire,
Hope gives us love, our love makes them desire, [pire.
And in the flames they raise, themselves ex-
Alon. Nor love, nor hope, can give you here success.
San. Let those despair whose passions have their bounds,
Whose hopes in hazards, or in dangers die:
Show me the object worthy of my flame,
Let her be barr'd by obligations, friends,
By vows engaged, by pride, aversion, all
The common lets that give the virtuous awe,
My love would mount the towering falcon's height, [way,
Cut through them all, like yielding air, my
And downward dart me rapid on my quarry.
Alon. Farewell, my lord, some other time, perhaps,
This rapture may subside, and want a friend:
I shall be glad to advise when you can h
But see, Belzara comes, with eyes confused,
That speak some new disorder in her heart.
Would you be happy, friend, be just; preserve
Inviolate the honest vows you've made her.
Farewell, I leave you to embrace th' occasion.
[*Exit.*

Enter BELZARA.

Bel. I come, Don Sanchez, to inform you of
A wrong that near concerns our mutual honour; [tract
'Tis whisper'd through the court, that you re-
Your solemn vows by contract made to me,
And with a perjured heart pursue Ximena:
Such false reports should perish in their birth;
I've done my honest part, and disbelieved 'em,
Do yours, and, by your vows perform'd, destroy them.
San. Madam, this tender care of me deserves
Acknowledgments beyond my power to pay;
But virtue always is the mark of malice,
Contempt the best return that we can make it.
Bel. Virtue should have so strict a guard, as not

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To suffer even suspicion to approach it.
For though, Don Sanchez, I dare think you just,
Yet while the envious world believes you false,
I feel their insults, and endure the shame.
San. Malice succeeds when its report's believed;
Seem you to slight it, and the monster's mute.
Bel. I could have hoped some cause to make me slight it:
This cold concern to satisfy my fears,
Proclaims the danger, and confirms them true.
San. Then you believe me false?
Bel. Believe it! Heaven!
Am I to doubt what even your looks, your words,
Your faint evasions, faithlessly confess?
Ungrateful man! when you betray'd my heart,
You should have taught me too to bear the wrong.
San. When tears with menaces relieve their grief,
They flow from pride, not tenderness distress'd.
Bel. Insulting, horrid thought! am I accused
Of pride, complaining from a breaking heart?
San. Behold th' unthrifty proof of woman's love!
Pursue you with the sighs of faithful passion,
You starve our pining hopes with painted coyness;
But if our honest hearts disdain the yoke,
Or seek from sweet variety relief,
Alarm'd to lose what you despised secure,
Your trembling pride retracts its haughty air,
And yields to love, pursuing when we fly.
These lavish tears when I deserved your heart,
Had held me sighing to be more your slave;
But to bestow them when that heart's broke loose,
When more I merit your contempt than love,
Arraigns your justice, and acquits my falsehood.
Bel. Injurious, false, and barbarous reproach!
Have I withheld my pity from your sighs,
Or used with rigour my once boundless power?
Am I not sworn by testified consent,
By solemn vows contracted, yielded yours?
But what avails the force of truth's appeal,
Where th' offender is himself the judge?
But yet remember, tyrant, while you triumph,
I am Don Henrick's daughter, whom you dare betray; [nour,
Henrick, whose famed revenge of injured ho-
Dares step as deep in blood, as you in provocations.
San. Since then your seeming grief's with rage relieved,
Hear me with temper, Madam, once for all.
You urge our solemn contract sworn; I own
The fact, but must deny the obligation;
'Twas not to me, but to a father's will,
To Henrick's dread commands, your pride submitted.
Since then your merit's to obedience due,
Seek your reward from duty, not from Sanchez:
Your slights to me live yet recorded here,
Nor can your forced submissions now remove them.
Ximena's softer heart has raised me to
A flame that gives at once revenge and rapture.
How far Don Henrick may resent the change,
I neither know, nor with concern shall hear:
Nay, trust your injured patience to inflame him.
Bel. Inhuman, vain provoker of my heart,
I need not urge the ills that must o'ertake thee;
Thy giddy passions will, without my aid,
Punish their guilt, and to themselves be fatal
Ximena's heart is fix'd as far above
Thy hopes, as truth and virtue from thy soul.
To her avenging scorn I yield thy love;
There, faithless wretch, indulge thy vain desires,
And starve, like tortured Tantalus, in plenty;
Gaze on her charms forbidden to thy taste,
Famish'd and pining at the tempting feast,
Still rack'd, and reaching at the flying fair,
Pursue thy falsehood, and embrace despair.
[*Exit.*
San. So raging winds in furious storms arise,
Whirl o'er our heads, and are when past forgotten.

Enter ALONZO.

Alon. Why, Sanchez, are you still resolved on ruin?
I met Belzara in disorder'd haste: [spoke,
At sight of me she stopp'd, and would have
But grief, alas, was grown too strong for words: [eyes,
When turning from my view her mournful
She burst into a shower of gushing tears,
And in the conflict of her shame retired.
Oh, yet collect your temper into thought,
And shun the precipice that gapes before you;
A moment hence, convinced, your eyes will see
Ximena parted from your hopes for ever.
San. Why dost thou double thus my new disquiets?
For pains foreseen are felt before they come.

Enter KING, GORMAZ, ALVAREZ, CARLOS, XIMENA, *&c.*

Alon. Behold the king, Alvarez, and her father,
Be wise, though late, and profit from the issue.
King. Count Gormaz, you, and you Alvarez, hear,
Though in the camp your swords, in court your counsel,
Have justly raised your fame to envied heights,
Yet let me still deplore your race and you,
That from a long descent of lineal heat,
Your private feuds as oft have shook the state;
And what's the source of this upheld defiance?
Alas! the stubborn claim of ancient rank,
Held from a two days' antedated honour,
Which gave the younger house pre-eminence.
How many valiant lives have eased our foes
Of fear, destroy'd by this contested title;
And what's decided by this endless valour?
Whose honour yet confesses the superior?
While both dare die, the quarrel is immortal:
Or say that force on one part has prevail'd,
Is there such merit in unequal strength?
If violence is virtue, brutes may boast it:
Lions with lions grapple, and dispute;
But men are only great, truly victorious,
When with superior reason they subdue.
Can you then think you are in honour bound
To heir the follies of your ancestors?
Since they have left you virtues and renown,
Transmit not to posterity their blame.
Alv. and Gor. My gracious lord——
King. Yet, hold; I'll hear you both.
Of your compliance, Gormaz, I've no doubt;
This quarrel in your nobler breast was dying,
Had not, Alvarez, you revived it.
Alv. I!
Wherein, my gracious lord, stand I suspected?

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King. What else could mean that sullen gloom you wore,
That conscious discontent, so ill conceal'd
In your abrupt retirement from our court,
When late the valiant count was made our general?
Was't not your own request you might resign it?
Which though, 'tis true, you long had fill'd with honour,
Was it for you to circumscribe our choice?
T' oppose from private hate the public good,
And in his case whose merit had preferr'd him?
When his fierce temper, from reflection calm,
Inclined to let the embers of his heat expire,
Was it well done thus to revive the flame,
To wake his jealous honour to resentment,
And shake that union we had laid to heart?
If thou hast ought to urge, that may defend
Thy late behaviour, or accuse his conduct
Unfold it free, we are prepared to hear.

Alv. Alas, my lord! the world misjudges me,
My hate supposed is not so deeply rooted;
Age has allay'd those fevers of my honour,
And weary nature now would rest from passions. [boil,
The noble count, whose warmer blood may
Perhaps is still my foe: I am not his,
Nor envy him those honours of his merit.
Where virtue is, I dare be just, and see it.
Your majesty has spoke your wisdom in [it.
Your choice, for I have seen his arm deserve
In all the sieges, battles I have won,
I knew not better to command, than he
To execute: those wreaths of victory
That flourish still upon this hoary brow,
Impartial I confess, his active sword
Has lopp'd from heads of Moors, and planted there.

King. How has report, my Gormaz, wrong'd this man?

Alv. Nor was the cause of my retirement more,
Than that I found it time to ease my age,
Unfit for farther action, and bequeath
My son the needless pomp of my possessions.

King. Is't possible? Couldst thou conceal this goodness?
Could secret virtue take so firm a root, [ties?
While slander, like a canker, kill'd its beau-
Gormaz, if yet thou art not passion's slave,
Take to thyself the glory to reward him.

Gor. My lord, the passions that have warm'd this breast,
Yet never stirr'd but in the cause of honour.
Honour's the spring that moves my active life;
And life's a torment while that right's invaded.
Show me the man whose merit claims my love,
Whose milder virtues modestly assail me,
And honour throws me at his feet submissive.
In proof of this, there needs but now to own,
The generous advances of Alvarez,
Have turn'd my fierce resentments into shame.
What can I more? My words but faintly speak me. [version,
But since my king seems pleased with my con-
My heart and arms are open to embrace him.

King. Receive him, soldier, to thy heart, and give
Your king this glory of your mutual conquest.
[*They embrace.*

Xim. Auspicious omen!

Car. O transporting hope!

San. Adders and serpents mix in their embraces. [*Apart.*

King. O, Gormaz! O, Alvarez! stop not here,
Confine not to yourselves your stinted virtue,
But in this noble ardour of your hearts,
Secure to your posterity your peace:
[CARLOS *and* XIMENA *kneel.*
Behold the lifted hands, that beg the blessing,
The hearts that burn to ratify the joy,
And to your heirs unborn transmit the glory.

Gor. Receive her, Carlos, from a father's hand,
Whose heart by obligations was subdued.

Alv. Accept, Ximena, all my age holds dear,
Not to my bounty, but thy merit due.

King. O, manly conquest! O, exalted worth!
What honours can we offer to applaud it?
To grace this triumph of Ximena's eyes,
Let public jubilee conclude the day.
Sound all our sprightly instruments of war,
Fifes, clarions, trumpets speak the general joy.

Alv. Raise high the clangor of your lofty notes,
Sound peace at home——

Gor. And terror to our foes.

King. Let the loud cannon from the ramparts roar.

Gor. And make the frighted shores of Afric ring.

Car. Long live, and ever glorious live, the king!
[*Trumpets and volleys at a distance.*

Alv. O, may this glorious day for ever stand
Famed in the rolls of late recorded time.

King. This happy union fix'd, my lords, we now
Must crave your counsel in our state's defence—
Letters this morn alarm us with designs
The Moors are forming to invade our realms:
But let them be, we're now prepared to meet them.
The prince that would sit free from foreign fears,
Should first with peace compose intestine jars;
Of hearts united while secure at home,
His rash invaders to their graves must come.
[Exeunt.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter DON SANCHEZ.

San. Relentless fortune! thou hast done thy part,
Neglected nothing to oppose my love.
But thou shalt find, in thy despite, I'll on.
Wert thou not blind, indeed, thou hadst foreseen
The honour done this hour to old Alvarez,
His being named the prince's governor,
(Which I well knew th' ambitious Gormaz aimed at)
Must, like a wildfire's rage, embroil their union,
Rekindle jealousies in Gormaz' heart,
Whose fatal flame must bury all in ashes:
But see, he comes, and seems to ruminate
With pensive grudge the king's too partial favour.

Enter GORMAZ *on the other Side.*

Gor. The king, methinks, is sudden in his choice—

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'Tis true, I never sought (but therefore is
Not less the merit) nor obliquely hinted,
That I desired the office——He has heard
Me say, the prince, his son, I thought was now
Of age to change his prattling female court,
And claim'd a governor's instructive guidance——
Th' advice, it seems, was fit—but not th' adviser—
Be't so—why is Alvarez then the man?
He may be qualified—I'll not dispute——
But was not Gormaz too of equal merit?
Let me not think Alvarez plays me foul——
That cannot be——he knew I would not bear it—
And yet, why he's so suddenly preferred——
I'll think no more on't—Time will soon resolve me.

San. Not to disturb, my lord, your graver thoughts,
May I presume——

Gor. Don Sanchez may command me.
This youthful lord is sworn our house's friend;
If there's a cause for jealous thought, he'll find it. [*Aside.*

San. I hear, my lord, the king has fresh advice received
Of a design'd invasion from the Moors,
Holds it confirm'd, or is it only rumour?

Gor. Such new alarms indeed his letters bring,
But yet their grounds seem'd doubtful at the council.

San. May it not prove some policy of state?
Some bugbear danger of our own creating?
The king, I have observed, is skill'd in rule,
Perfect in all the arts of tempering minds,
And—for the public good—can give alarms
Where fears are not, and hush them where they are.

Gor. 'Tis so! he hints already at my wrongs. [*Aside.*

San. Not but such prudence well becomes a prince;
For peace at home is worth his dearest purchase.
Yet he that gives his just resentments up,
Though honour'd by the royal mediation,
And sees his enemy enjoy the fruits,
Must have more virtues than his king to bear it——
Perhaps, my lord, I am not understood,
Nay, hope my jealous fears have no foundation;
But when the ties of friendship shall demand it,
Don Sanchez wears a sword that will revenge you. [*Going.*

Gor. Don Sanchez, stay—I think thou art my friend:
Thy noble father oft has served me in
The cause of honour, and his cause was mine.
What thou hast said, speaks thee Balthazar's son,
I need not praise thee more—If I deserve
Thy love, refuse not what my heart's concern'd
To ask; speak freely of the king, of me,
Of old Alvarez, of our late alliance, [whole,
And what has followed since: then sum the
And tell me truly, where the account's unequal.

San. My lord, you honour with too great a trust
The judgment of my inexperienced years;
Yet for the time I have observed on men,
I've always found the generous, open heart
Betray'd, and made the prey of minds below it.
Oh! 'tis the curse of manly virtue, that
Cowards, with cunning, are too strong for heroes:
And, since you press me to unfold my thoughts,
I grieve to see your spirit so defeated,
Your just resentments, by vile arts of court,
Beguiled, and melted to resign their terror.
Your honest hate, that had for ages stood
Unmoved, and firmer from your foes' defiance,
Now sapp'd, and undermined by his submission.
Alvarez knew you were impregnable to force,
To force, and changed the soldier for the statesman;
While you were yet his foe profess'd,
He durst not take these honours o'er your head;
Had you still held him at his distance due,
He would have trembled to have sought this office;
When once the king inclined to make his peace,
I saw too well the secret on the anvil,
And soon foretold the favour that succeeded:
Alas! this project has been long concerted,
Resolved in private 'twixt the king and him,
Laid out and managed here by secret agents,
While he, good man, knew nothing of the honour,
But from his sweet repose was dragg'd t' accept it.
Oh, it inflames my blood to think this fear
Should get the start of your unguarded spirit,
And proudly vaunt it in the plumes he stole
From you!

Gor. Oh, Sanchez, thou hast fired a thought
That was before but dawning in my mind!
Oh, now afresh it strikes my memory,
With what dissembled warmth the artful king
First charged his temper with the gloom he wore,
When I supplied his late command of general!
Then with what fawning flattery to me
Alvarez! fear disguised his trembling hate,
And soothed my yielding temper to believe him.

San. Not flattery, my lord; though I must grant
'Twas praise well-timed, and therefore skilful.

Gor. Now, on my soul, from him 'twas loathsome daubing!
I take thy friendship, Sanchez, to my heart;
And were not my Ximena rashly promised——

San. Ximena's charms might grace a monarch's bed,
Nor dares my humble heart admit the hope,
Or, if it durst, some fitter time should show it:
Results more pressing now demand your thought;
First ease the pain of your depending doubt,
Divide this fawning courtier from the friend.

Gor. Which way shall I receive, or thank thy love?

San. My lord, you over-rate me now—But see,
Alvarez comes—now probe his hollow heart,
Now while your thoughts are warm with his deceit,
And mark how calmly he'll evade the charge.
My lord, I'm gone. [*Exit.*

Gor. I am thy friend for ever.

Enter ALVAREZ.

Alv. My lord, the king is walking forth to see
The prince, his son, begin his horsemanship:
If you're inclined to see him, I'll attend you.

Gor. Since duty calls me not, I've no delight
To be an idle gaper on another's business.
You may indeed find pleasure in the office,
Which you've so artfully contrived to fit.

Alv. Contrived, my lord! I'm sorry such a thought
Can reach the man whom I so late embraced.
Gor. Men are not always what they seem—This honour,
Which, in another's wrong, you've barter'd for,
Was at the price of those embraces bought.
Alv. Ha! bought! For shame, suppress this poor suspicion!
For if you think, you can't but be convinced
The naked honour of Alvarez scorns
Such base disguise—Yet pause a moment——
Since our great master, with such kind concern,
Himself has interposed to heal our feuds,
Let us not, thankless, rob him of the glory,
And undeserve the grace by new, false fears.
Gor. Kings are, alas! but men, and form'd like us,
Subject alike to be by men deceived: [see.
The blushing court from this rash choice will
How blindly he o'erlooks superior merit.
Could no man fill the place but worn Alvarez?
Alv. Worn more with wounds and victories than age.
Who stands before him in great actions past?
But I'm to blame to urge that merit now,
Which will but shock what reasoning may convince.
Gor. The fawning slave! Oh, Sanchez, how I thank thee! [*Aside.*
Alv. You have a virtuous daughter, I a son,
Whose softer hearts our mutual hands have raised
Even to the summit of expected joy;
If no regard to me, yet let, at least,
Your pity of their passions rein your temper.
Gor. Oh, needless care! to nobler objects now,
That son, be sure, in vanity, pretends;
While his high father's wisdom is preferr'd
To guide and govern our great monarch's son,
His proud, aspiring heart forgets Ximena.
Think not of him, but your superior care;
Instruct the royal youth to rule with awe
His future subjects, trembling at his frown;
Teach him to bind the loyal heart in love,
The bold and factious in the chains of fear;
Join to these virtues too your warlike deeds,
Inflame him with the vast fatigues you've borne,
But now are past, to show him by example,
And give him in the closet safe renown;
Read him what scorching suns he must endure, [arms,
What bitter nights must wake, or sleep in
To countermarch the foe, to give th 'alarm,
And to his own great conduct owe the day;
Mark him on charts the order of the battle,
And make him from your manuscripts a hero.
Alv. Ill-temper'd man! thus to provoke the heart,
Whose tortured patience is thy only friend!
Gor. Thou only to thyself canst be a friend:
I tell thee, false Alvarez, thou hast wrong'd me,
Hast basely robb'd me of my merit's right,
And intercepted our young prince's fame.
His youth with me had found the active proof,
The living practice of experienced war;
This sword had taught him glory in the field,
At once his great example and his guard;
His unfledged wings from me had learn'd to soar,
And strike at nations trembling at my name:
This I had done; but thou, with servile arts,
Hast, fawning, crept into our master's breast,
Elbow'd superior merit from his ear,
And, like a courtier, stole his son from glory.
Alv. Hear me, proud man! for now I burn to speak, [thee;
Since neither truth can sway, nor temper touch
Thus I retort with scorn thy slanderous rage:
Thou, thou the tutor of a kingdom's heir!
Thou guide the passions of o'er-boiling youth,
That canst not in thy age yet rule thy own!
For shame! retire, and purge th' imperious heart,
Reduce thy arrogant, self-judging pride,
Correct the meanness of thy groveling soul,
Chase damn'd suspicion from thy manly thoughts,
And learn to treat with honour thy superior.
Gor. Superior, ha! dar'st thou provoke me, traitor?
Alv. Unhand me, ruffian, lest thy hold prove fatal.
Gor. Take that, audacious dotard. [*Strikes him.*
Alv. Oh, my blood,
Flow forward to my arm, to chain this tiger!
If thou art brave, now bear thee like a man,
And quit my honour of this vile disgrace.
[*They fight; ALVAREZ is disarmed.*
Oh, feeble life, I have too long endured thee!
Gor. Thy sword is mine; take back th' inglorious trophy, [wear.
Which would disgrace thy victor's thigh to
Now forward to thy charge, read to the prince
This martial lecture of thy famed exploits;
And from this wholesome chastisement, learn thou
To tempt the patience of offended honour. [*Exit.*
Alv. Oh, rage! Oh, wild despair! Oh, helpless age!
Wert thou but lent me to survive my honour?
Am I with martial toils worn gray, and see
At last one hour's blight lay waste my laurels?
Is this famed arm to me alone defenceless?
Has it so often propp'd this empire's glory,
Fenced, like a rampart, the Castilian throne,
To me alone disgraceful, to its master useless?
Oh, sharp remembrance of departed glory!
Oh, fatal dignity; too dearly purchased!
Now, haughty Gormaz, now guide thou my prince;
Insulted honour is unfit t' approach him. [well,
And thou, once glorious weapon, fare thee
Old servant, worthy of an abler master,
Leave now for ever his abandon'd side,
And, to revenge him, grace some nobler arm.
My son!

Enter CARLOS.

Oh, Carlos! canst thou bear dishonour?
Car. What villain dares occasion, Sir, the question?
Give me his name; the proof shall answer him.
Alv. Oh, just reproach! Oh, prompt resentful fire!
My blood rekindles at thy manly flame,
And glads my labouring heart with youth's return.
Up, up, my son—I cannot speak my shame—
Revenge, revenge me!
Car. Oh, my rage!—Of what?
Alv. Of an indignity so vile, my heart
Redoubles all its torture to repeat it.
A blow, a blow, my boy!
Car. Distraction! fury!
Alv. In vain, alas! this feeble arm assail'd,

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With mortal vengeance, the aggressor's heart;
He dallied with my age, o'erborne, insulted,
Therefore to thy young arm, for sure revenge,
My soul's distress commits my sword and cause:
Pursue him, Carlos, to the world's last bounds,
And from his heart tear back our bleeding honour.
Nay, to inflame thee more, thou'lt find his brow [ess:
Cover'd with laurels, and far-famed his prow-
Oh, I have seen him, dreadful in the field,
Cut through whole squadrons his destructive way, [foe!
And snatch the gore-died standard from the
Car. Oh, rack not with his fame my tortured heart,
That burns to know him, and eclipse his glory!
Alv. Though I foresee 'twill strike thy soul to hear it;
Yet since our gasping honour calls for thy
Relief—Oh, Carlos!—'tis Ximena's father—
Car. Ha!
Alv. Pause not for a reply—I know thy love,
I know the tender obligations of thy heart,
And even lend a sigh to thy distress.
I grant Ximena dearer than thy life; [both.
But wounded honour must surmount them
I need not urge thee more; thou know'st my wrong; [geance;
'Tis in thy heart, and in thy hand the ven-
Blood only is the balm for grief like mine,
Which, till obtain'd, I will in darkness mourn,
Nor lift my eyes to light, till thy return.
But haste, o'ertake this blaster of my name,
Fly swift to vengeance, and bring back my fame. [*Exit.*
Car. Relentless Heaven! is all thy thunder gone?
Not one bolt left to finish my despair!
Lie still, my heart, and close this deadly wound;
Stir not to thought, for motion is thy ruin.
But see, the frighted poor Ximena comes,
And with her tremblings strikes thee cold as death. [shame,
My helpless father too, o'erwhelm'd with
Begs his dismission to his grave with honour.
Ximena weeps; heart-pierced Alvarez groans;
Rage lifts my sword, and love arrests my arm:
Oh, double torture of distracting wo!
Is there no mean betwixt these sharp extremes?
Must honour perish, if I spare my love?
Oh, ignominious pity! shameful softness!
Must I, to right Alvarez, kill Ximena?
Oh, cruel vengeance! Oh, heart-wounding honour?
Shall I forsake her in her soul's extremes,
Depress the virtue of her filial tears,
And bury in a tomb our nuptial joy?
Shall that just honour that subdued her heart,
Now build its fame relentless on her sorrows.
Instruct me, Heaven, that gav'st me this distress,
To choose, and bear me worthy of my being!
Oh, Love, forgive me, if my hurried soul
Should act with error in this storm of fortune;
For Heaven can tell what pangs I feel to save thee! [call!
But hark! the shrieks of drowning honour
'Tis sinking, gasping, while I stand in pause;
Plunge in, my heart, and save it from the billows.
It will be so—the blow's too sharp a pain,
And vengeance has at least this just excuse,
That even Ximena blushes while I bear it:
Her generous heart, that was by honour won,
Must, when that honour's stain'd, abjure my love.
Oh, peace of mind, farewell! Revenge, I come,
And raise thy altar on a mournful tomb!
[Exit.

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Enter GARCIA *and* GORMAZ.

Gor. The king is master of his will and me;
But be it as it may—what's done's irrevocable.
Gar. My Lord, you ill receive this mark of favour,
And while thus obstinate, inflame your fault.
When sovereign power descends to ask of subjects
The due submission which its will may force
Your danger's greater from such slighted mildness,
Than should you disobey its full commands.
Gor. The consequence, perhaps, may prove it so.
Gar. Have you no fear of what his frown may do?
Gor. Has he no fear of what my wrongs may do?
Men of my rank are not in hours undone;
When I am crush'd, I fall with vengeance round me.
Gar. The rash indignity you've done Alvarez.
Without some proof of wrong, bears no excuse.
Gor. I am myself the judge of what I feel;
I feel him false, and, feeling, must resent.
Gar. Shall it be deem'd a falsehood to accept
A dignity by royal hands conferr'd?
Gor. He should have waived it; first consulted me.
He might have held me still his friend sincere,
Have shared my fortunes, as a friend entreating;
But basely thus to out me of my right,
By treacherous acts to do me private wrong,
Is what I never can forgive, and have resented.
Gar. But in this violence you offend the king.
The sanction of whose choice claim'd more regard.
Gor. Why am I fretted with these chains of honour,
Less free than others in my just resentments;
Who, unprovoked myself, do no man wrong,
But injured, am as storms implacable?
Gar. My Lord, this stubborn temper will undo you.
Gor. Then, Sir, Alvarez, will be satisfied.
Gar. Be yet persuaded, and compose this broil.
Gor. My resolution's fix'd; let's waive the subject.
Gar. Will you refuse all terms of reparation?
Gor. All, all, that are not from my honour due!
Gar. Dare you not trust that honour with the king?
Gor. My life's my king's, my honour is my own.
Gar. What's then, in short, your answer? For the king
Expects it on my first return,
Gor. 'Tis this,
That I dare die, but cannot bow to shame.
Gar. My lord, I take my leave.
Gor. Don Garcia's servant. [*Exit* GARCIA.

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Who fears not death, smiles at the frowns of power.

Enter CARLOS.

Car. My lord, your leave to talk with you.
Gor. Be free.
I did expect you on this late occasion.
Car. I'm glad to find you do my honour right;
And hope you'll not refuse it wrong'd Alvarez.
Gor. He had a sword to right himself.
Car. That sword is here.
Gor. 'Tis well; the place—and let our time be short.
Car. One moment's respite, for Ximena's sake:
She has not wrong'd me, and my heart would spare her:
We both, without a stain to either's honour,
May pity her distress, and pause to save her:
Nor need I blush that I suspend my cause,
Since with its vengeance her sure woes are blended.
Not for myself, but for her tender sake,
I bend me to the earth and beg for mercy.
Let not her virtues suffer for her love;
Oh, lay not on her innocence the grief
Of a mourn'd father's or a lover's blood!
Oh, spare her sighs, prevent her streaming ears;
Stop this effusion of my bleeding honour,
And heal, if possible, its wounds with peace!
Gor. What you have offer'd for Ximena's sake,
Will, in her gratitude be full repaid;
And for the peace you ask, that's yours to give.
Submission 'tis in vain to hope; for know,
I have this hour refused it to the king.
Thy father's arts betray d my friendship's faith;
I felt the wrong, and, as I ought, revenged it.
We're now on equal terms: but if his cause
So deep is in thy heart, that thou resolv'st,
With fruitless vengeance, to provoke my rage,
Then thou, not I, art author of thy ruin.
Car. Support me now, Ximena, guard my heart,
And bar this pressing provocation's entrance. [*Aside.*
Have I, my lord, in person wrong'd you?
Gor. No.
Car. Why then these fatal cruelties to me,
That I must lose, or wrong Ximena's love?
For she must scorn me, should I bear my shame;
Or fly me, though my honour should revenge it.
Gor. Place that to thy misfortune, not to me.
Car. Not to you!
Am I not forced by wrongs I blush to name,
To prosecute this fatal reparation,
Which, had you temper or a feeling here,
Had you the spirit to confess your error,
Your heart's confusion had subdued Alvarez,
And thrown you at his injured feet for pardon.
Gor. If thou com'st here to talk me from my sense,
Or think'st with words t' extenuate his guilt,
Thou offer'st to the winds thy forceless plea.
I will not bear the mention of his truth;
His falsehood's here, 'tis rooted in my heart,
And justifies a worse revenge than I have taken.
Car. Oh, patience, Heaven! Oh, tortured rage! Not speak
The pious pangs of my torn soul insulted!
Have I for this bow'd down my humble knee,
To swell thy triumph o'er my father's wrongs,
And hear him tainted with a traitor's practice?
Oh, give me back that vile submissive shame,
That I may meet thee with retorted scorn,
And right my honour with untainted vengeance! [love;
Yet no——withhold it, take it to acquit my
That sacrifice was to Ximena due;
Her helpless sufferings claim'd that pang; and since
I cannot bring dishonour to her arms,
Thus my rack'd heart pours forth its last adieus,
And makes libation of its bleeding peace:
Farewell ear, injured softness,—follow me.
Gor. Lead on——yet hold—should we together forth,
It may create suspicion, and prevent us.
Propose the place; I'll take some different circle.
Car. Behind the ramparts, near the Western Gate.
Gor. Expect me on the instant.
Car. Poor Ximena! [*Exit.*
Gor. Deep as resentment lodges in my heart,
It feels some pity there for Carlos' passion——
It shall be so——his brave resentment's just; [*Writes in tablets.*
And hard his fate both ways——This legacy
Shall write my honour and my enemy. [*Exit.*

Enter BELZARA *and* XIMENA.

Bel. Look up, Ximena, and suppress thy fears;
What though a transient cloud o'ercast thy joy,
Shall we conclude from thence a wreck must follow?
Xim. Can I resist the fears that reason forms?
Have I not cause to tremble in the storm,
While horror, ruin, and despair's in view?
Can I support the good Alvarez' shame,
Whose generous heart took pity on our love,
And not let fall a grateful tear to mourn it?
Can I behold fierce Carlos, stung with his disgrace, [arms,
Breaking, like fire, from these weak-holding
And not sink down with terror at his rage?
Must I not tremble for the blood may follow?
If by his arm my hapless father falls,
Am I not forced with rigour to revenge him?
If Carlos by my father's sword should bleed,
Am I not bound with double grief to mourn him?
One gave me life, shall I not revere him?
The other is my life, can I survive him?
Bel. Her griefs have something of such mournful force,
That, though not equal to my own, I feel them. [*Aside.*
Xim. Carlos, you see too, shuns my sight; no news,
No tidings yet arrive, though I have sent
My swiftest fears a thousand ways to find him.
Who can support these terrors of suspense?
Bel. Be not thus torn with wild, uncertain fears;
Carlos may yet arrive, and save your peace:
He is too much a lover to resist
The tender pleadings of Ximena's sorrow;
One word, one sigh from you arrests his arm,
And makes the tempest of his rage subside.
Xim. And say that I could conquer him with tears,
And terrors could subdue his piteous heart,
To yield his honour and its cause to love,
What will the world not say of his compliance?
Can I be happy in his fame's disgrace?

Can love subsist on shame, that sprung from honour?
Shall I reduce him to such hard contempt,
And raise on infamy our nuptial joy?
Ah, no! no means are left for my relief:
Let him resist, or yield to my distress,
Or shame, or sorrow's sure to meet me.
Bel. Ximena has, I see, a soul refined,
Too great, too just, too noble to be happy:
True virtue must despair from this vile world
To crown its days with unalloy'd reward.
But see, your servant is return'd—Good news,
Kind Heaven!

Enter a PAGE.

Xim. Speak quickly, hast thou seen Don Carlos?
Page. Madam, where your commands directed me, [him.
I've made the strictest search in vain to find
Xim. Now, now, Belzara, where's that hope thou gav'st me?
Bel. Nor hast thou gain'd no knowledge of his steps?
Has no one seen him pass, or heard of him?
Page. As I return'd, the sentinel that guards
The gate inform'd me, that he saw him scarce
Ten minutes hence pass in disorder'd haste
From out this very house alone.
Bel. Alone!
Page. Alone! and after soon my lord, wrapp'd in
His cloak, without a servant, follow'd him.
Xim. Oh, Heaven!
Bell. No servant, said'st thou?
Page. None; and as
My lord came forth, the soldier standing to
His arms, he sign'd forbiddance, and replied,
Be sure you saw me not.
Xim. Then ruin's sure;
They are engaged, and fatal blood must follow.
Excuse, my dear, this hurry of my fate;
One moment lost may prove an age too late.
[*Exit.*
Bel. Howe'er my own afflictions press my heart,
I bear a part in poor Ximena's grief;
Though e'en the worst that can befall her hopes,
May better be endured than what I feel.
Oh, nothing can destroy her lover's truth!
Carlos may prove unhappy, not inconstant;
Whate'er disasters may obstruct her joy,
The comfort of his truth is sure to find her;
That thought even pains of parting may remove,
Or fill up all the space of absence with delight.
But I, alas! am left to my despair alone,
Confined to sigh in solitude my woes,
Or hide with anguish what I blush to bear.
In vain the woman's pride resents my wrongs,
Unconquer'd love maintains his empire still,
And with new force insults my heart's resistance.

Enter ALONZO, *hastily.*

Alon. Your pardon, Madam—Have you seen Lord Gormaz?
I come to warn him that he stir not hence;
The guards are order'd to attend his door.
Bel. Alas, they are too late! Carlos and he
Are both gone forth, 'tis fear'd, with fatal purpose;
And poor Ximena, drown'd in tears, has follow'd them.
Alon. Then 'tis, indeed, too late—I wish my friend,
The rash Don Sanchez, had not blown this fire.
Be not concern'd, Madam; I know your griefs,
And, as a friend, have labour'd to prevent them.
You have not told Ximena of his falsehood?
Bel. Alas, I durst not! knowing that her friendship
Would for my sake so coldly treat his vows,
That 'twould but more provoke him to insult me.
Alon. You judge him right; patience will yet recall him:
'Tis not his love, but pride, pursues Ximena;
A youthful heat, that with the toil will tire.
Be comforted; I'll still observe his steps,
And when I find him staggering, catch him back [our.
To love, and warm him with his vows of hon-
But duty calls me to the king——Shall I
Attend you, Madam?
Bel. Sir, I thank your care.
My near concern for poor Ximena's fate
Keeps me impatient here, till her return.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter KING, GARCIA, SANCHEZ, *and Attendants.*

King. Since mild entreaties fail, our power shall force him. [offer'd,
Could he suppose his insult to our person
His outrage done within our palace walls,
Deserved the lenity we've deign'd to show him?
Is yet Alonzo with our orders gone?
Gar. He is, my lord, but not return'd.
San. Dread Sir,
For what the count has offer'd to Alvarez
I dare not plead excuse; but as his friend,
Would beg your royal leave to mitigate
His seeming disobedience to your pleasure,
Restraint, however just, opposed against
The tide of passion, makes the current fiercer,
Which, of itself, in time had ebb'd to reason;
Your will surprised him in his heart's emotion,
Ere thought had leisure to compose his mind;
Great souls are jealous of their honour's shame,
And bend reluctant to enjoin'd submission:
Had your commands obliged him to repair
Alvarez' wrongs with hazards in your service,
Were it to face the double-number'd foe,
To pass the rapid stream through showers of fire, [breach,
To force the trenchment, or to storm the
I'll answer he'd embrace with joy the charge,
And march intrepid in commands of honour.
King. We doubt not of his daring in the field;
But he mistakes, if he concludes from thence,
That to persist in wrong is height of spirit,
Or to have acted wrong is always base:
Perfection's not the attribute of man, [him;
Nor therefore can a fault confess'd degrade
The lowest minds have spirits to offend,
But few can reach the courage to confess it.
Submitting to our will, the count had lost
No fame, nor can we pardon his refusal.
What you have said, Don Sanchez, speaks the friend;
What we resolve, 'tis fit should speak the king:
We both have said enough—The public now
Requires our thought. We are inform'd ten sail
Of warlike vessels, mann'd with our old foes,
The Moors, were late discover'd off our coast,
And steering to the river's mouth their course.

Gar. The lives, Sir, they have lost in like attempts
Must make them cautious to repeat the danger;
This is no time to fear them.
King. Nor contemn;
Too full security has oft been fatal.
Consider with what ease the flood, at night,
May bring them down t' insult our capital.
Let at the port, and on the walls, our guards
Be doubled; till the morn that force may serve.
Gormaz has timed it till to be in fault,
When his immediate presence is required.
Gar. My liege, Alonzo is returned.

Enter ALONZO.

King. 'Tis well——
Have you obeyed us? Is the count confined?
Alon. Your orders, Sir, arrived unhappily
Too late; the count, with Carlos, was before
Gone forth, to end their fatal difference:
As I came back, I met the gathering crowd
In fright, and hurrying to the western gate
To see, as they reported, in the field,
The body of some murder'd nobleman.
Struck with my fears, I hasted to the place,
Where, to my sense's horror, when arrived,
I found them true, and Gormaz just expired;
While fair Ximena, to adorn the wo,
Bathed his pale breathless body with her tears,
Calling with cries for justice on his head,
Whose rueful hand had done the barbarous deed.
The pitying crowd took part in her distress,
And join'd her moving plaints for due revenge;
While some, in kinder feeling of her griefs,
Removed the mournful object from her eyes,
And to the neighbouring convent bore the body,
Which, when committed to the Abbot's care,
I left the pressing throng to tell the news.
King. Ximena's griefs are followed with our own;
For though, in some degree, the haughty count
Drew on himself the son's too just revenge,
We cannot lose, without a deep concern,
So true a subject, and so brave a soldier:
However pity may for Carlos plead,
Death ends his failings, and demands our grief.
Alon. Sir, here, in the tablets of th' unhappy count,
In his own hand, these written lines were found.
King. [Reads.] "*Alvarez wrong'd me in my master's favour;*
Carlos is brave, and has deserved Ximena."
Strange, generous spirit! now we pity thee.
Alon. Behold, Sir, where the lost Ximena comes,
O'erwhelm'd with sorrow, to demand your justice.

Enter XIMENA.

Xim. Oh, sacred Sir, forgive my grief's intrusion!
Behold a helpless orphan at your feet,
Who for a father's blood implores your justice.

Enter ALVAREZ, *hastily.*

Alv. Oh, turn, dread, royal master, turn your eyes,
See on the earth your faithful soldier prostrate,
Whose honour's just revenge entreats your mercy!
Xim. Oh, godlike monarch hear my louder cries!
Alv. Oh, be not to the old and helpless deaf!
Xim. Revenge yourself, your violated laws.
Alv. Support not violence in rude aggressors
Xim. Be greatly good, and do the injured justice.
Alv. Be greater still, and show the valiant mercy.
Xim. Oh, Sir, your crown's support and guard is gone!
The impious Carlos' sword has kill'd my father—
Alv. And, like a pious son, avenged his own.
King. Rise, fair Ximena, and Alvarez rise!
With equal sorrow we receive your plaints;
Both shall be heard apart—Proceed, Ximena;
Alvarez, in your place you speak; be patient.
Xim. What can I say? But miseries like mine
May plead, with plainest truths, their piteous cause.
Is he not dead? Is not my father kill'd?
Have not these eyes beheld his ghastly wound,
And mix'd with fruitless tears his streaming blood?
That blood, which in his royal master's cause
So oft has sprung him through your foes victorious;
That blood, which all the raging swords of war
Could never reach, a young, presumptuous arm
Has dared, within your view, to sacrifice!
These eyes beheld it stream—Excuse my grief;
My tears will better than my words explain me.
King. Take heart, Ximena; we're inclined to hear thee.
Xim. Oh, shall a life so faithful to the king
Fall unrevenged, and stain his glory?
Shall merit so important to the state
Be left exposed to sacrilegious rage,
And fall the sacrifice of private passion?
Alvarez says his honour was insulted;
Yet, be it so, was there no king to right it?
Who better could protect it than the donor?
Shall Carlos wrest the sceptre from your hand,
And point the sword of justice whom to punish?
Oh, if such outrage may escape with pardon,
Whose life's secure from his self-judging rage?
Oh, where's protection if Ximena's tears,
And tender passion could not save her father?
King. Alvarez, answer her.
Alv. My heart's too full:
Divided, torn, distracted with its griefs,
How can I plead poor Carlos' cause, when I
Am touch'd with pity of Ximena's wo?
Her suffering piety has caught my soul,
And only leaves me sorrow to defend me:
Ximena has a grief I cannot disallow,
Nor dare I hope for pardon, but your pity,
Carlos, even yet, may merit some compassion;
Perhaps I'm partial to his piety,
And see his deeds with a fond father's eye;
But that I still must leave to royal mercy.
Oh, Sir, imagine what the brave endure,
When the chaste front of honour is insulted,
Her fame abused, and ravish'd by a blow!
Oh, piercing, piercing must the torture be,
If soft Ximena wanted power t' appease it!
Pardon this weakness of o'erflowing nature;
I cannot see such filial virtue perish,
And not let fall a tear to mourn its hardship.
Xim. Oh, my divided heart! Oh, poor Alvarez! [*Aside.*
King. Compose thy griefs, my good old friend; we feel them.
Alv. If Gormaz' blood must be with blood revenged,
Oh, do not, sacred Sir, misplace your justice!

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Mine was the guilt, and be on me the vengeance:
Carlos but acted what my sufferings prompted;
The fatal sword was not his own, but mine;
I gave it, with my wrongs, into his hand,
Which had been innocent had mine been able.
On me your vengeance will be just and mild;
My days, alas! are drawing to their end,
But Carlos spared may yet live long to serve you.
Preserve my son, and I embrace my fate;
Since he has saved my honour from the grave,
Oh, lay me gently there to rest for ever!

King. Your mutual plaints require our tenderest thought:
Our council shall be summon'd to assist us—
Look up, my fair, and calm thy sorrows;
Thy king is now thy father, and will right thee.
Alvarez, on his word, has liberty;
Be Carlos found to answer to his charge.
Sanchez, wait you Ximena to her rest,
Whom, on the morrow's noon, we full will answer.

Hard is the task of justice, where distress
Excites our mercy, yet demands redress.

[Exeunt.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—Ximena's *Apartment.*

Belzara *alone.*

Bel. Sure some ill-boding planet must preside,
Malignant to the peace of tender lovers!
Undone Ximena! Oh, relentless honour,
That first subdued thy generous heart, then raised
Thy lover's fatal arm to pierce it through
Thy father's life, and make thy virtue wretched!
The hapless Carlos, too, is lost for ever!
Condemned to fly an exile from her sight,
In whom he only lives!——Oh, Heaven! he's here!
His miseries have made him desperate.

Enter Carlos.

Carlos, what wild distraction has possess'd thee,
That thus thou seek'st thy safety in thy ruin?
Is this a place to hide thy wretched head,
Where justice and Ximena's sure to find thee?

Car. I would not hide me from Ximena's sight;
Banish'd from her, I every moment die,
Since I must perish let her frowns destroy me;
Her anger's sharper than the sword of justice.

Bel. Alas, I pity thee! but would not have
Thee tempt the first emotions of her heart,
While duty and resentment yet transport her:
I wait each moment her return from court,
Which now, be sure, will be with friends attended.
O fly, for pity's sake, regard her fame,
Should you be seen, what must the world conclude?
Would you increase her miseries, to have
Malicious tongues report her love conceal'd
Beneath the roof her father's murderer.
But see, she comes! O, hide thee but a moment!
Kill not her honour too, let that persuade thee.

[*Exit* Carlos.

Don Sanchez here! O, Heavens! how I tremble.

[*Retires.*

Enter Don Sanchez *and* Ximena.

San. This noble conquest, Madam, of your love,
To after ages must record your fame.
Just is your grief, and your resentment great,
And great the victim that should fall before it;
But words are empty succours to distress:
Therefore command my actions to relieve you.
Would you have sure revenge, employ this sword,
My fortune and my life is yours to right you;
Accept my service, and you'll overpay it.

Bel. O faithless, barbarous man! but I'll divert
Thy cruel aim, and use my power for Carlos.

[*Aside.*

Xim. O, miserable me!

Bel. Take comfort, Madam.

San. Belzara here! then I have lost th' occasion;
Yet I may urge enough to give her pain.

[*Aside.*

Commanding me, you make your vengeance sure.

Xim. That were t' offend the king, to whom I have
Appeal'd, and whence I now must only wait [it.

San. Revenge from justice, Madam, moves so slow,
That oft the watchful criminal escapes it.
Appeal to your resentment, you secure it.
Carlos, you found, would trust no other power,
And 'tis but just you quit him as he wrong'd you.

Bel. Alas! Don Sanchez, Madam, feels not love,
He little thinks how Carlos fills your heart;
What shining glory in his crime appears;
What pangs it cost him to take part with honour;
That you must hate the hand that could destroy him.
Sanchez, to show the real friend, would use
His secret interest with the king to spare him,
For though you're bound in duty to pursue him,
Yet love, alas! would with a conscious joy,
Applaud the power that could, unbid, preserve him.

Xim. O, kind Belzara! how thou feel'st my sufferings;
Yet I must think Don Sanchez means me well.

San. Confusion! how her subtle tongue has foil'd me——

[*Aside.*

Madam, some other time I'll beg your leave
To wait your service, and approve my friendship.

Xim. Oh, every friend but Carlos is at hand
To help me! Grief, Sir, is unfit to thank you.

San. Oh! if such beauties 'midst her sorrows shine,
What darting charms must point her smiling eyes.

[*Exit.*

Xim. At length I'm free, at liberty to think,
And give my miseries a loose of sorrow.
O, Belzara! Carlos has kill'd my father!
Weep, weep, my eyes, pour down your baleful showers,
He that in grief should be my heart's support,
Has wrought my sorrows, and must fall their victim.
When Carlos is destroy'd, what comfort's left [me?
Spite of my wrongs, he still inhabits here:
O, still his fatal virtues plead his cause;

His filial honour charms my woman's heart,
And there, even yet, he combats with my father.
Bel. Restrain these headstrong sallies of your heart,
And try with slumbers to compose your spirits.
Xim. Oh! where's repose for misery like mine? [tion!
How grievous, Heaven! how bitter is my por-
O, shall a parent's blood cry unrevenged?
Shall impious love suborn my heart to pay
His ashes but unprofitable tears,
And bury in my shame the great regards of duty?
Bel. Alas! that duty is discharged; you have
Appeal'd to justice, and should wait its course.
Nor are you bound with rigour to enforce it;
His hard misfortunes may deserve compassion.
Xim. Oh! that they do deserve, it is my grief.
Could I withdraw my pity from his cause,
Were falsehood, pride, or insolence his crime,
My just revenge, without a pang, should reach him.
But as he is supported with excuse,
Defended by the cries of bleeding honour,
Whose cruel laws none but the great obey;
My hopeless heart is tortured with extremes,
It mourns in vengeance, and at mercy shudders.
Bel. O, what will be at last the dire resolve
Of your afflicted soul?
Xim. There is but one
Can end my sorrows, and preserve my fame;
The sole resource my miseries can have
Is to pursue, destroy; then meet him in the grave. [*Going.*

CARLOS *meets her.*

Amazement! horror! have my eyes their sense?
Or do my raving griefs create this phantom?
Support me! help me! hide me from the vision!
For 'tis not Carlos come to brave my sorrows.
[CARLOS *kneels.*
Bel. O turn your eye in pity of his griefs,
Resign'd, and prostrate at your feet for mercy.
Xim. What will my woes do with me?
Bel. Now!
Now, conquering love, shoot all thy darts to save him; [brow;
Now snatch the palm from cruel honour's
Maintain thy empire, and relieve the wretched:
O, hang upon his tongue thy thrilling charms,
To hold her heart, and kill the hopes of Sanchez. [*Exit.*
Car. O, pierce not thus with thy offended eyes,
The wretched heart that of itself is breaking.
Xim. Can I be wounded, and not shrink with pain?
Can I support with temper, him that shed
My father's blood, triumphant in my ruin!
O, Carlos! Carlos! was thy heart of stone?
Was nothing due to poor Ximena's peace?
Oh! 'twas not thus I felt new pains for thee,
When, at my feet, thy sighs of love were pitied,
And all hereditary hate forgotten!
Though bound in filial honour to insult
Thy flame, I broke through all to crown thy vows,
And bore the censure of my race to save thee:
And am I thus requited? Left forlorn!
The tender passion of my heart despised!
Could not my terrors move one spark of mercy?
No mild abatement of thy stern revenge?
T' excuse thy crime, or justify my love?
Car. O, hear me but a moment.
Xim. O, my heart!
Car. One mournful word!
Xim. Ah! leave me to despair!
Car. One dying last adieu, then wreak thy vengeance:
Behold the sword that has undone thee.
Xim. Ah! stain'd with my father's blood! O, rueful object!
Car. O, Ximena!
Xim. Take hence that horrid steel,
That, while I bear thy sight, arraigns my virtue.
Car. Endure it rather to support resentment,
T' inflame thy vengeance, and to pierce thy victim: [me.
I am more wretched than thy rage can wish
Xim. O, cruel Carlos! in one day thou hast kill'd
The father with thy sword, the daughter with
Thy sight——O, yet remove that fatal object;
I cannot bear the glare of its reproach;
If thou wouldst have me hear thee, hide the cause
That wounds reflection to our mutual ruin.
Car. Thus I obey—but how shall I proceed?
What words can help me to deserve thy hearing?
How can I plead my wounded honour's cause,
Where injured love and duty are my judges?
Or how shall I repent me of a crime,
Which, uncommitted, had deserved thy scorn?
Yet think not, O, I conjure thee, think not,
But that I bore a thousand racks of love,
While my conflicting honour press'd for vengeance.
O, I endured, submitted even to shame,
Begg'd as for life, for peaceful reparation!
But all in vain; like water sprinkled on
A fire, those drops but made him burn the more
And only added to thy father's fierceness.
Reduced, at last, to these extremes of torture,
That I must be, or infamous, or wretched,
I saved my honour, and resign'd to ruin.
Nor think, Ximena, honour had prevail'd,
But that thy nobler soul opposed thy charms,
And told my heart, none but the brave deserved thee.
Now having thus discharged my honour's debt,
And wash'd my injured father's stains away,
What yet remains of life, is due to love.
Behold the wretch whose honour's fatal fame
Is founded on the ruin of thy peace:
Receive the victim, which thy griefs demand,
Prepared to bleed, and bending to the blow.
Xim. O, Carlos, I must take thee at thy word,
But must with equal justice too discharge
My ties of love, as fatal bonds of duty.
O, think not, though enforced to these extremes,
My heart is yet insensible to thee!
Oh! I must thank thee for thy painful pause:
The generous shame thy tortured honour bore,
When at my father's feet my sufferings threw thee.
Can I present thee in that dear confusion,
And not with grateful sighs of pity mourn thee?
I can lament thee, but I dare not pardon;
Thy duty done, reminds me of my own;
My filial piety, like thine distress'd,
Compels me to be miserably just,
And asks my love a victim to my fame:

Yet think not duty could o'er love prevail,
But that thy nobler soul assures my heart,
Thou wouldst despise the passion that could save thee.

Car. Since I must die, let that kind hand destroy me.
Let not the wretch, once honour'd with thy love,
Thy Carlos, once thought worthy of thy arms,
Be dragg'd a public spectacle to justice:
To draw the irksome pity of a crowd,
Who may with vulgar reason call thee cruel.
My death from thee will elevate thy vengeance,
And show, like mine, thy duty scorn'd assistance.

Xim. Shall I then take assistance? and from thee?
Accept that vengeance from thy heart's despair?
No, Carlos, no!
I will not judge, like thee, my private wrongs,
But to the course of justice trust my duty,
Which shall, in every part, untainted flow;
Unmix'd with gain'd advantage o'er thy love,
And from its own pure fountain raise my glory.

Car. O, can my death with shame advance that glory?
Can I do more than perish to appease thee?
Can my misfortunes too have reach'd thy hate?

Xim. Can hate have part in interviews like this?
Nay, can I give thee greater proof of love,
Than that I trust my vengeance with thy honour?
Art not thou now within my power to seize?
Yet I'll release thee, Carlos, on thy word.
Give me thy word, that on the morrow noon,
Before the king in person thou wilt answer,
And take the shelter of the night to leave me.

Car. O, thou hast found the way to fix my ruin!
It must be so, thou shalt have ample vengeance,
Pursued by thee, my life's not worth the saving;
But then that fatal honour, my engagement,
That at the hour proposed I'll meet my fate—
But must we part, Ximena, like sworn foes?
Has love no sense of all its perish'd hopes?
Dismiss my miseries at least with pity:
May I not breathe upon this injured bosom
One parting sigh to ease my wounded soul,
And loose the anguish of a broken heart?

Xim. Support me, Heaven—we meet again to-morrow.

Car. To-morrow we must meet like enemies,
Thy piercing eyes, relentless in revenge,
And all the softness of thy heart forgotten;
This only moment is our life of love.
O, take not from this little interval,
The poor expiring comfort that is left me.

[XIMENA *weeps.*

My heart's confounded with thy soft compassion,
And dotes upon the virtue that destroys me.

Xim. Oh! I shall have the start of thee in woe;
Thou canst but fall for her thou lovest; but what
Must she endure that loves thee—and destroys thee?
Yet, Carlos, take this comfort in thy fate
That if the hand of justice should o'ertake thee,
Thy mournful urn shall hold Ximena's ashes.

Car. O, miracle of love!

Xim. O, mortal sorrow!
But haste, O leave me while my heart's resolved;
Fly, fly me, Carlos, lest thou taint my fame;
Lest in this ebbing rigour of my soul,
I tell thee, though I prosecute thy fate,
My secret wish is, that my cause may fail me.

Car. O, spirit of compassion! O, Ximena!
What pangs and ruin have our parents cost us?
Farewell, thou treasure of my soul, O stay!
Take not at once my short-lived joys away.
While thus I fix me on thy mournful eyes,
Let my distresses to extremes arise:
Thy victim's now secure; for thus to part,
I sate thy vengeance with a broken heart.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter ALVAREZ, *with* NOBLEMEN, *Officers, and others.*

1 *Nob.* These few, my lord, are on my part engaged;
In half an hour, Don Henrique de las Torres,
With sixty more, will wait upon your cause,
Resolved, and ready all, like us, to right you:
Since the just quarrel of your house must live,
Since the brave blood of Carlos is pursued,
The race of Gormaz shall attend his ashes.

Alv. My lord, this mark of your exalted honour
Will bind me ever grateful to your friendship:
Though I still hope the mercy of the king
Will spare the criminal, whose guilt is honour.
The service I have done the state has found
A bounteous master always to reward it;
Nor am I yet so wedded to my rest,
But that I still can, on occasion, break it.
The Moors are anchor'd now within the river,
And, as I'm told, near landing to insult us—
Wherefore, I would entreat you at this time,
To waive my private danger for the public.
Since chance has form'd us to so brave a body,
Let us not part inactive to our honour;
Let's seize this glad occasion of th' alarm,
Let's chase these robbers in our king's defence,
And bravely merit, not demand his mercy.

1 *Nob.* Alvarez may command us, who is still
Himself, and owns no cause unmix'd with honour.

Enter a Servant, who whispers ALVAREZ.

Alv. How now! the news.
Just enter'd, and alone!
O, Heaven, my prayers are heard! my noble friends,
Something to our present purpose has occurr'd.
Let me entreat you, forward to the garden,
Where you will find a treble number of
Our forces assembled on the like occasion;
Myself will in a moment bring you news,
That will confirm and animate our hopes.

[*Ex.* NOB.

Enter CARLOS.

My Carlos! O, do I live once more t' embrace thee,
Prop of my age, and guardian of my fame!
Nor think, my champion, that my joy's thus wild,
For that thou only hast revenged my honour,
(Though that's a thought might bless me in the grave):
No, no, my son, for thee am I transported;
Alas! I am too sensible what pains
Thy heart must feel from anguish of thy love;
And had I not new hopes that will support thee,

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Some present prospect of thy pain's relief,
My sense of thy afflictions would destroy me.
Car. What means this kind compassion of my griefs?
Is there on earth a cure for woes like mine?
O, Sir, you are so tenderly a father,
So good, I can't repent me of my duty:
Be not, however, jealous of my fame,
If yet I mix your transports with a sigh,
For ruin'd love and for the lost Ximena:
For since I drag, with my despair, my chain,
Her sated vengeance only can relieve me.
Alv. No more depress thy spirits with despair,
While glory and thy country's cause should wake it;
The Moors, not yet expected, are arrived,
The tide and silent darkness of the night
Lands, in an hour, their forces at our gates:
The court's dismay'd, the people in alarm,
And loud confusion fills the frighted town.
But Fortune, ere this public danger reach'd us,
Had raised five hundred friends, the foes of Gormaz,
Whose swords resolve to vindicate thy vengeance,
And here without expect thee at their head.
Forward, my son, their number soon will swell,
Sustain the brunt and fury of the foe.
And if thy life's so painful to be borne,
Lay it at least with honour in the dust,
Cast it not fruitless from thee; let thy king
First know its value ere his laws demand it——
But time's too precious to be talk'd away.
Advance, my son, and let thy master see,
What he has lost in Gormaz, is redeem'd in thee.
Car. Relenting Heaven at last has found the means
To end my miseries with guiltless honour.
Why should I live a burden to myself,
A trouble to my friends, a terror to Ximena?
Not all the force of mercy, or of merit,
Can wash a father's blood from her remembrance,
Or reconcile the horror to her love.
Yet I'll not think her duty so severe,
But that to see me fall my country's victim
Would please her passion, though it shock'd her vengeance.
It must be so——Dying with honour, I
Discharge the son, the subject, and the lover.
Oh! when this mangled body shall be found,
A bare and undistinguish'd carcass, 'midst the slain,
Will she not weep in pity of my wrongs,
And own her wounds have ample expiation?
Her duty then may, with a secret tear,
Confess her vengeance great, and glorious my despair. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.

Enter Belzara.

Bel. Victorious Carlos, now resume thy hopes,
Demand thy life, and silence thy Ximena.
Hard were thy fate indeed, if she alone
Should be the bar to triumphs nobly purchased.
But see, she comes, with mournful pomp of wo,
To prosecute this darling of the people,
And damp with ill-timed griefs the public joy.

Enter Ximena *in mourning, attended.*

Ximena! Oh! I more than ever now
Deplore the hard afflictions that pursue thee;
While thy whole native country is in joy,
Art thou the only object of despair?
Is this a time to prosecute thy cause,
When public gratitude is bound t' oppose thee?
When on the head of Carlos, which thy griefs
Demand, Fortune has pour'd protection down?
The Moors repulsed, his country saved from rapine,
His menaced king confirm'd upon his throne,
From every heart but thine, will find a voice
To lift his echo'd praises to the Heavens.
Xim. Is't possible? Are all these wonders true?
Am I the only mark of his misdoing?
Could then his fatal sword transpierce my father,
Yet save a nation to defeat my vengeance?
Still as I pass, the public voice extols
His glorious deeds, regardless of my wrongs;
The eye of pity, that but yesternight
Let fall a tear in feeling of my cause,
Now turns away, retracting its compassion,
And speaks the general grudge at my complaining.
But there's a king, whose sacred word's his law;
Supported by that hope, I still must on,
Nor, till by him rejected, can be silent.
Bel. Your duty should recede, when public good,
Must suffer in the life your cause pursues.
Xim. But can it be? Was it to Carlos' sword
The nation thus transported owes its safety?
O, let me taste the pleasure and the pain!
Tell me, Belzara, tell me all his glory;
O, let me surfeit on the guilty joy,
Delight my passion, and torment my virtue.
Bel. Alonzo, who was present, will inform us.

Enter Alonzo.

Alonzo, if your business will permit.
Alon. The abbot, at whose house, Count Gormaz lies,
Has sent in haste to speak with me; I guess
To fix the order of his funeral.
[*Aside to* Belzara.
Bel. Spare us at least a moment from th' occasion,
Ximena has not yet been fully told
The action of our late deliverance;
The fame of Carlos may compose her sorrows.
Alon. Permit the action then to praise itself.
Late in the night, at Lord Alvarez' house,
Five hundred friends were gather'd in his cause,
T' oppose the vengeance that pursued his son;
But in the common danger, brave Alvarez,
With valiant Carlos at their head, preferr'd
The public safety to their private honour,
And march'd with swords determined 'gainst the Moors,
This brave example, ere they reach'd the harbour,
Increased their numbers to three thousand strong.
Bel. Were the Moors landed ere you reach'd the port?

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Alon. Not till some hours after. When we arrived,
Our troops were form'd, Ximena was the word,
And Carlos foremost to confront the foe.
The Moors not yet in view, he order'd first
Two thirds of our divided force to lie bour;
Conceal'd i' th' hatches of our ships in har-
The rest, whose numbers every moment swell'd,
Halted with Carlos, on the shore, impatient,
And silent on their arms reposing, pass'd
The still remainder of the wasting night.
At length the brightness of the moon presents
Near twenty sail approaching with the tide;
Our order still observed, we let them pass;
Nor at the port, or walls, a man was seen.
This deadness of our silence wings their hopes
To seize th' occasion, and surprise us sleeping,
And now they disembark, and meet their fate,
For at the instant they were half on shore,
Uprose the numbers in our ships conceal'd,
And to the vaulted Heaven thunder'd their huzzas,
Which Carlos echo'd from his force on shore:
At this amazed, confusion seized their troops,
And ere their chiefs could form them to resist,
We press'd them on the water, drove them on
The land, then fired their ships to stop their flight: ing,
Howe'er, at length, their leaders bravely rally-
Recover'd them to order, and a while
Sustain'd their courage, and opposed our fury:
But, when their burning ships began to flame,
The dreadful blaze presenting to their view
Their slaughter'd heaps that fell where Carlos fought,
(For O, he fought as if to die were victory)
Their fruitless courage then resign'd their hopes; call'd
And now their wounded king, despairing,
Aloud, and hail'd our general to surrender,
Whom Carlos answering, received his prisoner.
At this, the rest had on submission quarter,
Our trumpets sound, and shouts proclaim our victory:
While Carlos bore his captive to his father,
Whose heart transported at the royal prize,
Dropp'd tears of joy, and to the king convey'd him;
Where now he's pleading for his son's distress,
And asks but mercy for his glorious triumph.
[*Exit.*

Xim. Too much! it is too much relentless Heaven!
Th' oppression's greater than my soul can bear!
O, wounding virtue! O, my tortured heart!
Art only thou forbidden to applaud him?
Can not a nation saved appease thy vengeance?
Why, why, just Heaven! are his deeds so glorious,
And only fatal to the heart that loves him?

Bel. Compose, Ximena, thy disorder; see,
The king approaches, smiling on Alvarez,
Whose heart, o'erflowing, gushes at his eyes,
And speaks his plea too strong for thy complaint.

Xim. Then sleep, my love, and virtue arm t' oppose him;
Let me look backward on his fatal honour,
Survey this mournful pomp of his renown,
These woful trophies of his conquer'd love,
That through my father's life pursued his fame,
And made me in his nuptial hopes an orphan:
O, broken spirit! wouldst thou spare him now,
Think on thy father's blood! exert the daughter,
Suppress thy passion, and demand thy victim.

Enter KING, ALVAREZ, SANCHEZ, &c.

King. Dismiss thy fears, my friend, and man thy heart,
For while his actions are above reward,
Mercy's, of course, included in the debt.
Our ablest bounty's bankrupt to his merit:
Our subjects rescued from so fierce a foe,
The Moors defeated, ere the rude alarm
Allow'd us time to order our defence,
Our crown protected, and our sceptre fix'd,
Are actions that secure acknowledgment.

Alv. My tears, Sir, better than my words will thank you.

Enter GARCIA.

Gar. Don Carlos, Sir, without attends your pleasure,
And comes surrender'd at his word engaged,
To answer the appeal of fair Ximena.

King. Attend him to our presence.

Xim. O, my heart!

King. Ximena, with compassion we shall hear thee, tice,
But must not have thy griefs arraign our jus-
If in his judge thou find'st an advocate:
Not less his virtues, than thy wrongs will plead.

Xim. O, fainting cause! but thus my griefs demand him. [*Kneeling.*

[*While the King raises* XIMENA, *enter* ALONZO, *and whispers* ALVAREZ.

Alv. This instant, say'st thou? Can I leave my son?

Alon. The matter's more important than your stay.
Make haste, my lord.

Alv. What can thy transport mean?
Be plain.

Alon. We have no time to lose in words,
Away, I say.

Alv. Lead on, and ease my wonder.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter CARLOS, *and kneels to the* KING.

King. Oh, rise, my warrior, raise thee to my breast,
And in thy master's heart repeat thy triumphs.

Car. These honours, Sir, to any sense but mine,
Might lift its transports to ambition's height;
But while Ximena's sorrows press my heart,
Forgive me, if despairing of repose
I taste no comfort in the life she seeks,
And urge the issue of her grief's appeal.

King. Ximena, 'tis most true, has lost a father,
But thou hast saved her country from its fate;
And the same virtue that demands thy life,
Owes more than pardon to the public weal.

Xim. My royal lord, vouchsafe my griefs a hearing;
Oh, think not, Sir, because my spirits faint,
That the firm conscience of my duty staggers.
The criminal I charge has kill'd my father;
And, though his valour has preserved the state,
Yet every subject is not wrong'd like me,
Therefore, with ease, may pardon what they feel not:

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As he has saved a nation from its foe,
The thanks that nation owes him are but just,
And I must join the general voice t' applaud him:
But all the tribute that my heart can spare him,
Is tears of pity; while my wrongs pursue him,
What more than pity can those wrongs afford?
What less than justice can my duty ask?
If public obligations must be paid him,
Let every single heart give equal share:
(Carlos has proved, that mine is not ungrateful)
But must my duty yield such disproportion?
Must on my heart a father's blood be levied,
And my whole ruin pay the public thanks?
If blood for blood might be before demanded,
Is it less due, because his fame's grown greater? [laws,
Shall virtue, that should guard, insult your
And tolerate your passions to infringe 'em?
If to defend the public, may excuse
A private wrong, how is the public safe?
How is the nation from a foe preserved,
If every subject's life is at his mercy?
My duty, Sir, has spoken, and kneels for judgment.

Car. Oh, noble spirit, how thou charm'st my sense,
And giv'st my heart a pleasure in my ruin. [*Aside.*

King. Raise thee, Ximena, and compose thy thoughts,
As thou to Carlos' deeds hast spoke impartial,
So to thy virtue, that pursues him, we
Must give an equal plaudit of our wonder:
But we have now our duty to discharge,
Which, far from blaming, shall exalt thy own:
If thy chaste fame, which we confess sublime,
Compels thy duty to suppress thy love,
To raise yet higher, then, thy matchless glory,
Prefer thy native country to them both,
And to thy public tears resign thy victim.
Where a whole people owe their preservation,
Shall private justice do a public wrong,
And feed thy vengeance with the general sorrow?

Xim. Is then my cause the public's victim?

King. No.
We've yet a hope to conquer thy resentment,
And rather would compose than silence it:
For if our arguments seem yet too weak
To guard thy virtue from the least reproach,
Behold the generous sanction that protects it
Read there the pardon which thy father gives him,
And with his dying hand assigns thy beauties.

Xim. My father's pardon!

King. Read, and raise thy wonder.

Xim. [*Reads.*] "Alvarez wrong'd me in my master's favour,
Carlos is brave, and has deserved Ximena."

Car. Oh, soul of honour! now lamented victory!

King. Now, fair Ximena, now resume thy peace,
Reduce thy vengeance to thy father's will,
And join the hand his honour has forgiven.

Xim. All-gracious Heaven! have my swollen eyes their sense?

San. Oh, tottering hope! but I have yet a thought
That will compel her virtue to pursue him.

Xim. Why did you show me, Sir, this wounding goodness?
This legacy, though fit for him to leave,
Would in his daughter be reproach to take;
Honour unquestion'd may forgive a foe,
But who'll not doubt it when it spares a lover?
If you proposed to mitigate my griefs,
You should have hid this cruel obligation.
Why would you set such virtues in my view,
And make the father dearer than the lover?

King. Since with such rigour thou pursu'st thy vengeance, [it,
And what we meant should pacify, provokes
Attend submissive to our last resolve:
For since thy honour's so severely strict,
As not to ratify thy father's mercy,
We'll right at once thy duty and thy lover:
Give thee the glory of his life pursued,
And seal his pardon to reward thy virtue.

Xim. Avert it, Heaven, that e'er my guilty heart
Should impiously insult a father's grave,
And yield his daughter to the hand that kill'd him.

San. Unnatural thought! Madam, suppress your tears,
Your murder'd father was my dearest friend;
Permit me, therefore, on your sinking cause,
To offer an expedient may support it.

Xim. Whatever right or justice may, I am bound
In duty to pursue, and thank your friendship.

San. Thus then to royal justice I appeal,
And in Ximena's right her advocate,
Demand from Carlos your reverse of pardon.

King. What means thy transport?

San. Sir, I urge your laws;
And since her duty's forced to these extremes,
There's yet a law from whence there's no appeal,
A right, which e'en your crown's obliged to grant her,
The right of combat, which I here demand,
And ask her vengeance from a champion's sword.

Car. O sacred Sir, I cast me at your feet,
And beg your mercy would relieve my woes;
Since her firm duty is inflexible,
Consign her victim to the braver sword.
Grant this expedient to acquit my crime,
Or silence with my arm her heart's reproaches.
Oh, nothing is so painful as suspense;
This way our griefs are equally relieved,
Her duty's full discharged, your justice crown'd,
And conquest must attend superior virtue.

King. This barbarous law, which yet is unrepeal'd, [ed,
Has often against right, gross wrongs support-
And robb'd our state of many noble subjects;
Nor ever was our mercy tempted more
T' oppose its force, than in our care for Carlos.
But since his peace depends upon his love,
And cruel love insists upon its right,
We'll trust his virtues to the chance of combat,
And let his fate reproach, or win Ximena.

Xim. What unforeseen calamities surround me!

King. Ximena! now no more complain, we grant [cause?
Thy suit; but where's this champion of thy
Whose appetite of honour is so keen,
As to confront in arms this laurell'd brow,
And dare the shining honours of his sword?

San. Behold th' assailant of this glorious hero;
Your leave, dread Sir, thus to appel him forth. [*Draws.*

Bel. Hold, heart, and spare me from the public shame. [*Aside.*

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Car. Carlos, behold the champion of Ximena,
Behold th' avenger of brave Gormaz' blood,
Who calls thee traitor to thy injured love,
Ungrateful to the sighs that pitied thee,
And proudly partial to thy father's falsehood:
These crimes my sword shall prove upon thy heart,
And to defend them dares thee to the combat.
Car. Open the lists, and give th' assailant room,
There on his life my injured sword shall prove
This arm ne'er drew it but in right of honour.
First, for thy slander, Sanchez, I defy thee,
And throwing to thy teeth the traitor's name,
Will wash the imputation with thy blood;
And prove thy virtue false as is thy spirit:
For not Ximena's cause, but charms have fired thee,
Vainly thou steal'st thy courage from her eyes,
And basely stain'st the virtue that subdued her.
San. Oh, that thy fame in arms——
King. Sanchez, forbear——
'Tis not your tongues must arbitrate your strife,
Let in your lists, your vauntings be approved.
Whose, arm, Ximena, shall defend your cause?
Xim. Oh, force of duty! Sir, the arm of Sanchez.
San. My word's my gage.
King. 'Tis well, the lists are set,——
Let on the morn the combatants be cited,
And, Felix, you be umpire of the field.
Car. The valiant, Sir, are never unprepared.
Oh, Sir, at once relieve my soul's suspense,
And let this instant hour decide our fate.
San. This moment, Sir—I join in that with Carlos.
King. Since both thus press it, be it now decided.
Carlos, be ready at the trumpet's call;
You, Felix, when the combat's done, conduct
The victor to our presence—Now, Ximena,
As thou art just or cruel in thy duty,
Expect the issue will reward or grieve thee.
Sanchez, set forward—Carlos, we allow
Thy pitied love a moment with Ximena.
[*Exit* KING *and train.*
San. A fruitless moment that must prove his last. [*Exit.*
Car. Ximena! Oh, permit me ere I die,
To tell thy heart, thy hard unkindness kills me.
Xim. Ah, Carlos, can thy plaints reproach my duty,
Nay, art thou more than Sanchez is, in danger?
Car. Or thou more injured than thy hapless father, [nour?
Whose greater heart forgave my sense of ho-
Thou canst not think I speak regarding life,
Which, hopeless of thy love, 's not worth my care;
But, oh! it strikes me with the last despair,
To think that loved Ximena's heart had less
Compassion than my mortal enemy;
My life had then indeed been worth acceptance,
Had thy relenting throes of pity saved it:
But, as it is pursued to these extremes,
Thus made the victim of superfluous fame,
And doom'd the sacrifice of filial rigour,
These arms shall open to thy champion's sword,
And glut the vengeance that supports thy glory.
Xim. Hast thou no honour, Carlos, to defend? [*Trembling.*
Car. How can I lose what Sanchez cannot gain? [ance?
For where's his honour where there's no resist-
Is it for me to guard Ximena's foe,
Or turn outrageous on the friendly breast,
Which her distressful charms have warn'd to right her.
Xim. Oh, cruel Carlos! thus to rack my heart
With hard reproaches, that thou know'st are groundless;
Why dost thou talk thus cruelly of death,
And give me terrors unconceived before?
What though my force of duty has pursued thee,
Hast thou not left thy courage to defend thee?
Oh, is thy quarrel to our race revived?
Couldst thou, to right thy honour, kill my father,
And now not guard it, to destroy Ximena?
Car. Oh, heavenly sound! Oh, joy unfelt before!
Xim. Oh, is my duty then not thought compulsive? [thee?
Canst thou believe I'm pleased while I pursue
Or think'st thou I'm not pleased the king preserved thee?
And that thy courage yet may ward my vengeance?
Oh, if thou knew'st what transports fill'd my heart, [thee,
When first I heard the Moors had fled before
Thy love would feel confusion for my shame,
And scarce forgive the passion thou reproachest.
Oh, Carlos, guard thy life, and save Ximena!
Car. And save Ximena! Oh, thou hast fired my heart
With animated love, and saved thy Carlos!
[*Trumpet sound.*
But hark, the trumpet calls me to the list!
Xim. May Heaven's high care, and all its angels guard thee!
Car. Words would but wrong my heart, my sword shall speak it.
Sanchez, I come, impatient to chastise
Thy love, which makes thee now the criminal;
I might have spared thee had the rival slept,
But boldly thus avow'd, thou'rt worth my sword—
'Tis said the lion, though distress'd for food,
Espying on the turf the huntsman sleeping,
Restrains his hunger, and forbears the prey;
But when his rousing foe, alarm'd and ready,
Uplifts his javelin brandish'd to assail him,
The generous savage then erects his crest,
Grinds his sharp fangs, and with fierce eyes inflamed,
Surveys him worthy of his rage defied,
Furious uprearing rushes on the game,
And crowns at once his vengeance and his fame.
[*Exit.*
Xim. Oh, glorious spirit! Oh, hard-fated virtue! [thee!
With what reluctance has my heart pursued
Bel. Was ever breast like mine with wo divided?
I fear the dangers of the faithless Sanchez,
And tremble more for his dread sword's success: [na!
Should Carlos fall, what stops him from Xime-
Keep down my sighs, or seem to rise for her.
[*Aside.*
Xim. Tell me, Belzara, was my terror blameful?
Might not his passion make my heart relent,
And feel, at such a time, a pang to save him?
Bel. So far was your compassion from a crime,
That 'tis th' exalted merit of your duty:

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Had Carlos been a stranger to your heart,
Where were the virtue that your griefs pursued him?
Were it no pain to lose him, where the glory?
The sacrifice that's great, must first be dear;
The more you love, the nobler is your victim.
Xim. Thy partial friendship sees not sure my fault;
I doubt my youthful ignorance has err'd,
And the strict matron, rigidly severe,
May blame this weakness of my woman's heart;
But let her feel my trial first, and if
She blames me then, I will repent the crime.
[*Trumpet sounds at a distance.*
Hark, hark the trumpet! Oh, tremendous sound!
Belzara, oh, the combat is begun!
The agonizing terror shakes my soul:
Help me, support me with thy friendly comforts;
Oh, tell me what my duty owes a parent,
And warm my wishes in his champion's favour!—
Oh, Heaven, it will not, will not be! my heart
Rebels, and, spite of me, inclines to Carlos,
Who now again, in Sanchez, fights my father;
Now he attacks him, presses, now retreats,
Again recovers, and resumes his fire,
Now grows too strong, and is at last triumphant!
Bel. Restrain thy thoughts, collect thy constancy,
Give not thy heart imaginary wounds;
Thy virtue must be Providence's care.
Xim. Oh, guard me, Heaven! help me to support it—Ah!
[*Trumpets and shouts.*
'Tis done! the dreadful shouts proclaim the victor:
If Carlos conquers, still I've lost a father;
And if he perishes, then—die Ximena.
Bel. Conquer who may, no hope supports Belzara. [*Aside.*

Enter GARCIA.

Came you, Don Garcia, from the combat?
Gar. Madam,
The king, to show he disapproves the custom,
Forbade his own domestics to be present.
[*Shouts nearer.*
But I presume 'tis done; these shouts confirm it: [tor.
Hence from this window we may guess the vic-
Xim. Oh, tell me quickly, while I've sense to hear thee!
Gar. Oh, Heaven! 'tis Sanchez! I see him with his sword, [way.
In triumph, pressing through the crowd his
Xim. Sanchez!—thou'rt sure deceived. Oh, better yet
Inform thy dazzled eyes!
Gar. 'Tis certain he; [back:
For now he stops, and seems to warn them
The crowd retires, I see him plain, and now
He mounts the steps that lead to this apartment.
Xim. Then, fatal vengeance, thou are dearly sated.
Now love unbounded may o'erflow my heart,
And Carlos' fate without a crime be mourn'd.
Oh, Sanchez, if poor Carlos told me true,
If 'twas thy love, not honour, fought my cause,
Thy guilt has purchased with thy sword my scorn,
And made thy passion wretched as Ximena.
Bel. Oh, Heaven support her nobler resolution!
But see, he comes to meet the disappointment.

Enter DON SANCHEZ, *and lays his sword at* XIMENA'S *feet*.

San. Madam, this sword, that in your cause was drawn——
Xim. Stain'd with the blood of Carlos, kills Ximena.
San. I come to mitigate your griefs.
Xim. Avaunt, avoid me, wing thee from my sight!
Oh, thou hast given me for revenge despair,
Hast ravish'd with thy murderous arm my peace,
And robb'd my wishes of their dearest object!
San. Hear me but speak——
Xim. Canst thou suppose 'twill please me
To hear thy pride triumphant, paint my ruin,
Vaunt thy vain prowess, and reproach my sorrows?
San. Those sorrows, would you hear my story—
Xim. Hence!
To regions distant as thy soul from joy,
Fly, and in gloomy horrors waste thy life:
Remorse, and pale affliction wait thee to
Thy rest, repose forsake thee, frightful dreams
Alarm thy sleeps, and in thy waking hours,
May woes like mine pursue thy steps for ever.
Bel. Oh, charming rage! how cordially she hates him! [*Aside.*

Enter KING.

King. What, still in tears, Ximena? Still complaining?
Cannot thy duty's full discharge content thee?
Repin'st thou at the act of Providence,
And think'st thy cause still wrong'd in Heaven's decree?
Xim. Oh, far, Sir, from my soul be such a thought! [ment;
I bow submissive to high Heaven's appoint-
But is affliction impious in its sorrow?
Though vengeance to a father's blood was due,
Is it less glorious that I prized the victim?
Has nature lost its privilege to weep,
When all that's valuable in life is gone?
Oh, Carlos, Carlos, I shall soon be with thee!
King. Are then these tears for Carlos? Oh, Ximena,
The vanquish'd Sanchez has deceived thy grief,
And made this trial of thy generous heart!
For know, thy Carlos lives, and lives t' adore thee.
Xim. What means my royal lord?
King. Inform her, Sanchez.
San. The fortune of the combat I had told before,
Had, Sir, her fright endured to hear my speech;
I would have told you, Madam, as obliged
In honour to the conquering sword of Carlos,
How nobly, for your sake, he spared your champion,
When on the earth, succumbent and disarm'd,
I lay: Live, Sanchez, said the generous victor,
The life that fights Ximena's cause is sacred;
Take back thy sword, and at her feet present
The glorious trophy which her charms have won,
The last oblation that despair can make her—
Touch'd with the noble fulness of his heart,

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I flew to execute the grateful charge;
But, Madam, your affright mistook the victor,
And your impatient griefs refused me audience.
King. Now think, Ximena, one moment, think for Carlos.
Xim. Oh love! Oh, persecuted heart!
Instruct me, Heaven, to support my fame,
To right my passion, and revere my father.
San. And now, with just confusion, Sir, I own
In me 'twas guilty love that drew my sword.
But since th' event has crown'd a nobler passion,
I plead the merit of that sword's defeat,
Regret the error, and entreat for pardon.
King. Sanchez, thy crime is punish'd in itself:
We late have heard of thy retracted vows,
Which on thy strict allegiance we enjoin
Thy honour instantly to ratify——
Suppress thy tears, Belzara, he shall right thee.
Xim. 'Tis fix'd—a beam of heavenly light breaks forth,
And shows my ruin'd peace its last resource.
Gar. Don Carlos, Sir, attends your royal pleasure.
King. Has he your leave, Ximena, to approach?
Xim. Oh, Sir, yet hold! I dare not see him now:
While my depending justice was my guard,
I saw him fearless from assaults of love;
But now my vanquish'd vengeance dreads his merit,
And conscious duty warns me to avoid him.
Since then my heart's impartial to his virtues,
Oh, do not call me cruel to his love,
If I, in reverence to a father's blood,
Should shut my sorrows ever from his sight!
For though you raise above mankind his merit,
And I confess it—still he has kill'd my father——
Nay though I grant the fact may plead for mercy,
Yet 'twould in me be impious to reward it;
My eyes may mourn, but never must behold him more,
Yet, ere I part, let, Sir, my humblest sense
Applaud your mercy, and confess your justice.
Hence to some sacred cloister I'll retire,
And dedicate my future days to Heaven——
'Tis done——Oh, lead me to my peaceful cell,
One sigh for Carlos——Now, vain world, farewell! [*As* Xim. *is going off*.

Enter Alvarez *and* Alonzo.

Alv. Turn, turn, Ximena, oh, prepare to hear
A story will distract thy sense with joy,
Drive all thy sorrows from thy sinking heart,
And crown thy duty with triumphant love.
Pardon, dread Sir, this tumult of my soul,
That carries in my rudeness my excuse:
Oh, press me not to tell particulars,
But let my tidings leap at once the bounds
Of your belief, and in one burst of joy
Inform my royal master, that his crown's support,
My vanquish'd friend, thy father, Gormaz lives;
He lives in health confirm'd from mortal danger:
These eyes have seen him, these bless'd arms embraced him.
The means, th' occasion of his death supposed,
Would ask more words than I have breath to utter.
Alonzo knows it all—Oh, where's my Carlos?
King. Fly, Sanchez, make him with this news thy friend.
Alv. Oh, lead me, lead me to his heart's relief! [*Exeunt* Alv. *and* San.
Xim. Oh, Heaven! Alvarez would not sure deceive me.
King. Proceed, Alonzo, and impart the whole;
Whence was his death so firmly credited,
And his recovery not before reveal'd?
Alon. My liege, the great effusion of his blood
Had such effect on his deserted spirits,
That I, who saw him, judged him quite expired:
But when the Abbot, at whose house he lay,
With friendly sorrow wash'd his hopeless wound,
His heaving breast discover'd life's return;
When calling straight for help, on stricter search,
His wound was found without a mortal symptom:
And when his senses had resumed their function,
His first words spoke his generous heart's concern
For Carlos and Ximena; when being told
How far her filial vengeance had pursued him,
Is't possible, he cried? Oh, Heaven! then wept,
And begg'd his life might be one day concealed,
That such exalted merit of her duty
Might raise her virtue worthy of his love.
But, Sir, to tell you how Alvarez met him,
What generous reconcilements pass'd between them,
Would ask more time than public joy could spare.
Let it suffice, the moment he had heard
Ximena had appealed brave Carlos to the lists,
We flew with terror to proclaim him living—
But, Sir, so soon the combat followed your
Decree, that, breathless, we arrived too late,
And had not his physicians, Sir, prescribed
His wound repose, himself had ventured forth
To throw his errors at your feet for pardon.
King. Not only pardon, but our love shall greet him.
Brave Carlos shall himself be envoy of
Our charge, and gratulate his bless'd recovery—
Has he your leave, Ximena, now t' approach you?
Xim. My senses stagger with tumultuous joy,
My spirits hurry to my heart's surprise,
And sinking nature faints beneath the transport.

Enter Alvarez, Sanchez, *and* Carlos.

King. Look up, Ximena, and complete thy joy.
Xim. My Carlos!—Oh!
Car. Ximena! Oh, my heart! [*Embracing*.
Alv. Oh, Carlos! Oh, Ximena! yet suppress
These transports, till kind Gormaz' hand confirms them;
First pay your duty there, haste to his feet,
And let his sanction consecrate your love.
King. Lose not a moment from his sight—Oh, fly!
Tell him his king congratulates his health,
And will with loads of honour crown his virtues;
Nor in his orisons let him forget
The hand of Heaven, whose providential care
Has order'd all, the innocent to save,
To right the injured, and reward the brave.
[*Exeunt omnes*.

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EPILOGUE,

SPOKEN BY XIMENA.

Well, Sirs!
I'M come to tell you, that my fears are over,
I've seen papa, and have secured my lover.
And, troth, I'm wholly on our author's side,
For had (as Corneille made him) Gormaz died,
My part had ended as it first begun,
And left me still unmarried, and undone,
Or, what were harder far than both—a nun.
The French, for form indeed, postpones the wedding,
But gives her hopes within a year of bedding.
Time could not tie her marriage-knot with honour,
The father's death still left the guilt upon her:
The Frenchman stopp'd her in that forced regard,
The bolder Briton weds her in reward:
He knew your taste would ne'er endure their billing
Should be so long deferr'd, when both were willing.
Your formal Dons of Spain an age might wait,
But English appetites are sharper set.
'Tis true, this difference we indeed discover,
That, though like lions you begin the lover,
To do you right, your fury soon is over.
Beside, this scene thus changed, the moral bears,
That virtue never of relief despairs:
But while true love is still in plays ill-fated,
No wonder you gay sparks of pleasure hate it—
Bloodshed discourages what should delight you,
And from a wife, what little rubs will fright you!
And virtue not consider'd in the bride,
How soon you yawn, and curse the knot you've tied!
How oft the nymph, whose pitying eyes give quarter,
Finds in her captive she has caught a Tartar!
While to her spouse, that once so high did rate her,
She kindly gives ten thousand pounds to hate her.
So, on the other side, some sighing swain,
That languishes in love whole years in vain,
Impatient for the feast, resolves he'll have her,
And in his hunger vows he'll eat for ever;
He thinks of nothing but the honey-moon,
But little thought he could have dined so soon.
Is this not true? Speak, dearies of the pit,
Don't you find too how horribly you're bit?
For the instruction, therefore, of the free,
Our author turns his just catastrophe.
Before you wed, let love be understood,
Refine your thoughts, and chase it from the blood:
Nor can you then of lasting joys despair,
For when that circle holds the British fair,
Your hearts may find heroic daughters there.

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RULE A WIFE AND HAVE A WIFE:

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

REMARKS.

AMONGST the numerous plays that the associated poets, Beaumont and Fletcher, have left to posterity, none stands higher in the public favour than this drama.

If we look for nature in this composition, we contemplate it either in its most loathsome state of distortion, as in *Cacafogo;* or of depravity, as in *Margaritta* and others. A more arrant knot of sharpers, swindlers, and impostors, were never assembled for the purpose of forming the cast of a comedy; whilst the grossness of the principal lady of the piece exceeds all bounds.

Upon the whole, if it be enough to form a lively fable, that has neither nature, character, nor moral, to recommend it, the object is accomplished; and this play, which has received the sanction of those who went before us, will continue to give pleasure to those who shall come after us.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DUKE OF MEDINA,
DON JUAN DE CASTRO, a Spanish Colonel.
SANCHIO, } Officers in the Army.
ALONZO, }
MICHAEL PEREZ, the Copper Captain.
LEON, Brother to Altea, and by her contrivance married to Margaritta.
CACAFOGO, a rich Usurer.
MARGARITTA, a wanton Lady, married to Leon, by whom she is reclaimed.
ALTEA, her Servant.
CLARA, a Spanish Lady.
ESTIFANIA, a Woman of intrigue.
AN OLD WOMAN.
MAID.
VISITING LADIES.

SCENE.—Spain.

PROLOGUE.

PLEASURE attend ye, and about ye sit,
The springs of mirth, fancy, delight, and wit;
To stir you up; do not your looks let fall,
Nor to remembrance our late errors call,
Because this day we're Spaniards all again;
The story of our play, and our scene Spain:
The errors, too, do not for this cause hate,
Now we present their wit, and not their state.
Nor, ladies, be not angry, if you see
A young fresh beauty, wanton and too free,
Seek to abuse her husband, still 'tis Spain;
No such gross errors in your kingdom reign:
You're vestals all, and though we blow the fire,
We seldom make it flame up to desire:
Take no example, neither, to begin,
For some by precedent delight to sin;
Nor blame the poet if he slip aside,
Sometimes lasciviously if not too wide. [ease;
But hold your fans close, and then smile at
A cruel scene did never lady please.
Nor, Gentlemen, pray be not you displeased,
Though we present some men fool'd, some diseased,
Some drunk, some mad, we mean not you, you're free,
We tax no further than our comedy,
You are our friends; sit noble, then, and see.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Chamber.

Enter DON JUAN DE CASTRO *and* MICHAEL PEREZ.

Mich. Are your companies full, colonel?
Juan. No, not yet, Sir:
Nor will not be this month yet, as I reckon.
How rises your command?
Mich. We pick up still,
And as our moneys hold out, we have men come.

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About that time, I think, we shall be full too:
Many young gallants go.
Juan. And unexperienced.
The wars are dainty dreams to young hot spirits.
Time and experience will allay those visions.
We have strange things to fill our numbers:
There's one Don Leon, a strange goodly fellow,
Commended to me from some noble friends,
For my Alferes.
Mich. I've heard of him, and that he hath served before too.
Juan. But no harm done, not even meant, Don Michael,
That came to my ears yet: ask him a question,
He blushes like a girl, and answers little,
To the point less. He wears a sword, a good one,
And good clothes too; he's whole skinn'd, has no hurt yet;
Good promising hopes. I never yet heard certainly,
Of any gentleman that saw him angry.
Mich. Preserve him, he'll conclude a peace if need be;
Many as stout as he will go along with us,
That swear as valiantly as heart can wish;
Their mouths charged with six oaths at once, and whole ones,
That make the drunken Dutch creep into molehills.
Juan. 'Tis true; such we must look for. But, Michael Perez,
When heard you of Donna Margaritta, the great heiress?
Mich. I hear every hour of her, though I ne'er saw her;
She is the main discourse. Noble Don Juan de Castro,
How happy were that man could catch this wench up,
And live at ease! She's fair, and young, and wealthy,
Infinite wealthy, and as gracious too
In all her entertainments, as men report.
Juan. But she is proud, Sir, that I know for certain,
And that comes seldom without wantonness:
He that shall marry her, must have a rare hand.
Mich. Would I were married; I would find that wisdom,
With a light rein to rule my wife. If e'er woman
Of the most subtile mould went beyond me,
I'd give boys leave to hoot me out o' the parish.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Sir, there be two gentlewomen attend to speak with you.
Juan. Wait on 'em in.
Mich. Are they two handsome women?
Serv. They seem so; very handsome; but they're veil'd, Sir.
Mich. Thou puttest sugar in my mouth. How it melts with me!
I love a sweet young wench.
Juan. Wait on them in, I say. [*Exit* SERV.
Mich. Don Juan.
Juan. Michael, how you burnish:
Will not this soldier's heat out of your bones yet?
Mich. There be two.
Juan. Say, what shame have you then?
Mich. I would fain see that;
I've been in the Indies twice, and have seen strange things;
But for two honest women:——one I read at once.
Juan. Pr'ythee, be modest.
Mich. I'll be any thing.

Enter Servant, DONNA CLARA, *and* ESTIFANIA, *veiled.*

Juan. You're welcome, ladies.
Mich. Both hooded! I like 'em well though;
They came not for advice in law sure hither;
May be they'd learn to raise the pike; I'm for 'em.
They're very modest! 'tis a fine preludium.
Juan. With me, or with this gentleman, would you speak, lady?
Cla. With you, Sir, as I guess, Juan de Castro.
Mich. Her curtain opens; she is a pretty gentlewoman.
Juan. I am the man, and shall be bound to fortune,
If I may do any service to your beauties.
Cla. Captain, I hear you're marching down to Flanders,
To serve the Catholic king.
Juan. I am, sweet lady.
Cla. I have a kinsman, and a noble friend,
Employ'd in those wars; may be, Sir, you know him;
Don Campusano, captain of carbines,
To whom I would request your nobleness
To give this poor remembrance. [*Gives a Letter.*
Juan. I shall do it;
I know the gentleman, a most worthy captain.
Cla. Something in private.
Juan. Step aside; I'll serve thee.
[*Exeunt* JUAN *and* CLARA.
Mich. Pr'ythee, let me see thy face.
Estif. Sir, you must pardon me;
Women of our sort, that maintain fair memories,
And keep suspect off from their chastities,
Had need wear thicker veils.
Mich. I'm no blaster of a lady's beauty,
No bold intruder on her special favours:
I know how tender reputation is,
And with what guards it ought to be preserved.
Lady, you may to me——
Estif. You must excuse me, Signior, I come
Not here to sell myself.
Mich. As I'm a gentleman; by the honour of a soldier.—
Estif. I believe you——
I pray be civil: I believe you'd see me,
And when you've seen me, I believe you'll like me:
But in a strange place, to a stranger too,
As if I came on purpose to betray you,
Indeed I will not.
Mich. I shall love you dearly,
And 'tis a sin to fling away affection;
I have no mistress, no desire to honour
Any but you.
I know not, you have struck me with your modesty
So deep, and taken from me
All the desire I might bestow on others——
Quickly, before they come.
Estif. Indeed, I dare not.
But since I see you're so desirous, Sir,
To view a poor face that can merit nothing
But your repentance——
Mich. It must needs be excellent.
Estif. And with what honesty you ask it of me;
When I am gone let your man follow me,
And view what house I enter. Thither come,
For there I dare be bold to appear open;
And, as I like your virtuous carriage, then

Enter JUAN, CLARA, *and* SERVANT.

I shall be able to give welcome to you.
She hath done her business, I must take my leave, Sir.
Mich. I'll kiss your fair, white hand, and thank you, lady. [vant.
My man shall wait, and I shall be your ser-
Sirrah, come near, hark.
Serv. I shall do it faithfully. [*Exit.*
Juan. You will command me no more services?
Cla. To be careful of your noble health, dear Sir,
That I may ever honour you.
Juan. I thank you,
And kiss your hands. Wait on the ladies down there.
[*Exeunt* LADIES *and* SERVANT.
Mich. You had the honour to see the face that came to you?
Juan. And 'twas a fair one. What was yours, Don Michael?
Mich. Mine was i' th' eclipse, and had a cloud drawn over it.
But I believe well, and I hope 'tis handsome.
She had a hand would stir a holy hermit.
Juan. You know none of 'em.
Mich. No.
Juan. Then I do, Captain;
But I'll say nothing till I see the proof on't.
Sit close, Don Perez, or your worship's caught.
Mich. Were those she brought love-letters?
Juan. A packet to a kinsman now in Flan-
Yours was very modest, methought. [ders.
Mich. Some young, unmanaged thing:
But I may live to see——
Juan. 'Tis worth experience.
Let's walk abroad, and view our companies.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Street.*

Enter SANCHIO *and* ALONZO.

San. What, are you for the wars, Alonzo?
Alon. It may be ay,
It may be no, e'en as the humour takes me.
If I find peace among the female creatures,
And easy entertainment, I'll stay at home.
I'm not so far obliged yet to long marches
And mouldy biscuits, to run mad for honour.
When you're all gone, I have my choice before me.
San. Ay, of which hospital thou'lt sweat in: wilt
Thou never leave whoring?
Alon. There is less danger in't than gunning, Sanchio; [mortal;
Though we be shot sometimes, the shot's not
Besides, it breaks no limbs.
San. But it disables 'em.
Dost see how thou pullest thy legs after thee,
As if they hung by points?
Alon. Better to pull 'em thus, than walk on wooden ones;
Serve bravely for a billet to support me.
San. Fy, fy, 'tis base.
Alon. Dost count it base to suffer?
Suffer abundantly? 'Tis the crown of honour.
You think it nothing to lie twenty days
Under a surgeon's hand that has no mercy.
San. As thou hast done, I'm sure: but I perceive now
Why you desire to stay; the orient heiress
The Margaritta, Sir.
Alon. I would I had her.
San. They say she'll marry.
Alon. Yes, I think she will.
San. And marry suddenly, as report goes, too.
She fears her youth will not hold out, Alonzo.
Alon. I would I had the sheathing on't.
San. They say too,
She has a greedy eye, that must be fed
With more than one man's meat.
Alon. Would she were mine,
I'd cater for her well enough: but, Sanchio,
There be too many great men that adore her;
Princes, and princes' fellows, that claim privilege,
San. Yet those stand off i' the way of marriage; [bour.
To be tied to a man's pleasure is a second la-
Alon. She has bought a brave house here in town.
San. I've heard so.
Alon. If she convert it now to pious uses,
And bid poor gentlemen welcome.
San. When comes she to it?
Alon. Within these two days: she's in the country yet,
And keeps the noblest house.
San. Then there's some hope of her.
Wilt thou go my way?
Alon. No, no, I must leave you,
And repair to an old gentlewoman that
Has credit with her, that can speak a good word.
San. Send thee good fortune, but make thy body sound first.
Alon. I am a soldier,
And too sound a body becomes me not;
So, farewell, Sanchio. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*Another Street.*

ESTIFANIA *crosses the Stage. Enter a Servant of* MICHAEL PEREZ *after her.*

Serv. 'Tis this or that house, or I've lost my aim:
They're both fair buildings:—she walk'd plaguy fast.

Enter ESTIFANIA, *courtesies, and exit.*

And hereabouts I lost her. Stay, that's she;
'Tis very she: she makes me a low court'sy:—
Let me note the place, the street I well remember. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.—*A Chamber in* MARGARITTA'S *House.*

Enter three old LADIES.

1st Lady. What should it mean, that in such haste we're sent for?
2d Lady. Belike the lady Margaret has some business
She'd break to us in private.
3d Lady. It should seem so.
'Tis a good lady, and a wise young lady.
2d Lady. And virtuous enough too, that I warrant ye,
For a young woman of her years: 'tis a pity
To load her tender age with too much virtue.

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3d Lady. 'Tis more sometimes than we can well away with.

Enter ALTEA.

Alt. Good-morrow, ladies.
All. 'Morrow, my good Madam.
1st Lady. How does the sweet young beauty, Lady Margaret?
2d Lady. Has she slept well after her walk last night?
1st Lady. Are her dreams gentle to her mind?
Alt. All's well, [ly,
She's very well: she sent for you thus sudden-
To give her counsel in a business
That much concerns her.
2d Lady. She does well and wisely,
To ask the counsel of the ancient'st. Madam,
Our years have run through many things she knows not.
Alt. She would fain marry.
1st Lady. 'Tis a proper calling,
And well beseems her years. Who would she yoke with?
Alt. That's left to argue on. I pray come in,
And break your fast; drink a good cup or two,
To strengthen your understandings, then she'll tell ye.
2d Lady. And good wine breeds good counsel, we'll yield to ye. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—A Street.

Enter JUAN DE CASTRO *and* LEON.

Juan. Have you seen any service?
Leon. Yes.
Juan. Where?
Leon. Every where.
Juan. What office bore ye?
Leon. None, I was not worthy.
Juan. What captains know you?
Leon. None, they were above me.
Juan. Were you ne'er hurt?
Leon. Not that I well remember;
But once I stole a hen, and then they beat me.
Pray ask me no long questions: I've an ill memory.
Juan. This is an ass. Did you ne'er draw your sword yet?
Leon. Not to do any harm, I thank Heaven for't.
Juan. Nor ne'er ta'en prisoner?
Leon. No, I ran away;
For I ne'er had no money to redeem me.
Juan. Can you endure a drum?
Leon. It makes my head ache.
Juan. Are you not valiant when you're drunk?
Leon. I think not; but I am loving, Sir.
Juan. What a lump is this man!
Was your father wise?
Leon. Too wise for me, I'm sure:
For he gave all he had to my younger brother.
Juan. That was no foolish part, I'll bear you witness.
Can'st thou lie with a woman?
Leon. I think I could make shift, Sir;
But I am bashful.
Juan. In the night?
Leon. I know not.
Darkness indeed may do some good upon me.
Juan. Why art thou sent to me to be my officer, [fight?
Ay, and commended too, when thou dar'st not
Leon. There be more officers of my opinion,
Or I'm cozen'd, Sir; men that talk more too.
Juan. How wilt thou 'scape a bullet?
Leon. Why, by chance.
They aim at honourable men; alas, I'm none, Sir.
Juan. This fellow hath some doubts in his talk that strike me.

Enter ALONZO.

He cannot be all fool. Welcome, Alonzo.
Alon. What have you got there, Temperance into your company?
The spirit of peace? we shall have wars by the ounce then.

Enter CACAFOGO.

Oh, here's another pumpion, the cramm'd son of a starved usurer, Cacafogo.
Both their brains butter'd cannot make too spoonfuls.
Caca. My father's dead, I am a man of war too. [tains.
Moneys, demesnes; I've ships at sea too, cap-
Juan. Take heed o' the Hollanders, your ships may leak else.
Caca. I scorn the Hollanders, there are my drunkards.
Alon. Put up your gold, Sir, I will borrow it else.
Caca. I am satisfied you shall not.
Come out, I know thee, meet mine anger instantly.
Leon. I never wrong'd ye.
Caca. Thou'st wrong'd mine honour,
Thou look'st upon my mistress thrice lascivi-
I'll make it good. [ously,
Juan. Do not heat yourself, you will surfeit.
Caca. Thou want'st my money too, with a pair of base bones, [thee,
In whom there was no truth for which I beat
I beat thee much; now I will hurt thee dangerously.
This shall provoke thee. [*He strikes.*
Alon. You struck too low, by a foot, Sir.
Juan. You must get a ladder, when you would beat this fellow.
Leon. I cannot choose but kick again; pray, pardon me.
Caca. Hadst thou not ask'd my pardon, I had kill'd thee.
I leave thee, as a thing despised, *baso las manos a vostra Seignora.* [*Exit* CACA.
Alon. You've 'scaped by miracles; there is not in all Spain,
A spirit of more fury than this fire-drake.
Leon. I see he's hasty, and I'd give him leave
To beat me soundly if he'd take my bond.
Juan. What shall I do with this fellow?
Alon. Turn him off;
He will infect the camp with cowardice,
If he go with thee.
Juan. About some week hence, Sir,
If I can hit upon no abler officer,
You shall hear from me.
Leon. I desire no better. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.—A Chamber in MARGARITTA'S *House.*

Enter ESTIFANIA *and* PEREZ.

Per. You've made me now too bountiful amends, lady,
For your strict carriage when you saw me first.
These beauties were not meant to be conceal'd;
It was a wrong to hide so sweet an object;

I could now chide ye, but it shall be thus:
No other anger ever touch your sweetness.
Estif. Ye appear to me so honest and so civil,
Without a blush, Sir, I dare bid you welcome.
Per. Now, let me ask your name.
Estif. 'Tis Estifania, the heir of this poor place.
Per. Poor, do you call it?
There's nothing that I cast mine eyes upon,
But shows both rich and admirable; all the rooms
Are hung as if a princess were to dwell here;
The gardens, orchards, every thing so curious.
Is all that plate your own too?
Estif. 'Tis but little,
Only for present use; I've more and richer,
When need shall call, or friends compel me use it;
The suits you see of all the upper chambers,
Are those that commonly adorn the house;
I think I have besides, as fair as Seville,
Or any town in Spain, can parallel.
Per. Now if she be not married, I have some hopes,
Are you a maid?
Estif. You make me blush to answer;
I ever was accounted so to this hour,
And that's the reason that I live retired, Sir.
Per. Then would I counsel you to marry presently.
(If I can get her I am made for ever.) [*Aside.*
For every year you lose, you lose a beauty.
A husband now, an honest, careful husband,
Were such a comfort. Will ye walk above stairs?
Estif. This place will fit our talk, 'tis fitter far, Sir;
Above there are day-beds, and such temptations
I dare not trust, Sir.
Per. She's excellent wise withal, too.
Estif. You named a husband; I am not so strict, Sir,
Nor tied unto a virgin's solitariness,
But if an honest, and a noble one,
Rich, and a soldier, (for so I've vow'd he shall be,)
Were offer'd me, I think I should accept him.
But above all, he must love.
Per. He were base else.
There's comfort ministered in the word soldier.
How sweetly should I live!
Estif. I'm not so ignorant,
But that I know well how to be commanded,
And how again to make myself obey'd, Sir.
I waste but little; I have gathered much:
My rial not less worth when it is spent,
If spent by my direction. To please my husband,
I hold it as indifferent in my duty,
To be his maid i' th' kitchen or his cook,
As in the hall to know myself the mistress.
Per. Sweet, rich, and provident; now Fortune stick to me.
I am a soldier, and a bachelor, lady;
And such a wife as you I could love infinitely.
They that use many words, some are deceitful;
I long to be a husband, and a good one.
For 'tis most certain I shall make a precedent
For all that follow me to love their ladies.
I'm young, you see, able I'd have you think too;
If't please you know, try me before you take me;
'Tis true, I shall not meet in equal wealth with ye;
But jewels, chains, such as the war has given me,
A thousand ducats too in ready gold,
As rich clothes, too, as any he bears arms, lady.
Estif. You're a gentleman, and fair, I know you by ye;
And such a man I'd rather take——
Per. Pray do so.
I'll have a priest o' the sudden.
Estif. And as suddenly
You will repent too.
Per. I'll be hang'd or drown'd first,
By this, and this, and this kiss.
Estif. You're a flatterer,
But I must say there was something when I saw you
First, in that noble face, that stirr'd my fancy.
Per. I'll stir it better ere you sleep, sweet lady.
I'll send for all my trunks, and give up all to ye,
Into your own dispose, before I bed ye;
And then, sweet wench.
Estif. You have the art to cozen me.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—An Apartment in MARGARITTA'S *House.*

Enter MARGARITTA, *three* LADIES, *and* ALTEA.

Mar. Come in, and give me your opinions seriously.
1*st Lady.* You say you have a mind to marry, lady.
Mar. 'Tis true, I have, for to preserve my credit;
Yet not so much for that, as to preserve my state, ladies.
Conceive me right, there lies the main o' the question:
Credit I can redeem, money will imp it;
But when my money's gone, when the law shall
Seize that, and for incontinency, strip me
Of all.
1*st Lady.* Do you find your body so malicious that way?
Mar. I find it as all bodies are, that are young and lusty,
Lazy and high fed.
I desire my pleasure, and pleasure I must have.
2*d Lady.* 'Tis fit you should have,
Your years require it, and 'tis necessary;
As necessary as meat to a young lady!
Sleep cannot nourish more.
1*st Lady.* But might not all this be and keep ye single?
You take away variety in marriage,
Th' abundance of your pleasure you are barr'd then;
Is't not abundance that you aim at?
Mar. Yes; why was I made a woman?
2*d Lady.* And every day a new?
Mar. Why fair and young, but to use it?
1*st Lady.* Your still i' th' right; why would you marry then?
Alt. Because a husband stops all doubts in this point,
And clears all passages.
2*d Lady.* What husband mean ye?
Alt. A husband of an easy faith, a fool,
Made by her wealth, and moulded to her pleasure;
One, though he sees himself become a monster,
Shall hold the door, and entertain the maker.
2*d Lady.* You grant there may be such a man.
1*st Lady.* Yes, marry; but how to bring him to this rare perfection.
2*d Lady.* They must be chosen so, things of no honour,
Nor outward honesty.

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matter;
y are, so they be comely.
's now, a rich lawyer, some

and a face of awe,
; but his clients' business.
o trusting them, they are

... them of natural mischief.
... Then some grave governor,
Some man of honour, yet an easy man.
Mar. If he has honour I'm undone: I'll none such.
Alt. With search, and wit, and labour,
I've found but one, a right one, and a perfect.
Mar. Is he a gentleman?
Alt. Yes, and a soldier; but as gentle as you'd wish him. A good fellow, and has good clothes, if he knew how to wear 'em.
Mar. Those I'll allow him;
They are for my credit. Does he understand
But little?
Alt. Very little.
Mar. 'Tis the better.
Have not the wars bred him up to anger?
Alt. No, he wont quarrel with a dog that bites him;
Let him be drunk or sober, he's one silence.
Mar. H'as no capacity what honour is;
For that's a soldier's good?
Alt. Honour's a thing too subtle for his wisdom;
If honour lie in eating, he's right honourable.
Mar. Is he so goodly a man, do you say?
Alt. As you shall see, lady;
But to all this he's but a trunk.
Mar. I'd have him so;
I shall add branches to adorn him.
Go, find me out this man, and let me see him;
If he be that motion that you tell me of,
And make no more noise, I shall entertain him.
Let him be here.
Alt. He shall attend your ladyship. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Street.*

Enter JUAN, ALONZO, *and* PEREZ.

Juan. Why, thou'rt not married indeed?
Per. No, no, pray think so.
Alas, I am a fellow of no reckoning!
Nor worth a lady's eye.
Alon. Would steal a fortune, [it,
And make none of thy friends acquainted with
Nor bid us to the wedding?
Per. No indeed.
There was no wisdom in't, to bid an artist,
An old seducer, to a female banquet.
I can cut up my pie without your instructions.
Juan. Was it the wench i' the veil?
Per. Basta, 'twas she.
The prettiest rogue that e'er you look'd upon;
The loving'st thief.
Juan. And is she rich withal too?
Per. A mine, a mine; there is no end of wealth, colonel.
I am an ass, a bashful fool. Pr'ythee, colonel,
How do thy companies fill now?
Juan. You're merry, Sir;
You intend a safer war at home, belike now?
Per. I do not think I shall fight much this year, colonel;
I find myself given to my ease a little.
I care not if I sell my foolish company;
They're things of hazard.
Alon. How it angers me,
This fellow at first sight should win a lady,
A rich, young wench—And I, that have consumed
My time and art in searching out their subtleties,
Like a fool'd alchymist, blow up my hopes still.
When shall we come to thy house, and be freely merry!
Per. When I have managed her a little more.
I have a house to maintain an army.
Alon. If thy wife be fair, thou'l't have few less come to thee.
Per. Where they'll get entertainment is the Signior, I beat no drum. [point;
May be I'll march after a month or two,
To get a fresh stomach. I find, colonel,
A wantonness in wealth, methinks I agree not with.
'Tis such a trouble to be married too, [ance,
And have a thousand things of great import-
Jewels and plate, and fooleries molest me,
To have a man's brains whimsey'd with his wealth.
Before I walked contentedly.

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. My mistress, Sir, is sick, because you're
She mourns, and will not eat. [absent.
Per. Alas, my jewel!
Come, I'll go with thee. Gentlemen, your fair leaves,
You see I'm tied a little to my yoke:
Pray, pardon me; would ye had both such loving wives.
[*Exeunt* PEREZ *and* SERVANT.
Juan. I thank ye
For your old boots. Never be blank, Alonzo.
Because this fellow has out-stripp'd thy fortune.
Tell me, ten days hence, what he is, and how
The gracious state of matrimony stands with him.
Come, let's to dinner; when Margaritta comes,
We'll visit both; it may be then your fortune.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*A Chamber.*

Enter MARGARITTA, ALTEA, *and* LADIES.

Mar. Is he come?
Alt. Yes, Madam, he has been here this half hour.
I've question'd him of all that you can ask him,
And find him fit as you had made the man.
Mar. Call him in, Altea. [*Exit* ALTEA.

Enter LEON *and* ALTEA.

A man of comely countenance. Pray ye come this way.
Is his mind so tame?
Alt. Pray, question him, and if you find him not
Fit for your purpose, shake him off, there's no harm done.
Mar. Can you love a young lady? How he blushes!
Alt. Leave twirling of your hat, and hold your head up,
And speak to the lady.
Leon. Yes, I think I can;
I must be taught; I know not what it means, Madam.
Mar. You shall be taught. And can you, when she pleases,
Go ride abroad, and stay a week or two?
You shall have men and horses to attend ye,
And money in your purse.

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Leon. Yes, I love riding:
And when I am from home I am so merry.
Mar. Be as merry as you will. Can you as handsomely,
When you are seat for back, come with obedience,
And do your duty to the lady loves you?
Leon. Yes, sure, I shall.
Mar. And when you see her friends here,
Or noble kinsmen, can you entertain
Their servants in the cellar, and be busied,
And hold your peace, whate'er you see, or hear?
Leon. 'Twere fit I were hang'd else.
Mar. Come, salute me.
Leon. Ma'am!
Mar. How the fool shakes! I will not eat you, Sir.
Can't you salute me?
Leon. Indeed I know not: but if your ladyship
will please to instruct me, sure I shall learn.
Mar. Come on then.
Leon. Come on then. [*He kisses her.*
Mar. Beshrew my heart, he kisses wond'rous manly!
Can you do any thing else?
Leon. Indeed I know not; but if your ladyship
will please to instruct me, sure I shall learn.
Mar. You shall then be instructed.
If I should be this lady that affects ye;
Nay, say I marry ye?
Alt. Hark to the lady.
Mar. What money have ye?
Leon. None, Madam, nor no friends,
I would do any thing to serve your ladyship.
Mar. You must not look to be my master, Sir,
Nor talk i' the house as though you wore the breeches;
No, nor command in any thing.
Leon. I will not;
Alas, I'm not able I've no wit, Madam.
Mar. Nor do not labour to arrive at any;
'Twill spoil your head. I take you upon charity,
And like a servant you must be unto me.
As I beheld your duty, I shall love you;
As you observe me, I may chance lie with ye.
Can you mark these?
Leon. Yes, indeed, forsooth.
Mar. There is one thing,
That if I take ye in, I put ye from me,
Utterly from me; you must not be saucy,
No, nor at any time familiar with me,
Scarce know me, when I call ye not.
Leon. I will not. Alas, I never knew myself sufficiently!
Mar. Nor must not now.
Leon. I'll be a dog to please ye.
Mar. Indeed you must fetch and carry as I appoint ye.
Leon. I were to blame else.
Mar. Kiss me again. [*Kisses her.*
A strong fellow, there's vigour in his lips.
If you see me
Kiss any other, twenty in an hour, Sir,
You must not start, nor be offended.
Leon. No, if you kiss a thousand, I shall be contented,
It will the better teach me how to please ye.
Alt. I told ye, Madam.
Mar. 'Tis the man I wish'd for; the less you speak—
Leon. I'll never speak again, Madam,
But when you charge me; then I'll speak softly too.
Mar. Get me a priest; I'll wed him instantly.
But when you're married, Sir, you must wait
And see ye observe my laws.
Leon. Else you shall hang me.
Mar. I'll give you better clothes when you deserve 'em.
Come in, and serve for witness.
Omnes. We shall, Madam.
Mar. And then away to the city presently;
I'll to my new house, and new company.
Leon. A thousand crowns are thine; I'm a made man.
Alt. Do not break out too soon.
Leon. I know my time, wench. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—A Grand Saloon.

Enter CLARA *and* ESTIFANIA *with a Paper.*

Cla. What, have you caught him?
Estif. Yes.
Cla. And do you find him
A man of those hopes that you aim'd at?
Estif. Yes, too, and the most kind man;
And the ablest, also,
To give his wife content: he is sound as old wine;
And so his soundness rises on the palate;
And there's the man.
I find him rich, too, Clara.
Cla. Hast thou married him?
Estif. What dost thou think I fish without a bait, wench?
I bob for fools. He is mine own. I have him.
I told thee what would tickle him like a trout;
And as I cast it, so I caught him daintily:
And all he has I've stow'd at my devotion.
Cla. Does the lady know this? she's coming now to town:
Now, to live here, in this house.
Estif. Let her come,
She shall be welcome, I am prepared for her;
She's mad sure, if she be angry at my fortune;
For what I have made bold.
Cla. Dost thou not love him?
Estif. Yes, entirely well,
As long as there he stays and looks no farther
Into my ends; but when he doubts, I hate him;
And that wise hate will teach me how to cozen him;
How to decline their wives, and curb their manners;
To put a stern and strong rein to their natures:
And hold he is an ass not worth acquaintance,
That cannot mould a devil into obedience.
I owe him a good turn for these opinions:
And, as I find his temper, I may pay him.

Enter PEREZ.

O here he is; now you shall see a kind man.
Per. My Estifania, shall we to dinner, lamb?
I know thou stay'st for me.
Estif. I cannot eat else.
Per. I never enter, but methinks a paradise
Appears about me.
Estif. You're welcome to it, Sir.
Per. I think I have the sweetest seat in Spain, wench.
Methinks the richest too. We'll eat i' the garden,
In one o' the arbours, there 'tis cool and pleasant;
And have our wine cool'd in the running fountain.
Who's that?
Estif. A friend of mine, Sir.
Per. Of what breeding?
Estif. A gentlewoman, Sir,
Per. What business has she?
Is she a woman learn'd i' the mathematics;
Can she tell fortunes?
Estif. More than I know, Sir.
Per. Or has she e'er a letter from a kinswoman,
That must be deliver'd in my absence, wife?
Or comes she from the doctor to salute ye,

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And learn your health? she looks not like a confessor.
Estif. What needs all this? why are you troubled, Sir?
What do you suspect? she cannot cuckold ye:
She is a woman, Sir, a very woman.
Per. Your very woman may do very well, Madam,
Towards the matter; for though she cannot perform it
In her own person, she may do it by proxy.
Your rarest jugglers work still by conspiracy.
Estif. Cry ye mercy, husband, you are jealous then,
And haply suspect me.
Per. No, indeed, wife.
Estif. Methink you should not till you have more cause, [husband,
And clearer too. I'm sure you've heard say,
A woman forced will free herself through iron:
A happy calm, and good wife discontented,
May be caught by tricks.
Per. No, no: I do but jest with ye.
Estif. To-morrow, friend, I'll see you.
Cla. I shall leave you
Till then, and pray all may go sweetly with ye. [*Exit.*
Estif. Why, where's the girl? who's at the door? [*Knocking at the door.*
Per. Who knocks there?
Is't for the king you come, ye knock so boisterously?
Look to the door.

Enter MAID.

Maid. My lady, as I live, mistress, my lady's come;
She's at the door: I peep'd through, I saw her,
And a stately company of ladies with her.
Estif. This was a week too soon, but I must meet with her,
And set a new wheel going; and a subtle one
Must blind this mighty Mars, or I'm ruin'd. [*Aside.*
Per. What are they at the door?
Estif. Such, my Michael,
As you may bless the day they enter'd here;
Such for our good.
Per. 'Tis well.
Estif. Nay, 'twill be better,
If you will let me but dispose the business,
And be a stranger to't, and not disturb me.
What have I now to do but advance your fortune?
Per. Do, I dare trust thee: I'm ashamed I was angry.
I find thee a wise young wife.
Estif. I'll wise your worship
Before I leave ye. [*Aside.*] Pray ye walk by, and say nothing,
Only salute them, and leave the rest to me, Sir;
I was born to make ye a man.
Per. The rogue speaks heartily;
Her good-will colours in her cheeks; I'm born to love her.
I must be gentle to these tender natures:
A soldier's rude, harsh words befit not ladies;
Nor must we talk to them, as we talk to
Our officers. I'll give her way; for 'tis for me she [has.
Works now; I am husband, heir, and all she

Enter MARGARITTA, LEON, ALTEA, *and* LADIES.

Who're these? I hate such flaunting things.
A woman of rare presence! excellent fair;
This is too big, sure, for a bawdy-house;
Too open seated too.
Estif. My husband, lady.
Mar. You've gain'd a proper man.
Per. Whate'er I am, I am your servant, lady. [*Kisses.*
Estif. Sir, be ruled now, [*Apart to* PEREZ.
And I shall make you rich: this is my cousin;
That gentleman dotes on her, even to death.
See how he observes her.
Per. She is a goodly woman.
Estif. She is a mirror.
But she is poor, she were for a prince's side else. [own,
This house she has brought him to as to her
And presuming upon me, and on my courtesy—
Conceive me short; he knows not but she's wealthy;
Or if he did know otherwise, 'twere all one,
He's so far gone.
Per. Forward; she's a rare face.
Estif. This we must carry with discretion, husband,
And yield unto her four days.
Per. Yield our house up, our goods and wealth!
Estif. All this is but seeming.—Do you see this writing? [married,
Two hundred pounds a-year, when they are
Has she seal'd to for our good—The time is unfit now;
I'll show it you to-morrow.
Per. All the house?
Estif. All, all; and we'll remove, too, to confirm him,
They'll into the country suddenly again,
After they're match'd, and then she'll open to him.
Per. The whole possession wife? Look what you do.
A part o' the house.
Estif. No, no, they shall have all,
And take their pleasure, too; 'tis for our 'vantage.
Why, what's four days? Had you a sister, Sir,
A niece, or mistress, that required this courtesy,
And should I make a scruple to do you good?
Per. If easily it would come back.
Estif. I swear, Sir, as easily as it came on.
Is't not pity
To let such a gentlewoman for a little help——
You give away no house.
Per. Clear but that question.
Estif. I'll put the writings into your hand.
Per. Well then.
Estif. And you shall keep them safe.
Per. I'm satisfied.—Would I had the wench too.
Estif. When she has married him,
So infinite his love is link'd unto her,
You, I, or any one that helps at this pinch,
May have, Heaven knows what.
Per. I'll remove my trunks straight,
And take some poor house by, 'tis but for four days.
Estif. I have a poor old friend; there we will be.
Per. 'Tis well then.
Estif. Go handsome off, and leave the house clear.
Per. Well.
Estif. That little stuff we'll use shall follow after;
And a boy to guide ye. Peace, and we are made both.

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Mar. Come, let's go in.
Are all the rooms kept sweet, wench?
Estif. They're sweet and neat.
[*Exit* PEREZ.
Mar. Why, where's your husband?
Estif. Gone, Madam.
When you come to your own, he must give place, lady.
Mar. Well, send you joy, you would not let me know't,
Yet I shall not forget ye.
Estif. Thank your ladyship.
Mar. Come, lead me. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Chamber.

Enter MARGARITTA *and* ALTEA.

Alt. Are you at ease now? Is your heart at rest,
Now you have got a shadow, an umbrella,
To keep the scorching world's opinion
From your fair credit.
Mar. I am at peace, Altea,
If he continue but the same he shows,
And be a master of that ignorance
He outwardly professes, I am happy.
The pleasure I shall live in, and the freedom,
Without the squint eye of the law upon me,
Or prating liberty of tongues that envy!
Alt. You're a made woman.
Mar. But if he should prove now
A crafty and dissembling kind of husband,
One read in knavery, and brought up in the art
Of villany conceal'd.
Alt. My life, an innocent.
Mar. That's it I aim at.
That's it I hope too, then I'm sure I rule him:
For innocents are like obedient children?
Brought up under a hard mother-in-law, a cruel,
Who, being not used to breakfasts and collations,
When they have coarse bread offered, are thankful,
And take it for a favour too.
Are the rooms made ready
To entertain my friends? I long to dance now,
And to be wanton. Let me have a song. Is the great couch up
The duke of Medina sent?
Alt. 'Tis up and ready.
Mar. And day-beds in all chambers?
Alt. In all, lady.
Your house is nothing now but various pleasures.
The gallants begin to gaze too.
Mar. Let 'em gaze on.
I was brought up a courtier, high and happy;
And company is my delight and courtship;
And handsome servants at my will. Where's my good husband?
Where does he wait?
Alt. He knows his distance, Madam.
I warrant ye he is busy in the cellar
Among his fellow-servants, or asleep,
Till your commands awake him.

Enter LEON *and* LORENZO.

Mar. 'Tis well, Altea,
It should be so; my ward I must preserve him.
Who sent for him? How dare he come uncall'd for?
His bonnet on too!
Alt. Sure he sees you not.
Mar. How scornfully he looks!
Leon. Are all the chambers [ure?
Deck'd and adorn'd thus for my lady's pleas-
New hangings every hour for entertainment?
And new plate bought, new jewels to give lustre?
Ser. They are; and yet there must be more and richer;
It is her will.
Leon. Hum, is it so? 'Tis excellent.
Is it her will, too, to have feasts and banquets,
Revels and masques?
Ser. She ever loved 'em dearly; [Sir.
And we shall have the bravest house kept now,
I must not call ye master; she has warn'd me;
Nor must not put my hat off to you.
Leon. 'Tis no fashion. [low;
What though I be her husband, I'm your fel-
I may cut first?
Ser. That's as you shall deserve, Sir.
Leon. And when I lie with her—
Ser. May be I'll light ye:
On the same point you may do me that service.

Enter a LADY.

1st Lady. Madam, the Duke Medina, with some captains,
Will come to dinner, and have sent rare wine,
And their best services.
Mar. They shall be welcome.
See all be ready in the noblest fashion;
The house perfumed.
Now I shall take my pleasure,
And not my neighbour justice maunder at me.
Go, get your best clothes on; but till I call ye,
Be sure you be not seen. Dine with the gentlewomen,
And behave yourself handsomely, Sir; 'tis for my credit.

Enter a second LADY.

2d Lady. Madam, the lady Julia——
Leon. That's a bawd;
A three-piled bawd; bawd-major to the army.
2d Lady. Has brought her coach to wait upon your ladyship,
And to be inform'd if you will take the air this morning.
Leon. The neat air of her nunnery.
Mar. Tell her no; i' the afternoon I'll call on her.
2d Lady. I will, Madam. [*Exit.*
Mar. Why are you not gone to prepare yourself?
May be you shall be sewer to the first course.
A portly presence. Altea, he looks lean—
'Tis a vast knave, he will not keep his flesh well.
Alt. A willing, Madam, one that needs no spurring.
Leon. Faith, Madam, in my little understanding,
You'd better entertain your honest neighbours,
Your friends about ye, that may speak well of ye,
And give a worthy mention of your bounty.
Mar. How now, what's this?
Leon. 'Tis only to persuade ye.
Courtiers are tickle things to deal withal,
A kind of march-pane men that will not last, Madam; [tions;
An egg and pepper goes farther than their po-
And in a well-knit body, a poor parsnip
Will play his prize above their strong potables.

Mar. The fellow's mad!
Leon. He that shall counsel ladies,
That hath both liquorish and ambitious eyes,
Is either mad or drunk, let him speak gospel.
Alt. He breaks out modestly.
Leon. Pray, be not angry;
My indiscretion has made bold to tell ye
What you'll find true.
Mar. Thou dar'st not talk?
Leon. Not much, Madam;
You have a tie upon your servant's tongue,
He dare not be so bold as reason bids him;
'Twere fit there were a stronger on your temper.
Ne'er look so stern upon me, I'm your husband;
But what are husbands? Read the New World's Wonders,
Such husbands as this monstrous world produces,
And you will scarce find such strange deformities;
They're shadows to conceal your venal virtues:
Sails to your mills, that grind with all occasions;
Balls that lie by you, to wash out your stains;
And bills nail'd up with horns before your doors,
To rent out wantonness.
Mar. Do you hear him talk?
Leon. I've done, Madam:
An ox once spoke, as learned men deliver;
Shortly I shall be such, then I'll speak wonders.
'Till when, I tie myself to my obedience. [*Exit.*
Mar. First I'll untie myself. Did you mark the gentleman,
How boldly and how saucily he talk'd,
And how unlike the lump I took him for!
The piece of ignorant dough, he stood up to me,
And rated my commands.
This was your providence,
Your wisdom, to elect this gentleman,
Your excellent forecast in the man, your knowledge:
What think ye now?
Alt. I think him an ass still.
This boldness some of your people have blown into him,
This wisdom too, with strong wine; 'tis a tyrant,
And a philosopher also, and finds out reasons.
Mar. I'll have my cellar lock'd, no school kept there,
Nor no discovery. I'll turn my drunkards,
Such as are understanding in their draughts,
And dispute learnedly the whys and wherefores,
To grass immediately; I'll keep all fools
Sober or drunk, still fools that shall know nothing.
Nothing belongs to mankind but obedience,
And such a hand I'll keep over this husband.
Alt. He'll fall again: my life he cries by this time:
Keep him from drink, he's a high constitution.

Enter LEON.

Leon. Shall I wear my new suit, Madam?
Mar. No, your old clothes.
And get you into the country presently,
And see my hawks well train'd: you shall have victuals,
Such as are fit for saucy palates, Sir,
And lodgings with the hinds, it is too good too.
Leon. Good Madam, be not so rough with repentance.
Alt. You see how he comes round again.
Mar. I see not what I expect to see.
Leon. You shall see, Madam, if it please your ladyship.
Alt. He's humbled;
Forgive, good lady.
Mar. Well, go get you handsome,
And let me hear no more.
Leon. Have ye yet no feelings?
I'll pinch you to the bones, then, my proud lady. [*Exit.*
Mar. See you preserve him thus, upon my favour.
You know his temper, tie him to the grindstone;
The next rebellion I'll be rid of him.
I'll have no needy rascals I tie to me
Dispute my life. Come in, and see all handsome.
Alt. I hope to see you so too, I've wrought ill else. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—An ordinary Apartment.

Enter PEREZ.

Per. Shall I
Never return to mine own house again?
We're lodg'd here in the miserablest dog-hole,
A conjuror's circle gives content above it;
A hawk's mew is a princely palace to it:
We have a bed no bigger than a basket,
And we lie like butter clapp'd together,
And sweat ourselves to sauce immediately;
The fumes are infinite inhabit here too,
And to that so thick, they cut like marmalade;
So various too, they'll pose a gold finder.
Never return to mine own paradise——
Why, wife. I say; why, Estifania!
Estif. [*Within.*] I'm going presently.
Per. Make haste, good jewel.
I'm like the people that live in the sweet islands:
I die, I die, if I stay but one day more here.
My lungs are rotten with the damps that rise,
And I cough nothing now but stinks of all sorts.
The inhabitants we have are two starved rats,
(For they're not able to maintain a cat here,)
And those appear as fearful as two devils;
They've eat a map of the whole world up already,
And if we stay a night, we're gone for company.
There's an old woman that's now grown to marble,
Dried in this brick-kiln, and she sits i' the chimney,
(Which is but three tiles raised, like a house of cards)
The true proportion of an old smoked Sybil.
There is a young thing too, that nature meant
For a maid servant, but 'tis now a monster;
She has a husk about her like a chesnut,
With laziness, and living under the line here;
And these two make a hollow sound together,
Like frogs, or winds between two doors that murmur.

Enter ESTIFANIA.

Mercy deliver me. Oh, are you come, wife!
Shall we be free again?
Estif. I am now going,
And you shall presently to your own house, Sir:
The remembrance of this small vexation
Will be argument of mirth for ever.
By that time you have said your orisons
And broke your fast, I shall be back, and ready
To usher you to your old content, your freedom.

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Per. Break my fast! break my neck rather.
Is there any thing here to eat
But one another, like a race of cannibals?
A piece of butter'd wall you think is excellent.
Let's have our house again immediately,
And pray ye take heed unto the furniture,
None be embezzled.
Estif. Not a pin, I warrant ye.
Per. And let 'em instantly depart.
Estif. They shall both: there's reason in all courtesy. [him,
For by this time I know she has acquainted
And has provided too: she sent me word, Sir,
And will give over gratefully unto you.
Per. I will walk i' the church-yard;
The dead cannot offend more than these living.
An hour hence I'll expect ye.
Estif. I'll not fail, Sir.
Per. And do you hear? let's have a handsome dinner,
And see all things be decent as they have been;
And let me have a strong bath to restore me;
I stink like a stale-fish shambles, or an oil-shop.
Estif. You shall have all which some interpret nothing.
I'll send ye people for the trunks afore-hand,
And for the stuff.
Per. Let 'em be known and honest;
And do my service to your niece.
Estif. I shall, Sir:
But if I come not at my hour, come thither,
That they may give you thanks for your fair courtesy,
And pray you be brave for my sake.
Per. I observe ye. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*A Street.*

Enter JUAN DE CASTRO, SANCHIO, *and* CACAFOGO.

San. Thou'rt very brave.
Caca. I've reason, I have money.
San. Is money reason?
Caca. Yes, and rhyme too, captain.
If you've no money, you're an ass.
San. I thank ye.
Caca. Ye've manners, ever thank him that has money.
San. Wilt thou lend me any?
Caca. Not a farthing, captain:
Captains are casual things.
San. Why, so are all men. Thou shalt have my bond.
Caca. Nor bonds nor fetters, captain.
My money is my own, I make no doubt on't.
Juan. What dost thou do with it?
Caca. Put it to pious uses.
Buy wine and wenches, and undo young cox-
That would undo me. [combs
Juan. Are those hospitals?
Caca. I first provide to fill my hospitals
With creatures of mine own, that I know wretched,
And then I build: those are more bound to pray for me:
Besides, I keep th' inheritance in my name still.
Juan. A provident charity. Are you for the wars, Sir?
Caca. I am not poor enough to be a soldier,
Nor have I faith enough to ward a bullet;
This is no lining for a trench, I take it.
Juan. Ye have said wisely.
Caca. Had you but my money,
You'd swear it, colonel. I had rather drill at home [honour,
A hundred thousand crowns, and with more
Than exercise ten thousand fools with nothing.
A wise man safely feeds, fools cut their fingers.
San. A right state usurer. Why dost not marry,
And live a reverend justice?
Caca. Is it not nobler to command a reverend justice, than to be one?
And for a wife, what need I marry, captain,
When every courteous fool that owes me money,
Owes me his wife too, to appease my fury?
Juan. Wilt thou go to dinner with us?
Caca. I will go and view the pearl of Spain, the orient [spected.
Fair one, the rich one too; and I will be re-
I bear my patent here; I will talk to her;
And when your captainships shall stand aloof,
And pick your noses, I will pick the purse
Of her affection.
Juan. The Duke dines there to-day too, the Duke of Medina.
Caca. Let the king dine there,
He owes me money, and so far's my creature.
And certainly I may make bold with mine own, captain.
San. Thou wilt eat monstrously.
Caca. Like a true-born Spaniard:
Eat as I were in England, where the beef grows.
And I will drink abundantly, and then
Talk ye as wantonly as Ovid did,
To stir the intellectuals of the ladies;
I learn'd it of my father's amorous scrivener.
Juan. If we should play now, you must supply me.
Caca. You must pawn a horse troop.
And then have at ye, colonel.
San. Come, let's go. [ladies
This rascal will make rare sport. How the
Will laugh at him!
Juan. If I light on him I'll make his purse sweat too.
Caca. Will ye lead, gentlemen? [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*An ordinary Apartment.*

Enter PEREZ, OLD WOMAN, *and* MAID.

Per. Nay, pray ye come out, and let me understand ye,
And tune your pipe a little higher, lady;
I'll hold ye fast. How came my trunks open?
And my goods gone? What pick-lock spirit—
Old Wom. Ha! What would ye have?
Per. My goods again. How came my trunks all open?
Old Wom. Are your trunks all open?
Per. Yes, and clothes gone,
And chains and jewels. How she smells like hung beef! [belches
The palsy, and pick-locks. Fy, how she
The spirit of garlic!
Old Wom. Where's your gentlewoman?
The young fair woman?
Per. What's that to my question?
She is my wife, and gone about my business.
Maid. Is she your wife, Sir?
Per. Yes, Sir: is that a wonder?
Is the name of wife unknown here?
Old Wom. Is she duly and truly your wife?
Per. Duly and truly my wife: I think so,
For I married her. It was no vision sure?

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Maid. She has the keys, Sir.
Per. I know she has; but who has all my goods, spirit?
Old Wom. If you be married to that gentlewoman,
You are a wretched man: she has twenty husbands.
Maid. She tells you true.
Old Wom. And she has cozen'd all, Sir.
Per. The devil she has; I had a fair house with her,
That stands hard by, and furnish'd royally.
Old Wom. You're cozen'd too, 'tis none of hers, good gentleman,
It is a lady's.
Maid. The lady Margaritta; she was her servant.
And kept the house; but going from her, Sir,
For some lewd tricks she play'd.
Per. Plague o' the devil;
Am I, i' the full meridian of my wisdom,
Cheated by a stale quean! What kind of lady
Is that that owns the house?
Old Wom. A young, sweet lady.
Per. Of low stature.
Old Wom. She's indeed but little, but she's wond'rous fair.
Per. I feel I'm cozen'd:
Now I am sensible I am undone.
This is the very woman, sure, that cousin,
She told me would entreat but for four days
To make the house hers—I am entreated sweetly.
Maid. When she went out this morning, I saw, Sir,
She had two women at the door attending,
And there she gave 'em things, and loaded 'em:
But what they were—I heard your trunks, too,
If they be yours. [open,
Per. They were mine while they were laden;
But now they've cast their calves, they're not worth owning.
Was she her mistress, say you?
Old Wom. Her own mistress, her very mistress, Sir; and all you saw
About her in that house was hers.
Per. No plate, no jewels, nor no hangings?
Maid. Not a farthing; she's poor, Sir, a poor shifting thing.
Per. No money?
Old Wom. Abominable poor, as poor as we are,
Money as rare to her, unless she steal it.
But for one single gown her lady gave her,
She might go bare, good gentlewoman.
Per. I'm mad now:
I think I am as poor as she, I'm wild else.
One single suit I have left too, and that's all,
And if she steals that, she must slay me for it.
Where does she use?
Old Wom. You may find the truth as soon.
Alas, a thousand conceal'd corners, Sir, she lurks in;
And here she gets a fleece, and there another,
And lives in mists and smokes where none can find her.
Per. Is she a whore, too?
Old Wom. Little better, gentleman:
I dare not say she is so, Sir, because
She's yours, Sir: these five years she has firk'd
A pretty living, until she came to serve.
I fear he will knock my brains out for lying.
Per. She has firk'd me finely. [ings
A whore and thief; two excellent moral learn-
In one she-saint. I hope to see her legend.
Have I been fear'd for my discoveries, ['em;
And been courted by all women to conceal
Have I so long studied the art of this sex,
And read the warning to young gentlemen;
Have I profess'd to tame the pride of ladies,
And made them bear all tests; and am I trick'd now? [yet,
Caught in my own noose? Here's a rial left
There's for your lodging, and your meat for a week;
A silk-worm lives at a more plentiful ordinary,
And sleeps in a sweeter box.
Farewell, great-grandmother:
If I do find you were accessary,
'Tis but the cutting off two smoking minutes!
I'll hang ye presently.
Old Wom. And I deserve it—I tell you truth.
Per. Not I, I am an ass, mother. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—*A grand Apartment.*

Enter the DUKE *of* MEDINA, JUAN DE CASTRO, ALONZO, SANCHIO, CACAFOGO, *and Attendants.*

Duke. A goodly house.
Juan. And richly furnish'd too, Sir.
Alon. Hung wantonly; I like that preparation;
It stirs the blood into a hopeful banquet,
And intimates the mistress free and jovial;
I love a house where pleasure prepares welcome.
Duke. Now, Cacafogo, how like you this mansion;
'Twere a brave pawn.
Caca. I shall be master of it;
'Twas built for my bulk, the rooms are wide and spacious,
Airy and full of ease, and that I love well.
I'll tell you when I taste the wine, my lord;
And take the height of her table with my stomach.
How my affection stands to the young lady.

Enter MARGARITTA, ALTEA, *Ladies, and Servant.*

Mar. All welcome to your Grace, and to these soldiers,
You honour my poor house with your fair presence; [Sir,
Those few slight pleasures that inhabit here,
I do beseech your Grace command, they're yours,
Your servant but preserves 'em to delight ye.
Duke. I thank ye, lady, I am bold to visit ye,
Once more to bless mine eyes with your sweet beauty, [court,
'T has been a long night since you left the
For till I saw you now, no day broke to me.
Mar. Bring in the Duke's meat.
San. She's most excellent.
Juan. Most admirable fair as e'er I look'd on; [ment.
I rather would command her than my regi-
Caca. I'll have a fling, 'tis but a thousand ducats,
Which I can cozen up in ten days,
And some few jewels to justify my knavery.
Say, shall I marry her, she'll get more money
Than all my usury, put my knavery to it;
She appears the most infallible way of purchase.
I could wish her a size or two stronger for the encounter,
For I am like a lion where I lay hold:

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But these lambs will endure a plaguy load,
And never bleat neither: that, Sir, time has taught us.
I am so virtuous now I cannot speak to her,
The errantest shame-faced ass; I broil away too.

Enter LEON.

Mar. Why, where's this dinner?
Leon. 'Tis not ready, Madam,
Nor shall it be, until I know the guests too,
Nor are they fairly welcome till I bid 'em.
Juan. Is not this my Alferes? He looks another thing.
Are miracles a-foot again?
Mar. Why, sirrah; why, sirrah, you.
Leon. I hear you, saucy woman;
And, as you are my wife, command your absence, [desty.
And know your duty; 'tis the crown of mo-
Duke. Your wife!
Leon. Yes, good my lord, I am her husband,
And, pray take notice, that I claim that hon-
And will maintain it. [our,
Caca. If thou be'st her husband,
I am determined thou shalt be my cuckold;
I'll be thy faithful friend.
Leon. Peace, dirt and dunghill,
I will not lose my anger on a rascal.
Provoke me more, I'll beat thy blown up body
Till thou rebound'st like a tennis-ball.
Caca. I'll talk with you another time. [*Exit.*
Alon. This is miraculous!
San. Is this the fellow,
That had the patience to become a fool,
A flutter'd fool, and on a sudden break,
As if he would show a wonder to the world,
Both in bravery and fortune too?
I am astonished!
Mar. I'll be divorced immediately.
Leon. You shall not.
You shall not have so much will to be wicked.
I am more tender of your honour lady.
You took me for a shadow,
You took me to gloss over your discredit,
To be your fool,
You had thought you had found a coxcomb.
I'm innocent of any foul dishonour I mean to ye,
Only I will be known to be your lord now,
And be a fair one too, or I will fall for't.
Mar. I do command ye from me, thou poor fellow,
Thou cozen'd fool.
Leon. Thou cozen'd fool,
I will not be commanded: I'm above ye.
You may divorce me from your favour, lady,
But from your state you never shall. I'll hold that,
And hold it to my use, the law allows it.
And then maintain your wantonness, I'll wink at it.
Mar. Am I braved thus in mine own house?
Leon. 'Tis mine, Madam;
You are deceived, I'm lord of it; I rule it,
And all that's in't; you've nothing to do here Madam,
But as a servant to sweep clean the lodgings,
And at my farther will to do me service,
And so I'll keep it.
Mar. 'Tis well.
Leon. It shall be better.
Mar. As you love me, give way.
Leon. I will give none, Madam;
I stand upon the ground of my own honour,
And will maintain it: you shall know me now
To be an understanding, feeling man,
And sensible of what a woman aims at;
A young, proud woman, that has will to sail with;
A wanton woman, that her blood provokes too.
I cast my cloud off, and appear myself,
The master of this little piece of mischief,
And I will put a spell about your feet, lady;
They shall not wander but where I give way now.
Duke. Is this the fellow that the people pointed at,
For the mere sign of man, the walking image?
He speaks wond'rous highly.
Leon. As a husband ought, Sir,
In his own house, and it becomes me well too.
I think your grace would grieve if you were put to it,
To have a wife or servant of your own,
(For wives are reckon'd in the rank of servants)
Under your own roof to command ye.
Juan. Brave! a strange conversion; thou shalt lead
In chief now.
Duke. Is there no difference betwixt her and you, Sir?
Leon. Not now, my lord, my fortune makes me even,
And, as I am an honest man, I'm nobler.
Mar. Get me my coach.
Leon. Let me see who dares get it
Till I command; I'll make him draw your coach, [diet,)
And eat your coach too (which will be hard
That executes your will; or, take your coach, lady,
I give you liberty; and take your people,
Which I turn off; and take your will abroad with ye,
Take all these freely, but take me no more,
And so farewell.
Duke. Nay, Sir, you shall not carry it
So bravely off; you shall not wrong a lady
In a high huffing strain, and think to bear it.
We shall not stand by as bawds to your brave
To see a lady weep— [fury,
Leon. They're tears of anger,
Wrung from her rage, because her will prevails not. [cry,
She would e'en now swoon if she could not
Else they were excellent, and I should grieve too; [orient.
But falling thus, they show not sweet nor
Put up, my lord; this is oppression,
And calls the sword of justice to relieve me,
The law to lend her hand, the king to right me, [me.
All which shall understand how you provoke
In mine own house to brave me, is this princely?
Then to my guard, and if I spare your grace,
And do not make this place your monument,
Too rich a tomb for such a rude behaviour,
Mercy forsake me. [*Draws.*
I have a cause will kill a thousand of ye.
Juan. Hold, fair Sir, I beseech ye,
The gentleman but pleads his own right nobly.
Leon. He that dares strike against the husband's freedom, [cuckold,
The husband's curse stick to him, a tamed
His wife be fair and young, but most dishonest,
Most impudent, and he have no feeling of it,
No conscience to reclaim her from a monster;
Let her lie by him like a flattering ruin,
And at one instant kill both name and honour:
Let him be lost, no eye to weep his end,
Nor find no earth that's base enough to bury him.

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Now, Sir, fall on. I'm ready to oppose ye.
Duke. I've better thought. I pray, Sir, use your wife well.
Leon. Mine own humanity will teach me that, Sir.
And now, you're welcome all, and we'll to dinner:
This is my wedding day.
Duke. I'll cross your joy yet.
Juan. I've seen a miracle; hold thine own, soldier.
Sure they dare fight in fire that conquer women.
San. He has beaten all my loose thoughts out of me,
As if he had thrash'd 'em out of the husk.

Enter PEREZ.

Per. Save ye, which is the lady of the house?
Leon. That's she, Sir, that good-natured, pretty lady,
If you'd speak with her.
Juan. Don Michael!
Per. Pray do not know me, I am full of business.
When I have more time I'll be merry with ye.
It is the woman. Good Madam, tell me truly,
Had you a maid call'd Estifania?
Mar. Yes, truly had I.
Per. Was she a maid, d'you think?
Mar. I dare not swear for her.——
For she had but a scant fame.
Per. Was she your kinswoman?
Mar. Not that ever I knew: now I look better, Sir.
I think you married her; give you much joy,
Per. Give me a halter.
Mar. You may reclaim her; 'twas a wild young girl.
Per. Is not this house mine, Madam?
Was she not owner of it? Pray speak truly.
Mar. No, certainly: I'm sure my money paid for it,
And ne'er remember yet I gave it you, Sir.
Per. The hangings and the plate too?
Mar. All are mine, Sir.
And every thing you see about the building:
She only kept my house when I was absent;
And so I'll keep it, I was weary of her.
Per. Where is your maid?
Mar. Do you not know that have her?
She's yours now, why should I look after her?
Since that first hour I came I never saw her.
Per. I saw her later, would the devil had had her.
It is all true, I find; a wild-fire take her.
Juan. Is thy wife with child, Don Michael? thy excellent wife?
Art thou a man yet?
Alon. When shall we come and visit thee?
San. And eat some rare fruit? Thou hast admirable orchards.
You are so jealous now! Pox o' your jealousy,
How scornfully you look.
Per. Pr'ythee leave fooling,
I'm in no humour now to fool and prattle.
Did she ne'er play the wag with you?
Mar. Yes, many times;
So often that I was ashamed to keep her.
But I forgave her, Sir, in hopes she'd mend still;
And had not you o' the instant married her,
I'd put her off.
Per. I thank ye: I am bless'd still;
Which way soe'er I turn I'm a made man.
Miserably gull'd beyond recovery.
Juan. You'll stay and dine?
Per. Certain I cannot, captain.
Hark in thine ear, I am the arrant'st puppy,
The miserablest ass!—But I must leave ye.
I am in haste, in haste. Bless you, good Madam,
And may you prove as good as my wife.
Leon. What then, Sir?
Per. No matter, if the devil had one to fetch the other. [*Exit* PEREZ.
Leon. Will you walk in, Sir, will your grace but honour me,
And taste our dinner? You are nobly welcome,
All anger's past, I hope, and I shall serve ye.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Street.

Enter PEREZ.

Per. I'll to a conjurer, but I'll find this polecat,
This pilfering whore. A plague of veils, I cry,
And covers for the impudence of women,
Their sanctity in show will deceive devils.
It is my evil angel, let me bless me.

Enter ESTIFANIA, *with a casket.*

Estif. 'Tis he! I'm caught. I must stand to it stoutly,
And show no shake of fear. I see he's angry,
Vex'd at the uttermost.
Per. My worthy wife,
I have been looking of your modesty
All the town over.
Estif. My most noble husband,
I'm glad I found ye; for in truth I'm weary,
Weary and lame with looking out your lordship.
Per. I've been in bawdy-houses——
Estif. I believe you, and very lately too.
Per. Pray ye, pardon me;
To seek your ladyship, I have been in cellars,
In private cellars, where the thirsty bawds
Hear your confessions; I have been at plays,
To look you out among the youthful actors;
At puppet-shows, you are mistress of the motions;
At gossipping I hearken'd after you,
But among those confusions of lewd tongues,
There's no distinguishing beyond a Babel;
I was amongst the nuns, because you sing well,
But they say yours are bawdy songs, and they mourn for ye;
And last I went to church to seek you out,
'Tis so long since you were there, they have forgot you.
Estif. You've had a pretty progress; I'll tell mine now.
To look you out, I went to twenty taverns—
Per. And are you sober?
Estif. Yes, I reel not yet, Sir;
Where I saw twenty drunk, most of 'em soldiers,
There I had great hope to find you disguised too;
From hence to the dicing-house, there I found quarrels
Needless and fenceless, swords, pots, and candlesticks,
Tables, and stools, and all in one confusion,
And no man knew his friend. I left this chaos,
And to the surgeon's went, he will'd my stay,
For, says he, learnedly, if he be tippled,
Twenty to one he whores, and then I hear of him;
If he be mad, he quarrels, then he comes too.

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I sought ye where no safe thing would have ventured,
Amongst diseases, base and vile, vile women,
For I remember'd your old Roman axiom,
The more the danger, still the more the honour.
Last, to your confessor I came, who told me,
You were too proud to pray; and here I found ye.
Per. She bears up bravely, and the rogue is witty;
But I shall dash it instantly to nothing.
Here leave we off our wanton languages,
And now conclude we in a sharper tongue.
Why am I cozen'd!——
Estif. Why am I abused?
Per. Thou most vile, base, abominable——
Estif. Captain.
Per. Thou stinking, over-stew'd, incorrigible——
Estif. Captain.
Per. Do you echo me?
Estif. Yes, Sir, and go before ye,
And round about ye: why do you rail at me,
For that was your own sin, your own knavery?
Per. And brave me too?
Estif. You'd best now draw your sword, captain!
Draw it upon a woman, do, brave captain.
Upon your wife, oh, most renown'd captain!
Per. A plague upon thee, answer me directly;
Why didst thou marry me?
Estif. To be my husband:
I thought you had had infinite, but I'm cozen'd.
Per. Why didst thou flatter me, and show me wonders?
A house and riches, when they are but shadows,
Shadows to me!
Estif. Why did you work on me?
It was but my part to requite you, Sir,
With your strong soldier's wit, and swore you'd bring me
So much in chains, so much in jewels, husband,
So much in right rich clothes?
Per. Thou hast 'em, rascal;
I gave 'em to thy hands, my trunks and all,
And thou hast open'd them and sold my treasure.
Estif. Sir, there's your treasure, sell it to a tinker,
To mend old kettles! Is this noble usage?
Let all the world view here the captain's treasure.
A man would think now these were worthy matters;
Here's a shoeing horn, chain gilt over, how it scenteth,
Worse than the dirty mouldy heels it served for;
And here's another of a lesser value,
So little, I would shame to tie my dog in't,
These are my jointure; blush and save a labour,
Or these else will blush for ye.
Per. A fire subtile ye, are ye so crafty?
Estif. Here's a goodly jewel;
Did not you win this at Goletta, captain?
Or took it in the field from some brave bashaw?
See how it sparkles—Like an old lady's eyes;
And fills each room with light like a close lantern,
This would do rarely in an abbey window,
To cozen pilgrims.
Per. Pr'ythee leave prating.
Estif. And here's a chain of whitings' eyes for pearls,
A mussel-monger would have made a better.
Per. Nay, pr'ythee, wife, my clothes, my clothes.
Estif. I'll tell ye,
Your clothes are parallels to these, all counterfeit.
Put these and them on, you're a man of copper,
A kind of candlestick,
A copper, a copper captain, these you thought you.
To have cozen'd me withal, but I am quit with you.
Per. Is there no house then, nor no ground about it?
No plate nor hangings?
Estif. There are none, sweet husband.
Shadow for shadow is as equal justice.
[PEREZ *sings.*—ESTIF. *sings.*
Can you rail now? Pray put your fury up, Sir;
And speak great words, you are a soldier, thunder.
Per. I will speak little, I have play'd the fool,
And so I am rewarded.
Estif. You have spoke well, Sir;
And now I see you're so conformable,
I'll heighten you again. Go to your house,
They're packing to be gone, you must sup there,
I'll meet you, and bring clothes and clean linen after,
And all things shall be well. I'll colt you once more,
And teach you to bring copper.
Per. Tell me one thing,
I do beseech thee tell me truth, wife;
However, I forgive thee; art thou honest?
The beldam swore——
Estif. I bid her tell you so, Sir,
It was my plot; alas, my credulous husband;
The lady told you too——
Per. Most strange things of thee.
Estif. Still 'twas my way, and all to try your sufferance?
And she denied the house?
Per. She knew me not,
No, nor title that I had.
Estif. 'Twas well carried;
No more, I'm right and straight.
Per. I would believe thee,
But, Heaven knows, how my heart is; will ye follow me?
Estif. I'll be there straight.
Per. I'm fool'd, yet dare not find it.
[*Exit* PEREZ.
Estif. Go, silly fool; thou may'st be a good soldier
In open fields, but for our private service
Thou art an ass. I'll make thee so or miss else.

Enter CACAFOGO.

Here comes another trout that I must tickle,
And tickle daintily, I've lost my end else.
May I crave your leave, Sir?
Caca. Pr'ythee be answer'd, thou shalt crave no leave.
I'm in my meditations, do not vex me.
A beaten thing, but this hour a most bruised thing,
That people had compassion on, it look'd so:
The next, Sir Palmerin. Here's fine proportion!
An ass, and then an elephant. Sweet justice!
There's no way left to come at her now, no craving,
If money could come near, yet I would pay him;
I have a mind to make him a huge cuckold,
And money may do much; a thousand ducats!
'Tis but the letting blood of a rank heir.
Estif. 'Pray you hear me.

Caca. I know thou hast some wedding-ring to pawn now,
Of silver gilt, with a blind posy in't:
'Love and a mill-horse should go round together:'
Or thy child's whistle, or thy squirrel's chain.
I'll none of 'em. I would she did but know me.
Or would this fellow had but use of money,
That I might come in any way.
Estif. I'm gone, Sir;
And I shall tell the beauty sent me to ye;
The lady Margaritta——
Caca. Stay, I pr'ythee.
What is thy will? I turn me wholly to ye;
And talk now till thy tongue ache, I will hear ye.
Estif. She would entreat you, Sir.
Caca. She shall command, Sir;
Let it be so; I beseech thee, my sweet gentlewoman,
Do not forget thyself.
Estif. She does command then
This courtesy, because she knows you're noble.
Caca. Your mistress by the way?
Estif. My natural mistress.
Upon these jewels, Sir, they're fair and rich,
And view 'em right.
Caca. To doubt 'em is a heresy.
Estif. A thousand ducats; 'tis upon necessity
Of present use; her husband, Sir, is stubborn.
Caca. Long may he be so.
Estif. She desires withal
A better knowledge of your parts and person,
And when you please to do her so much honour——
Caca. Come, let's despatch.
Estif. In truth I've heard her say, Sir,
Of a fat man she has not seen a sweeter.
But in this business, Sir.
Caca. Let's do it first,
And then dispute; the lady's use may long for't.
Estif. All secrecy she would desire. She told me
How wise you are.
Caca. We are not wise to talk thus.
Carry her the gold, I'll look her out a jewel
Shall sparkle like her eyes, and thee another.
Come, pr'ythee come, I long to serve the lady;
Long monstrously. Now, valour, I shall meet you,
You that dare dukes.
Estif. Green goose, you are now in sippets.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—A Chamber.

Enter the DUKE, SANCHIO, JUAN, *and* ALONZO.

Duke. He shall not have his will, I shall prevent him.
I have a toy here that will turn the tide,
And suddenly and strangely. Here, Don Juan,
Do you present it to him.
Juan. I am commanded.
[*Exit.*
Duke. A fellow founded out of charity,
And moulded to the height, contemn his maker,
Curb the free hand that made him!
It must not be.
San. That such an oyster-shell should hold a pearl,
And of so rare a price, in prison!
Was she made to be the matter of her own undoing,
To let a slovenly unwieldy fellow,
Unruly and self-will'd, dispose her beauties?
We suffer all, Sir, in this sad eclipse;
She should shine where she might show like herself,
An absolute sweetness, to comfort those admire her,
And shed her beams upon her friends.
We are gull'd all,
And all the world will grumble at your patience,
If she be ravish'd thus.
Duke. Ne'er fear it, Sanchio;
We'll have her free again, and move at court
In her clear orb. But one sweet handsomeness
To bless this part of Spain, and have that slubber'd!
Alon. 'Tis every good man's cause, and we must stir in it.
Duke. I'll warrant ye, he shall be glad to please us,
And glad to share too; we shall hear anon
A new song from him; let's attend a little.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—Another Chamber.

Enter LEON *and* JUAN *with a Commission.*

Leon. Colonel, I am bound to you for this nobleness.
I should have been your officer, 'tis true, Sir;
And a proud man I should have been to 've served you.
'T has pleased the king, out of his boundless favours,
To make me your companion: this commission
Gives me a troop of horse.
Juan. I do rejoice at it,
And am a glad man we shall gain your company.
I'm sure the king knows you are newly married, Sir.
And out of that respect gives you more time,
Leon. Within four days I'm gone, so he commands me,
And 'tis not mannerly for me to argue it.
The time grows shorter still—Are your goods ready?
Juan. They are aboard.
Leon. Who waits there?

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Sir.
Leon. Do you hear, ho? Go carry this unto your mistress, Sir,
And let her see how much the king has honour'd me;
Bid her be lusty; she must make a soldier.
Go, take down all the hangings, jewels,
And pack up all my clothes, my plate and
And all the furniture that's portable.
Sir, when we lie in garrison, 'tis necessary
We keep a handsome port, for the king's honour.
And, do you hear? let all your lady's wardrobe too.
Be safely placed in trunks; they must along
Serv. Whither must they go?
Leon. To the wars, Lorenzo.
Serv. Must my mistress go, Sir?
Leon. Ay, your mistress, and you, and all must go.
I will not leave a turnspit behind me man:
That has one dram of spleen against a Dutch-
All must go.
Serv. Why, Pedro, Vasco, Diego, come, help me, boys.
[*Exit.*
Juan. H' as taken a brave way to save his honour dearly.
And cross the duke; now I shall love him
By the life of credit thou'rt a noble gentleman.

Enter MARGARITTA *led by two Ladies.*

Leon. Why how now, wife, what, sick at my preferment?
This is not kindly done.

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Mar. No sooner love ye,
Love ye entirely, Sir, brought to consider
The goodness of your mind and mine own duty,
But lose you instantly, be divorced from ye?
This is cruelty. I'll to the king,
And tell him 'tis unjust to part two souls,
Two minds so nearly mix'd.
Leon. By no means, sweetheart.
Mar. If he were married but four days, as I am—
Leon. He'd hang himself the fifth, or fly his country. [*Aside.*
Mar. He'd make it treason for that tongue that durst
But talk of war, or any thing to vex him.
You shall not go.
Leon. Indeed I must, sweet wife.
What should I lose the king for a few kisses?
We'll have enough.
Mar. I'll to the duke, my cousin; he shall to the king.
Leon. He did me this great office;
I thank his grace for't: should I pray him now
T' undo't again? Fy, 'twere a base discredit.
Mar. Would I were able, Sir, to bear you company;
How willing should I be then, and how merry!
I will not live alone.
Leon. Be in peace, you shall not. [*Knocking within.*
Mar. What knocking's this? Oh, Heaven, my head! Why, rascal,
I think the war's begun i' the house already.
Leon. The preparation is, they're taking down [jewels,
And packing up the hangings, plate, and
And all those furnitures that shall befit me
When I lie in garrison.

Enter LORENZO.

Lor. Must the coach go too, Sir?
Leon. How will your lady pass to the sea else easily? [it:
We shall find shipping for't there to transport
Mar. I go? Alas!
Leon. I'll have a main care of ye: [easier,
I know you are sickly, he shall drive the
And all accommodation shall attend ye.
Mar. Would I were able.
Leon. Come, I warrant ye.
Am not I with ye, sweet? Are her clothes pack'd up,
And all her linen? Give your maids direction:
You know my time's but short, and I'm commanded.
Mar. Let me have a nurse,
And all such necessary people with me,
An easy bark.
Leon. It shall not trot, I warrant ye;
Curvet it may sometimes.
Mar. I am with child, Sir.
Leon. At four days' warning! This is something speedy.
Do you conceive, as our jennets do, with a west-wind?
My heir will be an errant fleet one, lady.
I'll swear you was a maid when I first lay with ye.
Mar. Pray do not swear, I thought I was a maid too;
But we may both be cozen'd in that point, Sir.
Leon. In such a strait point, sure I could not err, Madam.
Juan. This is another tenderness to try him.
Fetch her up now.
Mar. You must provide a cradle, and what a trouble's that!
Leon. The sea shall rock it:
'Tis the best nurse; 'twill roar and rock together.
A swinging storm will sing you such a lullaby!
Mar. Faith let me stay: I shall but shame you, Sir.
Leon. An you were a thousand shames you shall along with me:
At home I'm sure you'd prove a million.
Every man carries the bundle of his sins [ye.
Upon his back: you are mine; I'll sweat for

Enter DUKE, ALONZO, *and* SANCHIO.

Duke. What, Sir, preparing for your noble [journey?
'Tis well, and full of care.
I saw your mind was wedded to the war.
And knew you'd prove some good man for your country;
Therefore, fair cousin, with your gentle pardon,
I got this place. What, mourn at his advancement! [cousin:
You are to blame; he'll come again, sweet
Meantime, like sad Penelope and sage,
Among your maids at home, and housewifely—
Leon. No, Sir, I dare not leave her to that solitariness: [quarters,
She's young, and grief or ill news from those
May daily cross her: she shall go along, Sir.
Duke. By no means, captain.
Leon. By all means, an't please ye.
Duke. What, take a young and tender-bodied-lady,
And expose her to those dangers, and those
A sick lady too! [tumults!
Leon. 'Twill make her well, Sir;
There's no such friend to health as wholesome travel.
San. Away; it must not be.
Alon. It ought not, Sir.
Go hurry her! It is not humane, captain.
Duke. I cannot blame her tears——Fright her with tempests,
With thunder of the war?
I dare swear if she were able——
Leon. She's most able:
And, pray ye, swear not: she must go, there's no remedy:
Nor greatness, nor the trick you had to part us,
Which smells too rank, too open, too evident,
Shall hinder me. Had she but ten hours life,
Nay less, but two hours, I would have her with me;
I would not leave her fame to so much ruin,
To such a desolation and discredit, as
Her weakness and your hot will would work her to.

Enter PEREZ.

What mask is this now?
More tropes and figures to abuse my sufferance!
What cousin's this?
Juan. Michael Van Owle, how dost thou?
In what dark barn, or tod of aged ivy,
Hast thou lain hid?
Per. Things must both ebb and flow, colonel,
And people must conceal and shine again.
You're welcome hither, as your friend may say, gentlemen;
A pretty house ye see handsomely seated,
Sweet and convenient walks, the waters crystal.
Alon. He's certain mad.

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Juan. As mad as a French taylor, that
Has nothing in his head but ends of fustians.
Per. I see you're packing now, my gentle cousin,
And my wife told me I should find it so;
'Tis true I do: you were merry when I was last here;
But 'twas your will to try my patience, Madam.
I'm sorry that my swift occasions
Can let you take your pleasure here no longer;
Yet I would have you think, my honour'd cousin, [vant's.
This house, and all I have, are all your ser-
Leon. What house, what pleasure, Sir? what do you mean?
Per. You hold the jest so stiff, 'twill prove discourteous.
This house, I mean, the pleasures of this place.
Leon. And what of them?
Per. They're mine, Sir, and you know it:
My wife's, I mean, and so conferr'd upon me.
The hangings, Sir, I must entreat your servants,
That are so busy in their offices,
Again to minister to their right uses.
I shall take view o' the plate anon, and furnitures
That are of under place. You're merry still, cousin,
And of a pleasant constitution:
Men of great fortunes make their mirths *ad placitum.*
Leon. Pr'ythee, good, stubborn wife, tell me directly;
Good, evil wife, leave fooling, and tell me honestly,
Is this my kinsman?
Mar. I can tell ye nothing.
Leon. I've many kinsmen, but so mad a one,
And so frantic——all the house?
Per. All mine,
And all within it. I will not bate you an ace on't.
Can't you receive a noble courtesy,
And quietly and handsomely as ye ought, coz,
But you must ride o' the top on't?
Leon. Canst thou fight?
Per. I'll tell ye presently; I could have done it, Sir.
Leon. For you must law and claw before ye get it.
Juan. Away, no quarrels.
Leon. Now I am more temperate,
I'll have it proved you were ne'er yet in Bed-
Never in love, for that's a lunacy; [lam;
No great 'state left ye, that ye never look'd for,
Nor cannot manage, that's a rank distemper;
That you were christen'd, and who answer'd for you,
And then I yield——
Per. He has half persuaded me I was bred i' the moon.
I have ne'er a brush at my breech—Are not we both mad?
And is not this a fantastic house we are in,
And all a dream we do? Will you walk out?
And if I do not beat thee presently
Into a sound belief as sense can give thee,
Brick me into the wall there for a chimney-piece,
And say, I was one o' the Cæsars done by a seal-cutter.
Leon. I'll talk no more; come, we'll away immediately.
Mar. Why then the house is his, and all that's in it:
I'll give away my skin, but I'll undo ye:
I gave it to his wife. You must restore, Sir;
And make a new provision.
Per. Am I mad now,
Or am I christen'd? You, my Pagan cousin,
My mighty Mahound kinsman, what quirk now?
You shall be welcome all. I hope to see, Sir,
Your grace here, and my coz: we are all soldiers,
And must do naturally for one another.
Duke. Are you blank at this? Then I must tell ye, Sir,
Ye've no command; now you may go at pleasure,
And ride your ass troop. 'Twas a trick I used
To try your jealousy, upon entreaty,
And saving of your wife.
Leon. All this not moves me,
Nor stirs my gall, nor alters my affections.
You have more furniture, more houses, lady,
And rich ones too; I will make bold with those;
And you have land i' the Indies, as I take it;
Thither we'll go, and view a while those climates,
Visit your factors there, that may betray ye.
'Tis done, we must go.
Mar. Now thou'rt a brave gentleman;
And by this sacred light I love thee dearly.
Hark ye, Sir, [Sir;
The house is none of yours; I did but jest,
You are no coz of mine; I beseech ye, vanish.
I tell you plain, you have no more right than he
Has, that senseless thing. Your wife has once more fool'd ye, Sir.
Go ye and consider.
Leon. Good-morrow, my sweet Mahound cousin.
You are welcome—welcome all—my cousin too—
We are soldiers, and should naturally do for one another.
Per. By this hand she dies for't,
Or any man that speaks for her.
These are fine toys. [*Exit* PEREZ.
Mar. Let me request you stay but one poor month;
You shall have a commission, and I'll go too.
Give me but will so far.
Leon. Well, I will try ye.
Good-morrow to your grace; we've private business.
Duke. If I miss thee again, I'm an errant bungler.
Juan. Thou shalt have my command, and I'll march under thee,
Nay, be thy boy, before thou shalt be baffled;
Thou are so brave a fellow.
Alon. I have seen visions. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—MARGARITTA'S *House.*

Enter LEON *with a letter, and* MARGARITTA.

Leon. Come hither, wife. Do you know this hand?
Mar. I do, Sir; 'tis Estifania's, that was once my woman.
Leon. She writes to me here, that one Cacafogo,
A usuring jeweller's son, I know the rascal,
Has mortally fallen in love with you.

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Mar. He is a monster; deliver me from mountains.
Leon. Do you go a-birding for all sorts of people?
And this evening will come to ye, and show ye jewels,
And offers any thing to get access to you.
If I can make or sport or profit on him,
(For he is fit for both) she bids me use him,
And so I will. Be you conformable, and follow but my will.
Mar. I shall not fail, Sir.
Leon. Will the duke come again, do you think?
Mar. No, sure, Sir.
H'as now no policy to bring him hither.
Leon. Nor bring you to him, if my wit hold, fair wife.
Let's in to dinner. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Street.*

Enter PEREZ.

Per. Had I but lungs enough to bawl sufficiently,
That all the queans in Christendom might hear me,
That men might run away from the contagion,
I had my wish. Would it were made high treason,
Most infinite high, for any man to marry:
I mean, for a man that would live handsomely,
And like a gentleman in's wits and credit.
What torments shall I put her to? Phalaris' bull now?
Pox! they love bulling too well, though they smoke for't.
Cut her in pieces, every piece will live still,
And every morsel of her will do mischief.
They have so many lives, there's no hanging of 'em; [feathers;
They are too light to drown, they're cork and
To burn too cold, they live like salamanders:
Under huge heaps of stones to bury her,
And so depress her, as they did the giants,
She will move under more than built old Ba-
I must destroy her. [bel.

Enter CACAFOGO, *with a Casket.*

Caca. Be cozen'd by a thing of clouts! a she moth, [cheated,
That every silkman's shop breeds! To be
And of a thousand ducats, by a whim-wham!
Per. Who's that is cheated? Speak again, thou vision.
But art thou cheated? Minister some comfort.
Tell me, I conjure thee, art thou cheated bravely? [coxcomb,
Come, pr'ythee come; art thou so pure a
To be undone? Do not dissemble with me.
Caca. Then keep thy circle:
For I'm a spirit wild that flies about thee;
And, whosoe'er thou art, if thou be'st human,
I'd let thee plainly know, I'm cheated damnably.
Per. Ha, ha, ha!
Caca. Dost thou laugh? Damnably; I say, most damnably.
Per. By whom, good spirit? Speak, speak! Ha, ha, ha!
Caca. I'll utter; laugh till thy lungs crack; by a rascal woman!
A lewd, abominable, and plain woman!
Dost thou laugh still?
Per. I must laugh, pr'ythee pardon me,
I shall laugh terribly.
Caca. I shall be angry,
Terribly angry; I have cause.
Per. That's it;
And 'tis no reason but thou shouldst be angry,
Angry at heart: yet I must laugh still at thee.
By a woman cheated! Art sure it was a woman?
Caca. I shall break thy head; my valour itches at thee.
Per. It is no matter. By a woman cozen'd,
A real woman!
Caca. By a real devil.
Plague of her jewels, and her copper chains,
How rank they smell.
Per. Sweet, cozen'd Sir, let's see them.
I have been cheated too, I would have you note that,
And lewdly cheated, by a woman also,
A scurvy woman. I am undone, sweet Sir,
Therefore I must have leave to laugh.
Caca. Pray ye take it;
You are the merriest undone man in Europe.
What need we fiddles, bawdy songs, and sherry,
When our own miseries can make us merry?
Per. Ha, ha, ha! [worth
I've seen these jewels: what a notable penny-
Have you had! You will not take, Sir,
Some twenty ducats—
Caca. Thou'rt deceived; I will take——
Per. To clear your bargain, now.
Caca. I'll take some ten,
Some any thing, half ten, half a ducat.
Per. An excellent lapidary set these stones,
D'ye mark their waters? [sure:
Caca. Quicksands choke their waters,
And hers that brought them too: but I shall find her.
Per. And so shall I, I hope: but do not hurt her:
If you had need of cozening, as you may have,
(For such gross natures will desire it often,
'Tis, at sometimes too, a fine variety,)
You cannot find in all this kingdom,
A woman that can cozen you so neatly.
She hath taken half mine anger off with this trick. [*Exit.*
Caca. If I were valiant now, I'd kill this fellow.
I've money enough lies by me, at a pinch,
To pay for twenty rascals' lives that vex me.
I'll to this lady; there I shall be satisfied. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*A Street.*

Enter PEREZ *and* ESTIFANIA, *meeting.*

Per. Why, how dar'st thou meet me again, thou rebel?
And know'st how thou hast used me thrice, thou rascal? [geance,
Were there not ways enough to fly my ven-
No holes nor vaults to hide thee from my fury,
But thou must meet me face to face to kill thee?
I would not seek thee to destroy thee willingly,
But now thou com'st t' invite me, com'st upon me. [manner,
How like a sheep-biting rogue, taken i' the
And ready for a halter, dost thou look now?
Thou hast a hanging look, thou scurvy thing.
Hast ne'er a knife,
Nor e'er a string, to lead thee to Elysium?
Be there no pitiful 'pothecaries in this town,
That have compassion upon wretched women,
That dare administer a dram of ratsbane,
But thou must fall to me?
Estif. I know you've mercy.

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Per. If I had tons of mercy thou deserv'st none. [houses
What new trick's now a-foot, and what new
Have you i' the air? What orchards in appari-
What canst thou say for thy life? [tion?
Estif. Little or nothing.
I know you'll kill me, and I know 'tis useless
To beg for mercy. Pray let me draw my book
And pray a little. [out,
Per. Do, a very little:
For I have farther business than thy killing.
I have money yet to borrow. Speak when you're ready.
Estif. Now, Sir, now. [*Shows a pistol.*
Come on. Do you start off from me?
Do you sweat, great captain? Have you seen a spirit?
Per. Do you wear guns?
Estif. I am a soldier's wife, Sir,
And by that privilege I may be arm'd.
Now, what's the news? And let's discourse more friendly,
And talk of our affairs in peace.
Per. Let me see,
Pr'ythee, let me see thy gun; 'tis a very pretty one.
Estif. No, no, Sir, you shall feel.
Per. Hold, hold, ye villain! what would
Kill your own husband. [you
Estif. Let mine own husband then,
Be in's own wits. There, there's a thousand ducats.
Who must provide for you? And yet you'll kill me.
Per. I will not hurt thee for ten thousand millions.
Estif. When will you redeem your jewels? I have pawn'd 'em,
You see for what we must keep touch.
Per. I'll kiss thee;
And get as many more, I'll make thee famous.
Had we the house now!
Estif. Come along with me;
If that be vanish'd there be more to hire, Sir.
Per. I see I am an ass when thou art near me. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*A Chamber.*

Enter LEON *and* MARGARITTA.

Leon. Come, we'll away unto your country house,
And there we'll learn to live contentedly.
This place is full of charge, and full of hurry;
No part of sweetness dwells about these cities.
Mar. Whither you will, I wait upon your pleasure:
Live in a hollow tree, Sir, I'll live with ye.
Leon. Ay, now you strike a harmony, a true one,
When your obedience waits upon your husband.
Why, now I dote upon you, love ye dearly;
And my rough nature falls, like roaring streams,
Clearly and sweetly into your embraces.
Oh, what a jewel is a woman excellent,
A wise, a virtuous, and a noble woman!
When we meet such, we bear our stamps on both sides, [virtues.
And through the world we hold our current
Alone we are single medals, only faces,
And wear our fortunes out in useless shadows.
Command you now, and ease me of that trouble,
I'll be as humble to you as a servant.
Bid whom you please, invite your noble friends,
They shall be welcome all, now experience
Has bound you fast unto the chain of goodness.
[*Clashing of swords—a cry within, of "down with their swords."*
What noise is this? what dismal cry?
Mar. 'Tis loud too.
Sure there's some mischief done i' the street; look out there.
Leon. Look out, and help.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Oh, Sir, the Duke Medina——
Leon. What of the Duke Medina?
Serv. Oh, sweet gentleman, is almost slain!
Mar. Away, away, and help him;
All the house help. [*Exit* SERVANT.
Leon. How! slain? Why, Margaritta,
Wife, sure some new device they have a-foot again,
Some trick upon my credit; I shall meet it.
I'd rather guide a ship imperial,
Alone, and in a storm, than rule one woman.

Enter DUKE, SANCHIO, ALONZO, *and* SERVANT.

Mar. How came you hurt, Sir?
Duke. I fell out with my friend, the noble colonel. [honour;
My cause was naught, for 'twas about your
And he that wrongs the innocent ne'er prospers,
And he has left me thus; for charity,
Lend me a bed to ease my tortured body,
That ere I perish I may show my penitence.
I fear I'm slain.
Leon. Help, gentlemen, to carry him.
There shall be nothing in this house, my lord,
But as your own.
Duke. I thank ye, noble Sir.
Leon. To bed with him; and, wife, give your attendance.
[*Exeunt* DUKE, SAN. ALON. MARG. *and* SERVANT.

Enter JUAN.

Leon. Afore me,
'Tis rarely counterfeited.
Juan. True, it is so, Sir! [ye.
And take you heed this last blow do not spoil
He is not hurt, only we made a scuffle,
As though we purposed anger: that same scratch,
On's hand, he took, to colour all, and draw compassion, [ningly.
That he might get into your house more cun-
I must not stay; stand now, and you're a brave fellow.
Leon. I thank ye, noble colonel, and I honour ye.
Never be quiet! [*Exit* JUAN.

Enter MARGARITTA.

Mar. He's most despetate ill, Sir!
I do not think these ten months will recover him.
Leon. Does he hire my house to play the fool in,
Or does it stand on fairy ground? We're haunted.
Are all men and their wives troubled with dreams thus?
Mar. What ail you, Sir?
Leon. Nay, what ail you, sweet wife,
To put these daily pastimes on my patience?

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What dost thou see in me, that I should suffer this?
Have I not done my part like a true husband,
And paid some desperate debts you never look'd for?
Mar. You have done handsomely, I must confess, Sir.
Leon. Have I not kept thee waking like a hawk,
And watch'd thee with delights, to satisfy thee,
The very tithes of which had won a widow?
Mar. Alas, I pity ye.
Leon. Thou'lt make me angry;
Thou never saw'st me mad yet.
Mar. You are always;
You carry a king of bedlam still about ye.
Leon. If thou pursu'st me farther, I run stark mad.
If you have more hurt dukes, or gentlemen,
To lie here on your cure, I shall be desperate.
I know the trick, and you shall feel I know it.
Are ye so hot that no hedge can contain ye?
I'll have thee let blood in all the veins about thee; [open'd,
I'll have thy thoughts found too, and have them
Thy spirits purged, for those are they that fire ye.
The maid shall be thy mistress, thou the maid,
And all her servile labours thou shalt reach at,
And go through cheerfully, or else sleep empty,
That maid shall lie by me, to teach you duty;
You in a pallet by, to humble ye,
And grieve for what you lose, thou foolish, wicked woman.
Mar. I've lost myself, Sir,
And all that was my base self, disobedience: [*Kneels.*
My wantonness, my stubbornness, I've lost too.
And now, by that pure faith, good wives are crown'd with,
By your own nobleness——
Leon. Beware, beware——have you no fetch now?
Mar. No, by my repentance, no.
Leon. And art thou truly, truly honest?
Mar. These tears will show it.
Leon. I take you up, and wear you next my heart:
See you be worth it.——

Enter ALTEA.

Now, what with you?
Alt. I come to tell my lady,
There is a fulsome fellow would fain speak with her.
Leon. 'Tis Cacafogo; keep him from the duke, [ter.
The duke from him; anon he'll yield us laugh-
Alt. Where is it, please that we shall detain him?
He seems at war with reason, full of wine.
Leon. To the cellar with him; 'tis the drunkard's den,
Fit cover for such beasts. Should he be resty,
Say I'm at home; unwieldy as he is,
He'll creep into an auger hole to shun me.
Alt. I'll dispose him there. [*Exit.*
Leon. Now, Margaritta, comes your trial on;
The duke expects you; acquit yourself to him;
I put you to the test; you have my trust,
My confidence, my love.
Mar. I will deserve 'em. [*Exit.*
Leon. My work is done, and now my heart's at ease.
I read in every look, she means me fairly;
And nobly shall my love reward her for't.
He who betrays his rights, the husband's rights,
To pride and wantonness; or who denies
Affection to the heart he has subdued,
Forfeits his claim to manhood and humanity. [*Exit.*

* *SCENE V.—A Chamber.* DUKE *discovered in a night-gown.*

Duke. Why, now this is most excellent invention;
I shall succeed, spite of this huffing husband.
I can but smile to think most wary spouses
The soonest are deceived.

Enter MARGARITTA.

Who's there? My love?
Mar. 'Tis I, my lord.
Duke. Are you alone, sweet friend?
Mar. Alone, and come to inquire how your wounds are.
Duke. I have none, lady; not a hurt about me.
My damages I did but counterfeit,
And feign'd the quarrel to enjoy you, lady.
I am as lusty and as full of health,
As high in blood——
Mar. As low in blood, you mean:
Dishonest thoughts debase the greatest birth;
The man that acts unworthily, though ennobled,
Sullies his honour.
Duke. Nay, nay, my Margaritta;
Come to my couch, and there let's lisp love's language.
Mar. Would you take that which I've no right to give?
Steal wedlock's property; and in his house,
Beneath the roof of him that entertains you,
Would you his wife betray?—Will you become
Th' ungrateful viper, who, restored to life,
Venom'd the breast which saved him?
Duke. Leave these dull thoughts to mortifying penance;
Let us, while love is lusty, prove its power.
Mar. Ill wishes once, my lord, my mind debased: [it:
You found my weakness, wanted to ensnare
Shameful, I own my fault, but 'tis repented.
No more the wanton Margaritta now,
But the chaste wife of Leon. His great merit,
His manly tenderness, his noble nature,
Commands from me affection in return
Pure as esteem can offer. He has won me;
I owe him all my heart.
Duke. Indeed, fair lady,
This jesting well becomes a sprightly beauty.
Love prompts to celebrate sublimer rites.
No more mementos; let me press you to me,
And stifle with my kisses——
Mar. Nay, then, within there!

Enter LEON, JUAN, ALONZO, *and* SANCHIO.

Leon. Did you call, my wife; or you, my lord? [swer!
Was it your grace that wanted me?—No an-
How do you, my good lord? What, out of bed!
Methinks you look but poorly on this matter.
Has my wife wounded you? You were well before.
Duke. More hurt than ever; spare your reproach;
I feel too much already.

* This scene is entirely altered for representation: as there was no possibility of distinguishing the variations from the original, it was thought necessary to omit, in order to prevent confusion.

Leon. I see it, Sir—And now your grace shall know,
I can as readily pardon as revenge.
Be comforted; all is forgotten.
Duke. I thank you, Sir.
Leon. Wife, you are a right one;
And now, with unknown nations I dare trust ye.
Juan. No more feign'd fights, my lord, they never prosper.

Enter LORENZO.

Lor. Please you, Sir,
We cannot keep this gross fat man in order:
He swears he'll have admittance to my lady,
And reels about, and clamours most outrageously.
Leon. Let him come up—Wife, here's another suitor
We forgot: he has been sighing in the cellar,
Making my casks his mistresses.
Will your grace permit us to produce a rival?
Duke. No more on that theme, I request, Don Leon.
Leon. Here comes the porpus; he's devilish drunk.
Let me stand by.

Enter CACAFOGO, *drunk.*

Caca. Where is my bona roba? Oh, you're all here. Why, I don't fear snap-dragons—Impotential, powerfully potion'd—I can drink with Hector, and beat him too. Then what care I for captains; I'm full of Greek wine: the true ancient courage.—Sweet Mrs. Margaritta, let me kiss thee.—Your kisses shall pay me for his kicking.
Leon. What would you?
Caca. Sir!
Leon. Lead off the wretch.
Duke. Most filthy figure truly.
Caca. Filthy! Oh, you're a prince; yet I can buy all of you, your wives and all.
Juan. Sleep, and be silent.
Caca. Speak you to your creditors, good captain Half-pay;
I'll not take thy pawn in.
Leon. Which of the butts is thy mistress!
Caca. Butt in thy belly.
Leon. There are two in thine, I'm sure, it is grown so monstrous.
Caca. Butt in thy face.
Leon. Go, carry him to sleep; [*Exit* CACA.
When he is sober, let him out to rail,
Or hang himself; there will be no loss of him.

Enter PEREZ *and* ESTIFANIA.

Leon. Who's this? my Mahound cousin?
Per. Good Sir, 'tis very good: would I'd a house too,
For there's no talking in the open air.
You have a pretty seat, you have the luck on't,
A pretty lady too, I have miss'd both;
My carpenter built in a mist, I thank him.
Do me the courtesy to let me see it,
See it once more. But I shall cry for anger.
I'll hire a chandler's shop close under ye,
And, for my foolery sell soap and whip-cord.
Nay, if you do not laugh now, and laugh heartily.
You are a fool, coz.
Leon. I must laugh a little;
And now I've done. Coz thou shalt live with me,
My merry coz, the world shall not divorce us:
Thou art a valiant man, and thou shalt never want.
Will this content thee?
Per. I'll cry, and then be thankful,
Indeed I will, and I'll be honest to ye;
I'd live a swallow here, I must confess.
Wife, I forgive thee all if thou be honest,
And at thy peril, I believe thee excellent.
Estif. If I prove otherwise, let me beg first.
Mar. Hold, this is yours, some recompence for service,
Use it to nobler ends than he that gave it.
Duke. And this is yours, your true commission, Sir.
Now you're a captain.
Leon. You're a noble prince, Sir;
And now a soldier.
Juan. Sir, I shall wait upon you through all fortunes.
Alon. And I.
Alt. And I must needs attend my mistress.
Leon. Will you go, sister?
Alt. Yes, indeed, good brother:
I have two ties, mine own blood, and my mistress.
Mar. Is she your sister?
Leon. Yes, indeed, good wife,
And my best sister, for she proved so, wench,
When she deceived you with a loving husband.
Alt. I would not deal so truly for a stranger.
Mar. Well, I could chide ye, but it must be lovingly,
And like a sister.
I'll bring you on your way, and feast ye nobly,
For now I have an honest heart to love ye.
And then deliver you to the blue Neptune.
Juan. Your colours you must wear, and wear 'em proudly,
Wear 'em before the bullet, and in blood too.
And all the world shall know we're virtue's servants.
Duke. And all the world shall know, a noble mind
Makes women beautiful, and envy blind.
Leon. All you who mean to lead a happy life,
First learn to rule and then to have a wife.

EPILOGUE.

GOOD night, our worthy friends, and may you part
Each with as merry and as free a heart
As you came hither. To those noble eyes,
That deign to smile on our poor faculties,
And give a blessing to our labouring ends,
As we hope many to such fortune sends
Their own desires, wives fair as light, as chaste:
To those that live by spite, wives made in haste.

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LOVE A LA MODE:

AN AFTERPIECE,

IN TWO ACTS.

BY CHARLES MACKLIN.

REMARKS.

THIS severe satire was first produced at Drury-lane in 1760; it is replete with shrewd remark, strong humour, and pertinent observations on the manners and customs of the times. The gentlemen of North Britain were at first highly offended at the character of Mac Sarcasm: the author has certainly paid an exclusive national compliment, in portraying his Irish officer as the only disinterested character; but, as all countries unhappily afford materials for the delineation of pride, flattery, duplicity, vanity, and meanness, their exposure cannot fairly be objected to.—Public curiosity was so keenly excited, that George II. then 77, sent for the MS. and had it read to him. Macklin ably sustained Sir Archy, Moody, Sir Callaghan; and King, Squire Groom.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SIR THEODORE GOODCHILD, ...	*Mr. Davenport.*
SIR ARCHY MAC SARCASM, ...	*Mr. Cooke.*
SIR CALLAGHAN O'BRALLAGHAN, ...	*Mr. Waddy.*
SQUIRE GROOM, ...	*Mr. Lewis.*
MR. MORDECAI, ...	*Mr. Simmons.*
MISS CHARLOTTE, ...	*Miss Logan.*

SERVANTS, &c.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Enter SIR THEODORE *and* CHARLOTTE.

Char. Nay, there can be no harm in a little mirth, guardian: even those who happen to be the objects must approve the justice of it.

Sir T. But consider, Charlotte, what will the world say of me? will it not be in every mouth, that Sir Theodore Goodchild was a very imprudent man, in combining with his ward to turn her lovers into ridicule?

Char. Not at all, Sir; the world will applaud the mirth; especially when they know what kind of lovers they are, and that the sole motive of their addresses was the lady's fortune. Well, sure, since the days of giants and enchanted castles, no poor damsel has been besieged by such a group of odd mortals. Let me review my equipage of lovers! the first upon the list is a beau Jew, who, in spite of nature and education, sets up for a wit, a gentleman, and a man of taste.

Sir T. Aye, laugh at him as much as you will.

Char. The next is a downright English, Newmarket, stable-bred, gentleman jockey, who, having ruined his finances by dogs, grooms, cocks, and horses, and such polite company, now thinks to retrieve his affairs by a matrimonial match with a city fortune.

Sir T. Ha, ha, ha! I find, Madam, you have perused the squire with great exactness.

Char. Pretty well, Sir. To this Newmarket wight succeeds a proud, haughty, Caledonian knight; whose tongue, like the dart of death, spares neither sex nor age; it leaves none unvisited. All dread, and all feel it.

Sir T. Yes, yes, his insolence of family, and licentiousness of wit, have gained him the contempt and general toleration of mankind; but we must not look upon his spleen and ill-nature, my dear, as a national, but a personal vice.

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Char. As such, Sir, I always understand, and laugh at him.—Well, of all my swains, he is the most whimsical; his passion is to turn every mortal into ridicule; even I, the object of his flame, cannot escape; for while his avarice courts my fortune, his pride despises and sneers at my birth.

Sir T. That, Charlotte, is only to show his wit.

Char. True, Sir.—The next in Cupid's train is your nephew, guardian, a wild Irish, Prussian, hard-headed soldier, whose military humour, and fondness for his profession, make me fancy sometimes, that he was not only born in a siege, but that Bellona had been his nurse, Mars his schoolmaster, and the Furies his playfellows!

Sir T. Ha, ha, ha! O fy, Charlotte, how can you be so severe upon my poor nephew?

Char. Upon my honour, Sir Theodore, I don't mean to be severe, for I like his character extremely; ha, ha!

Sir T. Well, well, notwithstanding your mirth, Madam, I assure you, he has gained the highest esteem in his profession. But what can you expect, my dear, from a soldier, a mere rough-hewn soldier, who, at the age of fifteen, would leave Ireland, his friends, and every other pursuit, to go a volunteer into the Prussian service, and there he has lived seventeen years; so that I don't suppose he has six ideas out of his own profession. Garrisons and camps have been the courts and academies that have formed him; but he ever had, from a child, a kind of military madness.

Char. O, I am in love with his warlike humour, I think it highly entertaining.

Sir T. As he has not made any direct addresses to you, Charlotte, let me inform him how improper such a step would be, and even let us leave him out of our scheme to-night.

Char. O, Sir, impossible! our day's sport, our plot, our every thing, would be imperfect without him; why, I intend him to be the leading instrument in the concert. One cannot possibly do without Sir Callaghan Brall—Bra—Brall—Pray, guardian, teach me to pronounce my lover's name.

Sir T. Thou art a mad creature! well, Madam, I will indulge your wicked mirth. His name is Callaghan O'Brallaghan.

Char. O shocking! Callaghan O'Brallaghan! why, it is enough to choke one; and is as difficult to pronounce as a Welsh pedigree. Why, if the fates should bring us together, I shall be obliged to hire an Irish interpreter, to go about with me, to teach the people to pronounce my name; ha, ha, ha!

Sir T. You may laugh, Madam, but he is as proud of that name as any of your lovers are of their titles. I suppose they all dine here.

Char. Certainly! all but Squire Groom.

Sir T. O! you must not expect him; he is at York; he was to ride his great match there yesterday. He will not be here, you may be sure. Let me see:—what is't o'clock?—almost three.—Who's there?

Enter a SERVANT.

Order the coach to the door.

Serv. 'Tis ready, Sir.

Sir T. I will but just step to Lincoln's Inn Hall, and see what they are doing in your cause; it is to be ended to-day. By the time I return, I suppose, your company will be come. A good morning to you, Charlotte.

Char. Sir, a good morning.

[*Exit* SIR THEODORE.

Mor. [*Sings Italian without.*] Sir Theodore, your humble servant.

Sir T. [*Without.*] Mr. Mordecai, your most obedient.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Mr. Mordecai, Madam.

Char. Show him in. [*Exit* SERVANT.

Mor. [*Without.*] I see your coach is at the door, Sir Theodore, you dine with us, I hope.

Sir T. [*Without.*] Certainly. You'll find Miss Charlotte within. Your servant.

Mor. [*Without.*] Yours, Sir Theodore.

Enter MORDECAI, *singing an Italian air, and addressing* CHARLOTTE *fantastically.*

Char. *O caro, caro, carissimo.*

Mor. *Voi sete molto cortese! anima mia!* here let me kneel, and pay my softest adoration; and thus, and thus, in amorous transport breathe my last. [*Kisses her hand.*

Char. Ha, ha, ha! softly, softly! you would not sure breathe your last yet, Mr. Mordecai.

Mor. Why, no, Madam, I would live a little longer for your sake. [*Bowing very low.*

Char. Ha, ha, ha! You are infinitely polite—but a truce with your gallantry—why, you are as gay as the sun; I think I never saw any thing better fancied than that suit of yours, Mr. Mordecai.

Mor. Ha, ha! a—well enough—just as my tailor fancied—ha, ha, ha! do you like it, Madam?

Char. Quite elegant! I don't know any one about town deserves the title of beau better than Mr. Mordecai.

Mor. O dear Madam, you are very obliging.

Char. I think you are called Beau Mordecai by every body.

Mor. Yes, Madam, they do distinguish me by that title, but I don't think I merit the honour.

Char. No body more: for I think you are always by far the finest man in town. But do you know that I have heard of your extraordinary court the other night, at the opera, to Miss Sprightly?

Mor. O Heaven, Madam, how can you be so severe? that the woman has designs, I steadfastly believe; but as to me—oh!—

Char. Ha, ha, ha! nay, nay, you must not deny it: for my intelligence is from very good hands.

Mor. Pray, who may that be?

Char. Sir Archy Mac Sarcasm.

Mor. Oh, shocking! the common Pasquin of the town; besides, Madam, you know he's my rival, and not very remarkable for veracity in his narrations.

Char. Ha, ha, ha! I cannot say he's a religious observer of truth, but his humour always makes amends for his invention. You must allow he has humour, Mr. Mordecai.

Mor. *O cuor mio!* how can you think so? bating his scandal, dull, dull as an alderman, after six pounds of turtle, four bottles of port, and twelve pipes of tobacco.

Char. Ha, ha, ha! O surfeiting! surfeiting!

Mor. The man, indeed, has something droll—something ridiculous in him:—his

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abominable Scots accent, his grotesque visage, almost buried in snuff, the roll of his eyes, and twist of his mouth, his strange, inhuman laugh, his tremendous periwig, and his manner altogether, indeed, has something so caricaturely risible in it, that, ha, ha, ha! may I die, Madam, if I don't always take him for a mountebank-doctor at a Dutch fair.

Char. Oh, oh! what a picture has he drawn! why you're as severe in your portraits as Sir Archy himself.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Sir Archy Mac Sarcasm is below, Madam.

Char. Show him up. [*Exit* SERVANT.

Mor. Don't you think, Madam, he is a horrid, foul-mouthed, uncouth fellow? he is worse to me, Madam, than asafœtida, or a tallow chandler's shop, in the dog-days; his filthy high-dried poisons me, and his scandal is grosser than a hackney news writer's: Madam, he is as much despised by his own countrymen, as by the rest of the world. The better sort of Scotland never keep him in company; but that is *entre nous, entre nous.*

Sir A. [*Speaks without.*] Randol, bid Sawney be here wi' the chariot at aught o'clock exactly.

Enter SIR ARCHY.—MORDECAI *runs up to embrace him.*

Sir A. Ha, ha, ha! my chield o' circumcision, gie us a wag of thy loof; how do ye do, my bonny Girgishite?

Mor. Always at your service, Sir Archy:—he stinks worse than a Scotch snuff-box. [*Aside.*

Sir A. Weel, Mordecai, I see ye are as diligent in the service o' yeer mistress, as in the service of yeer looking glass, for yeer face and yeer thoughts are ay turned upo' the t'ane or the t'ither.

Mor. And I see your wit, Sir Archy, like a lawyer's tongue, will ever retain its usual politeness and good nature.

Char. [*Coming forward.*] Ha, ha, ha! civil and witty on both sides. Sir Archy, your most obedient. [*Courtesies.*

Sir A. Ten thousand pardons, Madam, I did na observe ye; I houp I see yeer ladyship weel; Ah! you look like a diveenity. [*Bowing awkwardly and low.*

Char. Sir Archy, this is immensely gallant.

Sir A. Weel, Madam, I see my friend, Mordecai here, is determined to bear-awa' the prize frae us a'! Ha, ha, ha! he is tricked out in a' the colours o' the rainbow.

Char. Mr. Mordecai is always well dressed, Sir Archy.

Sir A. Upon honour, he is as fine as a jay. Turn about, man, turn about, let us view yeer finery: stap alang, and let us see yeer shapes—he has a bonny march wi' him: vera weel, vera elegant. Ha, ha, ha! guid trouth, I think I never saw a tooth-drawer better dressed in a' my life. [*Viewing and admiring his dress.*

Char. Ha, ha, ha!

Mor. You are very polite, Sir.

Char. But, Sir Archy, what is become of my Irish lover, your friend, Sir Callaghan? I hope he dines here.

Sir A. Ah, ah! guid faith, wull he! I hae brought him alang wi' me.

Char. What! is he in the house?

Sir A. Ay, in this vera mansion, Madam; for ye maun ken, that, like the monarchs of auld, I never travel now without my fool.

Char. Then, pray, Sir Archy, exhibit your fool.

Mor. Let's have a slice of him.

Sir A. Gently, gently, not sae fast! he is not in right order yet.

Char. How do you mean, Sir Archy?

Sir A. Madam, as we cam' hither, I counselled him to write a love epistle tull ye, by way of introduction tull his courtship! he is now about it below stairs, and in ten minutes ye maun look to see an amorous billet, sic as has na been penn'd sin the days o' Don Quixote;—ha, ha, ha!

Omnes. Ha, ha ha!

Char. O charming! I shall be impatient till I see his passion upon paper.

Sir A. Guid faith, Madam, he has done that already; for he has composed a jargon, that he ca's a sonnet, upon his bewitching Charlotte, as he terms ye. Mordecai, ye hae heard him sing it.

Mor. I beg your pardon, Sir Archy, I have heard him roar it. Madam, we had him last night at the tavern, and made him give it to us in an Irish howl, that might be heard from hence to West Chester.

Sir A. Ha, ha, ha! why ye hae a deevilish deal o' wit, Mordecai.

Char. Ha, ha, ha! I must hear this song!

Mor. Madam, your servant;—I will leave Sir Archy to entertain you for a few minutes.

Char. You are not going, Mr. Mordecai?

Mor. Madam, I am only going down stairs, to see if Sir Callaghan is disengaged; and if he be, to have a laugh at him before dinner, by way of a whet—that's all, Madam, only by way of a whet. [*Going.*

Sir A. But, hark'e, Mordecai, not a syllable o' the letter.

Mor. O, never fear me, Sir Archy, I am as secret as a spy. [*Exit.*

Sir A. What a fantastical baboon this Irelite maks o' himsel'. The fellow is the mockery of the hale nation.

Char. Why, to say the truth, he is entertaining, Sir Archy.

Sir A. O yes, he is ridiculous, therefore vera useful in society,—for wherever he comes there must be laughter.—But now, Madam, if ye please, a word or twa o' our ain matters; ye see I dinna pester ye wi' flames, and darts, and sighings, and lamentations, and frivolous protestations, like yeer silly lovers in a romance; for ye ken, I ay speak my thoughts wi' a blunt integrity:—Madam, I lo'e ye, and gin I did not, I would scorn to say it.

Char. O, Sir Archy, all the world allows you sincerity, which is the most valuable quality a friend or a lover can possess.

Sir A. Vera true, Madam, therefore I cannot help giving ye about ye, wha ca' themselves yeer lovers.—Squire Groom, doubtless, is a man of honour, and my vera guid friend, but he is a beggar, a beggar; and, touching this Mordecai, the fellow is wealthy, 'tis true; yes, yes, he is wealthy, but he is a reptile, a mere reptile! and, as to the Irishman, Sir Callaghan O'Brallaghan, the fallow is weel eneugh to laugh at, but I wad hae ye look about ye there, for ye ken that yeer guardian is his uncle; and, to my certain knowledge, there is a design upon yeer fortune in that quarter, depend upon it.

Char. Very possible, Sir Archy, very possible; for a woman's fortune, I believe, is the principal object of every lover's wish.

Sir A. Madam, yeer observation is very orthodox, in troth—as to Mordecai, Sir Callaghan, Squire Groom, and sic like fallows; but men of honour! men of honour, Madam, hae other principles. I assure ye, lady, the tenure o' my affection is nae for yeer pecuniar, but for the mental graces o' yeer saul, and the divine parfections o' yeer body, which are indeed to me a Peru and a Mexico.

Char. O, Sir Archy, you overwhelm me.

Sir A. Madam, I speak upo' the verity o' mine honour: beside, Madam, gin ye marry me, ye wull marry a man of sobriety and economy: 'tis true, I am not in the high-day o' blood, yet, as the poet sings, far frae the vale o' years; not like yeer young flashy whupsters, that gae aff like a squib or a cracker, on a rejoicing night, in a noise and a stanch, and are never heard o' after.

Char. You are certainly right, Sir Archy, the young fellows of fashion are mere trifles.

Sir A. They are baubles, Madam, absolute baubles and prodigals; therefore, ye should preponderate the matter weel, before ye mak yeer election. Consider, Madam, there is nae scant o' wealth or honour in our family. Lady, we hae in the house o' Mac Sarcasm, twa barons, three viscounts, sax earls, yae marquisate, and twa dukes—besides baronets and lairds out of a' reckoning.

Char. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir A. What gars ye laugh, Madam?

Charl. I beg your pardon, Sir; but—ha, ha, ha! I am laughing to—ha, ha, ha! to think what a—ha, ha! a number of noble relations I shall have.

Sir A. Faith wull ye, Madam, and other guess families than ye hae in this part o' the warld. Odswunds, Madam, there is as muckle difference betwixt our nobility o' the north, and yours o' the south, as there is betwixt a hound o' blood and a mungrel.

Char. Ha, ha, ha! Pray how do you make out that, Sir Archy?

Sir A. Why, Madam, in Scotland, a' our nobility are sprung frae monarchs, warriors, heroes, and glorious achievements; now, here i' th' south, ye are a' sprung frae sugar hogsheads, rum puncheons, woo packs, hop sacks, iron bars, and tar jackets;—in short, ye are a composition o' Jews, Turks, and refugees, and of a' the commercial vagrants o' the land and sea—a sort of amphibious breed ye are.

Char. Ha, ha, ha! we are a strange mixture indeed, nothing like so pure and noble as you are in the north.

Sir A. O naething like it, Madam, naething like it—we are of anither kidney. Now, Madam, as ye yoursel are nae weel propagated, as ye hae the misfortune to be a child o' commerce, ye should endeavour to mak yeer espousals intul ane o' our ancient noble families o' the north; for ye maun ken, Madam, that sic an alliance wull purify yeer blood, and gie ye a rank and consequence in the warld, that a' yeer pelf, were it as muckle as the bank of Edinburgh, could not purchase for ye.

Char. Very true, Sir Archy, very true; upon my word, your advice is friendly and impartial, and I will think of it.

Enter MORDECAI.

Mor. Here he is! he is coming, Madam! he is but just giving some orders to his servant about his baggage and post-horses.

Char. I hope he is not going away.

Mor. Troth he is, Madam; he is impatient to be with the army in Germany.

SIR CALLAGHAN *and* SERVANT *within.*

Sir C. Is Sir Archy Mac Sarcasm and the lady this way, do you say, young man?

Ser. Yes, Sir.

Sir C. Then I'll trouble you with no further ceremony.

Enter SIR CALLAGHAN.

Sir C. Madam, I am your most devoted and most obedient humble servant, and am proud to have the honour of kissing your fair hand this morning. [*Salutes her.*

Char. Sir Callaghan, your humble servant—I am sorry to hear we are likely to lose you. I was in hopes the campaign had been quite over in Germany for this winter.

Sir C. Yes Madam, it was quite over, but it begun again: a true genius never loves to quit the field till he has left himself nothing to do; for then, you know, Madam, he can keep it with more safety.

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir A. Vera true, Sir, vera true. But, Sir Callaghan, just as ye entered the apartment, the lady was urging she should like it mightily, gin ye would favour her wi' a slight narrative o' the late transactions and battles in Germany.

Char. If Sir Callaghan would be so obliging.

Sir. C. O dear Madam, don't ax me.

Char. Sir, I beg pardon; I would not press any thing that I thought might be disagreeable to you.

Sir C. O, dear Madam, it is not for that; but it rebutes a man of honour to be talking to ladies of battles, and sieges, and skrimages—it looks like gasconading and making the fanfaron. Besides, Madam, I give you my honour, there is no such thing in nature as making a true description of a battle.

Char. How so, Sir?

Sir C. Why, Madam, there is so much doing every where, there is no knowing what is done any where; for every man has his own part to look after, which is as much as he can do, without minding what other people are about. Then, Madam, there is such drumming and trumpeting, firing and smoking, fighting and rattling every where—and such an uproar of courage and slaughter in every man's mind—and such a delightful confusion altogether, that you can no more give an account of it than you can of the stars in the sky.

Sir A. As I shall answer it, I think it a vera descriptive account that he gi'es o' a battle.

Char. Admirable! and very entertaining.

Mor. O delightful!

Sir A. Mordecai, ask him some questions—to him—to him, mun — hae a little fun wi' him—smoke him, smoke him, rally him, mun, rally him. [*Whispering.*

Mor. I'll do it, I'll do it—yes, I will smoke the captain.—Well, and pray, Sir Callaghan, how many might you kill in a battle?

Sir C. Sir.

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Mor. I say, Sir, how many might you have killed in any one battle?

Sir C. Kill? Um!—Why, I generally kill more in a battle than a coward would choose to look upon, or than an impertinent fellow would be able to eat—Ha!—are you answered, Mr. Mordecai?

Mor. Yes, yes, Sir, I am answered. He is a devilish droll fellow—vastly queer.

Sir A. Yes, he is vera queer.—But ye were vera sharp upon him.—Odswunds, at him again, at him again—hae another cut at him.

Mor. Yes, I will have another cut at him.

Sir A. Do, do.—He wull bring himsel intull a damned scrape presently. [*Aside.*

Mor. [*Going to Sir Callaghan and sneering at him.*] He, he, he! but hark'e, Sir Callaghan—he, he, he!—give me leave to tell you now, if I was a general——

Sir C. You a general! faith then, you would make a very pretty general! [*Turns Mordecai about.*] Pray, Madam, look at the general—ha, ha, ha!

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir C. O my dear Mr. Mordecai, be advised, and don't prate about generals: it is a very hard trade to learn, and requires being in the field late and early—a great many frosty nights and scorching days—to be able to eat and drink, and laugh and rejoice, with danger on one side of you, and death on the other—and a hundred things beside, that you know no more of than I do of being a high priest of a synagogue; so hold your tongue about generals, Mr. Mordecai, and go and mind your lottery-tickets, and your cent. per cent. in 'Change-alley.

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir A. Ha, ha, ha! he hath tickled up the Isrelite—he has gi'en it the Moabite on baith sides o' his lugs.

Char. But, Sir Callaghan, sure you must have been in imminent danger in the variety of actions you have gone through.

Sir C. Ho! to be sure, Madam, who would be a soldier without danger? Danger, Madam, is a soldier's greatest glory, and death his best reward.

Mor. Ha, ha, ha! that is an excellent bull! death a reward! Pray, Sir Callaghan, no offence I hope, how do you make death being a reward.

Sir C. How! Why, don't you know that?

Mor. Not I, upon honour.

Sir C. Why, a soldier's death, in the field of battle, is a monument of fame, that makes him as much alive as Cæsar, or Alexander, or any dead hero of them all.

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

Char. Very well explained, Sir Callaghan.

Sir A. Excellently weel! vera logically, and like a true hero.

Sir C. Why, Madam, when the history of the English campaigns in America comes to be written, there is your own brave young general, that died the other day in the field of battle before Quebec, will be alive to the end of the world.

Char. You are right, Sir Callaghan, his virtues, and those of his fellow soldiers, in that action—ay, and of those that planned it too, will be remembered by their country, while Britain or British gratitude has a being.

Sir A. Oh! the Highlanders did guid service in that action—they cut them, and slashed them, and whupt them about, and played the vera deevil wi' them, Sir. There is nae sic thing as standing a Highlander's Andrew Ferara; they will slaughie aff a fellow's head at ae dash, slap: it was they that did the business at Quebec.

Sir C. I dare say they were not idle, for they are tight fellows. Give me your hand, Sir Archy; I assure you your countrymen are good soldiers—ay, and so are ours too.

Char. Well, Sir Callaghan, I assure you, I am charmed with your heroism, and greatly obliged to you for your account.—Come, Mr. Mordecai, we will go down to Sir Theodore, for I think I heard his coach stop.

Mor. Madam, I attend you with pleasure; will you honour me with the tip of your lady-ship's wedding finger? Sir Callaghan, your servant; yours, yours. Look here, here!

[*Exit, leading Charlotte.*

Sir C. I find he is a very impertinent coxcomb, this same Beau Mordecai.

Sir A. Yes, Sir, he is a damned impudent rascal.

Sir C. I assure you, I had a great mind to be upon the *qui vive* with him, for his jokes and his mockeries, but that the lady was by.

Sir A. Yes, he is a cursed impudent fellow—because he is suffered to speak tull a man of fashion, at Bath and Tunbridge, and other public places, the rascal always obtrudes himself upon you. But, Sir Callaghan, hae ye written the letter to the lady?

Sir C. I have not.

Sir A. How happened that, mun?

Sir C. Why, upon reflecting, I found it would not be consisting with the decorums of a man of honour to write to a lady in the way of matrimonial advances, before I had first made my affections known to her guardian, who is, you know, my uncle; so I have indited the letter to him, instead of the lady, which is the same thing, you know.

Sir A. Ha, ha! exactly, exactly, for so ye do but write about it, ye ken, it matters not to wham.

Sir C. Ay, that is what I thought myself; so here it is. [*Takes out a letter, reads.*] "To Sir Theodore Goodchild"—

Sir A. Ay, let's have it—I warrant 'tis a bonny epistle.

Sir C. [*Reads.*]

"Sir—

"As I have the honour to bear the character of a soldier, and to call Sir Theodore Goodchild uncle, I do not think it would be conshisting vid a man of honour to behave like a scoundrel."—

Sir A. That is an excellent remark, Sir Callaghan, an excellent remark, and vera new.

Sir C. Yes, I think it is a good remark. [*Reads*] "Therefore I thought proper, before I proceeded any farther, (for I have done nothing as yet,) to break my mind to you, before I engage the affections of the young lady."—You see, Sir Archy, I intend to carry the place like a soldier, *à la militaire*, as we say abroad for I make my approaches regularly to the breastwork, before I attempt the covered way.

Sir A. Excellent! that's excellent!

Sir C. Yes, I think it will do. [*Reads.*] "For as you are a gentleman, and one that knows my family, by my fader's side, which you are shensible is as ould as any in the three kingdoms, and oulder too—So I thought it would

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be foolish to stand shilli shalli any longer, but come to the point at once." You see, Sir Archy, I give him a rub; by way of a hint about my family, because why, do you see, Sir Theodore is my uncle, only by my moder's side, which is a little upstart family, that came in vid one Strongbow but t'other day—lord, not above six or seven hundred years ago; whereas my family, by my fader's side, are all the true old Milesians, and related to the O'Flahertys, and O'Shocknesses, and the MacLaughlans, the O'Donnaghans, O'Callaghans, O' Geogaghans, and all the tick blood of the nation—and I myself, you know, am an O'Brallaghan, which is the ouldest of them all.

Sir A. Ha, ha, ha! ay, ay! I believe you are of an ancient family, Sir Callaghan, but you are ont in ae point.

Sir C. What is that, Sir Archy?

Sir A. Whare ye said ye were as ancient as ony family i' the three kingdoms.

Sir C. Faith, den, I said nothing but truth.

Sir A. Hoot, hoot, hoot awa, mun, hoot awa, ye maunna say that: what the de'il, consider our families i' the North; why ye of Ireland, Sir, are but a colony frae us, an outcast! a mere outcast, and as such ye remain tull this hour.

Sir C. I beg your pardon, Sir Archy, that is the Scotch account, which, you know, never speaks truth, because it is always partial;—but the Irish history, which must be the best, because it was written by an Irish poet of my own family, one Shemus Thurlough Shannaghan O' Brallaghan, and he says, in his chapter of genealogy, that the Scots are all Irishmen's bastards.

Sir A. Hoo, Sir! bastards! do ye mak us illegeetemate, illegeetemate, Sir!

Sir. C. Faith I do—for the youngest branch of our family, one Mac Fergus O'Brallaghan, was the very man that went from Carrickfergus, and peopled all Scotland with his own hands; so that, my dear Sir Archy, you must be bastards of course, you know.

Sir A. Hark'e, Sir Callaghan, though yeer ignorance and vanity would mak conquerors and ravishers of yeer ancestors, and harlots, and Sabines o' our mithers—yet, ye shall prove, Sir, that their issue are a' the children of honour.

Sir C. Hark'e, hark'e Sir Archy, what is that you mentioned about ignorance and vanity?

Sir A. Sir, I denounce ye baith ignorant and vain, and mak yeer maist o't.

Sir C. Faith, Sir, I can make nothing of it; for they are words I don't understand, because they are what no jontlemon is used to: and therefore you must unsay them.

Sir A. Hoo, Sir! eat my words? a North Briton eat his words?

Sir C. Indeed you must, and this instant eat them.

Sir A. Ye shall first eat a piece o' this weapon. [*Draws.*

Sir C. Poo, poo; Sir Archy, put up, put up—this is no proper place for such work; consider drawing a sword is a very serious piece of business, and ought always to be done in private: we may be prevented here; but if you are for a little of that fun, come your ways to the right spot, my dear.

Sir A. No equivocation, Sir! dinna ye think ye hae gotten Beau Mordecai to cope wi'. Defend yeersel, for by the sacred honour of Saint Andrew, ye shall be responsible for making us illegeetemate, Sir, illegeetemate.

Sir C. Then by the sacred crook of Saint Patrick, you are a very foolish man to quarrel about such a trifle. But since you have a mind for a tilt, have at you, my dear, for the honour of the sod. Oho! my jewel! never fear us, you are as welcome as the flowers in May. [*They fight.*

Enter CHARLOTTE.

Char. O! bless me, gentlemen! What are you doing? What is all this about?

Sir C. Madam, it is about Sir Archy's great grandmother.

Char. His great grandmother!

Sir C. Yes, Madam, he is angry that I said my ancestor, Fergus O'Brallaghan, was a gallant of hers.

Char. Grandmother! pray, Sir Archy, what is the meaning of all this?

Sir A. Madam, he has cast an affront upon a hale nation.

Sir C. I am sure if I did, it was more than I intended; I only argued out of the history of Ireland, to prove the antiquity of the O'Brallaghans.

Sir A. Weel, Sir, since ye say ye did na intend the affront, I am satisfied. [*Puts up his sword.*

Sir C. Not I, upon my honour;—there are two things I am always afraid of; the one is of being affronted myself, and the other of affronting any man.

Sir A. Vera weel, Sir, vera weel.

Char. That is a prudent and a very generous maxim, Sir Callaghan. Sir Archy, pray let me beg that this business may end here: I desire you will embrace, and be the friends you were before this mistake happened.

Sir A. Madam, your commands are absolute.

Char. Sir Callaghan—

Sir C. Madam, with all my heart and soul. I assure you, Sir Archy, I had not the least intention of affronting or quarrelling with you. [*Offers to embrace.*

Sir A. [*Starting from him with contempt.*] Vera weel, Sir, vera weel.

Sir C. Oh! the curse of Cromwell upon your proud Scotch stomach.

Char. Well, gentlemen, I am glad to see you are come to a right understanding—I hope 'tis all over.

Sir A. I am satisfied, Madam; there is an end o't. But now, Sir Callaghan, let me tell ye as a friend, ye should never enter intul a dispute about literature, history, or the antiquity of families, frae ye hae gotten sic a wicked, awkward, cursed jargon upon your tongue, that ye are never inteelegeble in yeer language.

Sir C. Ha, ha, ha! I beg your pardon, Sir Archy, it is you that have got such a cursed twist of a fat Scotch brogue about the middle of your own tongue, that you can't understand good English when I spake it to you.

Sir A. Ha, ha, ha! weel, that is drol eneugh, upon honour—ye are as guid as a farce or a comedy; but ye are out again, Sir Callaghan, it is ye that hae the brogue, and not me; for a' the warld kens I speak the Sooth Country sae weel, that wherever I gang, I am ay taken for an Englishman: but we wull mak judgment by the lady, which of us twa has the brogue.

Sir C. O, with all my heart. Pray, Madam, have I the brogue?

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Char. Ha, ha, ha! not in the least, Sir Callaghan, not in the least.

Sir C. I am sure I could never perceive it.

Char. Pray, Sir Archy, drop this contention, or we may chance to have another quarrel—you both speak most elegant English; neither of you have the brogue; neither. Ha, ha, ha!

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. The ladies are come, Madam, and Sir Theodore desires to speak with you.

Char. I will wait on him. [*Exit* SERV.] Gentlemen, your servant;—you will come to us? [*Exit.*

Sir A. Instantly Madam. Weel, Sir Callaghan, dinna let us drap the design o' the letter, notwithstanding what has happened.

Sir C. Are we friends, Sir Archy?

Sir A. Pooh! upon honour am I; it was a' a mistak.

Sir C. Then give me your hand; I assure you, Sir Archy, I always love a man when I quarrel with him, after I am friends.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Dinner is served, gentlemen.

Sir A. Come alang then, Sir Callaghan. I wull bring ye and the lady thegether after dinner, and then we shall see how ye wull mak yeer advances in love.

Sir C. O never fear me, Sir Archy—I will not stay to make a regular siege of it, but will take her at once with a *coup de main*, or die upon the spot; for, as the old song says, Sir Archy— [*Sings to an Irish tune.*

You never did hear of an Irishman's fear,
In love, or in battle, in love or in battle;
We are always on duty, and ready for beauty,
Though cannons do rattle, though cannons do rattle:
By day and by night, we love and we fight,
We're honour's defender, we're honour's defender;
The foe and the fair we always take care
To make them surrender, to make them surrender. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—The same.

Enter SIR ARCHY *and* CHARLOTTE.

Sir A. Adswuns, Madam, stap intul us for a moment, ye wull crack yoursel wi' laughter; we hae gotten anither fool come to divert us unexpectedly, which I think is the highest finished fool the age has produced.

Char. Whom do you mean, Sir Archy?

Sir A. Squire Groom, Madam; but sic a figure, the finest ye ever beheld: his little half boots, black cap, jockey dress, and a' his pontificalibus, just as he rid the match yesterday at York. Antiquity, in a' its records o' Greek and Roman folly, never produced a senator, visiting his mistress, in so complete a fool's garb.

Char. Ha, ha, ha! ridiculous! I thought I had done wondering at the mirror of folly; but he is one of those geniuses that never appear without surprising the world with some new stroke.

Enter MORDECAI.

Mor. O Madam! ha, ha, ha! I am expiring—such a scene between your two lovers, Squire Groom, and Sir Callaghan:—they have challenged each other.

Char. O heavens, I hope not.

Sir A. Ha, ha, ha! that's guid, that's guid! I thought it would come to action; ha, ha, ha! that's clever—now we shall hae ane o' them penk'd; ha, ha, ha!

Char. How can you laugh, Sir Archy, at such a shocking circumstance?

Mor. Don't be frightened, Madam, ha, ha, ha! don't be frightened! neither of them will be killed, take my word for it—unless it be with claret, for that's their weapon.

Char. O, Mr. Mordecai how could you startle one so?

Sir A. O I am sorry for that—guid faith, I was in howps they had a mind to show their prowess before their mistress, and that we should hae a little Irish or Newmarket blood spilt;—but what was the cause o' challenge, Mordecai?

Mor. Their passion for this lady, Sir. Squire Groom challenged Sir Callaghan to drink your ladyship's health in a pint bumper—which the knight gallantly accepted in an instant, and returned the challenge in a quart—which was as gallantly received and swallowed by the Squire, ha, ha, ha! and outbraved by a fresh daring of three pints: upon which I thought proper to decamp; not thinking it altogether safe to be near the champions, lest I should be deluged by a cascade of claret.

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

Char. O monstrous! they will kill themselves.

Mor. Never fear, Madam.

Groom. [*Within hallooing.*] Come along, Sir Callaghan Brallaghan, haux, haux! hark forward, my honeys.

Mor. Here your champion comes, Madam.

Enter SQUIRE GROOM, *drunk.*

Groom. Madam, I beg a million of pardons for not being with you at dinner—it was not my fault, upon my honour—for I set up all night, on purpose to set out betimes; but about one o'clock last night, at York, as we were all damned jolly, that fool, Sir Roger Bumper, borrowed my watch to set his by it:—there it is—look at it, Madam, it corrects the sun—they all stop by it, at Newmarket;—and so, Madam, as I was telling you, the drunken blockhead put mine back two hours, on purpose to deceive me—otherwise I would have held fifty to one I should have been here to a second.

Char. O, Sir, there needs no apology; but how came you to travel in that extraordinary dress?

Groom. A bet, a bet, Madam—I rid my match in this very dress, yesterday. So, Jack Buck, Sir Roger Bumper, and some more o. them, laid me an hundred each that I would not ride to London, and visit you in it, Madam—ha, ha! don't you think I have touched them Madam—ha! I have taken them all in,—ha! haven't I, Madam!

Omnes. Ha! ha, ha!

Char. You have, indeed, Sir; pray what time do you allow yourself to come from York to London?

Groom. Ha! time? Why, bar a neck, a leg, or an arm, sixteen hours, seventeen minutes, and thirty-three seconds—sometimes three or four

seconds under, that is, to the Stone's end, not to my own house.

Sir A. No, no, not tull yeer ain house, that would be o'er muckle.

Groom. No, no, only to the Stone's end; but then, I have my own hacks, steel to the bottom, all blood—stickers and lappers every inch, my dear—that will come through if they have but one leg out of the four. I never keep any thing, Madam, that is not bottom—game, game, to the last; ay, ay, you will find every thing that belongs to me game, Madam.

Sir A. Ha, ha, ha! weel said, squire—yes, yes, he is game, game to the bottom. There, walk about and let us see yeer shapes.—Ha! what a fine figure; why, ye are so fine a figure, and hae sae guid an understanding for it, it is a pity ye should ever do ony thing a' yeer life, but ride horse-races.—Dinna ye think he is a cursed idiot, Mordecai?

[*Whispering Mordecai.*

Mor. Um! he is well enough for a squire; ha, ha!

Groom. Madam, I am come to pay my respects to you, according to promise. Well, which of us is to be the happy man? you know I love you—may I never win a match, if I don't.

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

Char. O, Sir, I am convinced of your passion—I see it in your eyes.

Sir A. Weel, but, squire, ye hae gi'en us nae account how the match went.

Char. Pray, what was the match, Sir?

Groom. Our contribution, Madam. There are seven of us:—Jack Buck—Lord Brainless—Bob Rattle—(you know Bob, Madam, Bob's a damned honest fellow)—Sir Harry Idle—Dick Riot—Sir Roger Bumper—and myself. We put in five hundred a-piece, all to ride ourselves, and all to carry my weight. The odds at starting were six and seven to four against me, the field round; and the field, ten, fifteen, and twenty to one; for you must know, Madam, the thing I was to have rid was let down—do you mind?—was let down, Madam, in his exercise.

Sir A. That was unlucky.

Groom. O, damned unlucky! however, we started off score, by Jupiter; and for the first half mile, Madam, you might have covered us with your under petticoat. But your friend Bob, Madam—ha, ha! I shall never forget it; poor Bob went out of the course, and ran over two attorneys, an exciseman, and a little beau Jew, Mordecai's friend, Madam, that you used to laugh at so immoderately at Bath; a little, fine, dirty thing, with a chocolate-coloured phiz, just like Mordecai's. The people were in hopes he had killed the lawyers, but were damnably disappointed, when they found he had only broke a leg of one, and the back of the other.

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir A. And how did it end, squire? Wha wan the subscription?

Groom. It lay between Dick Riot and me. We were neck and neck, Madam, for three miles, as hard as we could lay leg to ground—made running every inch; but, at the first loose, I felt for him, found I had the foot—knew my bottom—pulled up—pretended to dig and cut—all fudge, all fudge, my dear; gave the signal to pond, to lay it on thick—had the whip hand all the way—lay with my nose in his flank, under the wind—thus, snug, snug, my dear, quite in hand; while Riot was digging and lapping, right and left—but it would not do, my dear, against foot, bottom, and head; so, within a hundred yards of the distance-post, poor Dick knocked up, as stiff as a turnpike, and left me to canter in by myself, and to touch them all round; for I took all the odds, split me—Ha! Wasn't I right?—Ha! took the odds. Ay, ay, took all the odds, my dear.

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir A. Weel, it is wonderfu' to think to what a pitch of excellence our nobility are arrived at in the art of sporting;—I believe we excel a' the nobility in Europe in that science, especially in jockeyship.

Groom. Sir Archy, I'll tell you what I will do.—I will start a horse, fight a main, hunt a pack of hounds, ride a match, or a fox chase, drive a set of horses, or hold a toast, with any nobleman in Europe, for a thousand each—and I say done first, damn me.

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir A. Why, I know ye wull, and I wull gang yeer halves. Why, Madam, the squire is the keenest sportsman in a' Europe.—Madam, there is naething comes amiss tull him; he wull fish, or fowl, or hunt—he hunts every thing; every thing, frae the flea i' the blanket to the elephant i' the forest. He is at a'—a perfect Nimrod; are ye not, squire?

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

Groom. Yes damn me, I am a Nimrod, Madam; at all, at all—any thing, any thing. Why, I ran a snail with his grace, the other day, for five hundred—nothing in it—won it hollow, above half a horn's length.

Sir A. By aboon half a horn's length? that was hollow indeed, squire.

Groom. O, devilish hollow.

Sir A. But whare is Sir Callaghan a' this time?

Groom. O, he's with Sir Theodore, who is joking him about his drinking bumpers with me, and his passion for you, Madam.

Sir A. Ye maun ken, gentlemen, this lady and I hae laid a scheme to hae a little sport wi' Sir Callaghan; now, if ye wull stoop ahint that screen, and promise to be silent, I'll gang and fetch him, and ye shall hear him mak love as fierce as ony hero in a tragedy.

Groom. Sir Archy, I'll be as silent as a hound at fault.

Sir A. Then do ye retire, Madam, and come in tull him, as if ye cam on purpose.—I'll fetch him in an instant.

Char. I shall be ready, Sir Archy. [*Exit.*

Sir A. Get ye behind, get ye behind gentlemen. [*Exit.*

Groom. Ay, ay, we'll squat, never fear, Sir Archy—an Irishman make love! I should be glad to hear what an Irishman can say when he makes love. What do you think he'll say, little Shadrach? Do you think he'll make love in Irish?

Mor. Something very like it, I dare say, squire. Let us retire, here they come.

[*Both retire.*

Enter SIR ARCHY *and* SIR CALLAGHAN.

Sir A. Speak bauldly, man; ye ken the auld proverb, 'Faint heart——'

Sir C. That is true——'never won fair lady.'—Yes, I think, now I have got a bumper or two, I may tell her my passion, and bring the point to an eclaircissement.

Sir A. Ay, that's right, mun! stick to that,

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she wull be wi' ye in a twankling. Yeer servant, I wish ye guid success. [*Exit.*

Sir C. Sir Archy, your servant! Well, now what am I to do in this business? I know it is a great scandal for a soldier to be in love in time of war—I strive to keep her out of my mind, but can't; the more I strive to do it, the more she comes in. I am upon the forlorn hope here, so must e'en make my push with vigour at once.

Enter CHARLOTTE.

Char. Sir Callaghan, your servant.

Sir C. Madam, I humbly beg your pardon, for not seeing of you sooner: but I was spaking a soliloquy to myself, about your ladyship, and that kept me from observing you.

Char. Sir Theodore told me you wanted to speak to me upon some particular business.

Sir C. Why, look you, Madam, for my part, I was never born or bred in a school of compliments, where they learn fine bows, and fine speeches; but in an academy, where heads and legs, and arms, and bullets, dance country dances without the owner's leave; just as the fortune of war directs. Therefore, Madam, all that I can say to you, is, that your eyes have made me a prisoner of war, that Cupid has made a garrison of my heart, and kept me to devilish hard duty; and if you don't relieve me, I shall be a dead man before I come to action.

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir A. He begins vera weel; he has got intul the heat o' the battle already. [*Aside.*

Char. But Sir Callaghan, among all your symptoms of love, you have forgot to mention one that I am told is very elegant, and very powerful.

Sir C. Pray, what is that, Madam?

Char. A song that I hear you have made, and set yourself in the true Irish taste.

Sir C. Madam, I own I have been guilty of torturing the Muses in the shape of a song, and I hope you will pardon my putting your ladyship's name to it.

Char. Upon one condition I will, which is, that you will do me the favour to let me hear you sing it.

Sir C. O, dear Madam, don't ax me; it is a foolish song, a mere bagatelle.

Char. Nay, I must insist upon hearing it, as you expect or value the smiles, or fear the frowns, of your mistress; for by your poetry I shall judge of your passion.

Sir C. Then, Madam, you shall have it, if it were ten times worse—hem, hem!—fal, lal, la! ha! I don't know how I shall come about the right side of my voice.

Sir A. Ay, ay, now for it, now ye shall hear sic a sang as has nae been penned sin the time they first clipped the wings and tails o' the wild Irish.

Sir C. Now, Madam, I tell you beforehand, you must not expect such fine singing from me, as you hear at the Opera; for, you know, we Irishmen are not cut out for it, like the Italians.

Let other men sing of their goddesses bright,
That darken the day and enlighten the night;
I sing of a woman—but such flesh and blood,
A touch of her finger would do your heart good,
With my fal, lal, lal, &c.

Ten times in each day to my charmer, I come,
To tell her my passion, but can't, I'm struck [dumb:
For Cupid he seizes my heart by surprise,
And my tongue falls asleep at the sight of her eyes.

Her little dog Pompey my rival, I see;
She kisses and hugs him, but frowns upon me:
Then pr'ythee, dear Charlotte, abuse not your charms,
Instead of a lap-dog, take me to your arms

Sir A. Come, now the sang is over, let us steal aff.

Groom. He is a damned droll fellow!—'Instead of a lap-dog, take me to your arms.' [*Aside.*

Sir A. Hush! saftly, dinna let him see us; steal aff, steal aff—he is an excellent droll fellow; a deevelish comical chield.

[*Exeunt* SIR ARCHY, GROOM, *and* MORDECAI

Char. Well, Sir Callaghan, your poetry is excellent; nothing can surpass it but your singing.

Sir C. Look'e, Madam, to come to the point: I know I can't talk fine courtship, and love, and nonsense like other men, for I don't speak from my tongue, but my heart; so that if you can take up your quarters for life with a man of honour, a sincere lover, and an honest Prussian soldier, now is your time, I am your man: what do you say, Madam? Come, speak the word boldly, and take me to your arms.

Char. Ha, ha, ha! don't be so violent, Sir Callaghan—but say a lady were inclined to do herself the honour of going before a priest with you, I suppose you would have so much complaisance for your mistress, as to quit your trade of war, and live at home with her, were she to request it of you?

Sir C. Why, look you, Madam, I will deal with you like a man of honour in that point too, and let you into a secret. I have received the king my master's money (and a brave king he is, I assure you) for above seventeen years, when I had none of my own; and now I am come to a title and fortune, and that he has need of my service, I think it would look like a poltroon to leave him;—no, Madam, it is a rule with me never to desert my king, or my friend, in distress.

Char. Your sentiment is great, I confess: I like your principles; they are noble, and mos heroic, but a little too military for me—ha, ha, ha! [*Exit.*

Sir C. What! does she decline the battle? Well, then, I'll not quit the field yet, though; I'll reconnoitre her once more, and if I can't bring her to action, why then I'll break up the camp at once, ride post to Germany to-morrow morning, and so take my leave in a passion, without saying a word. [*Exit.*

Enter SIR ARCHY *and* MORDECAI.

Mor. Pr'ythee, what is the meaning of all this, Sir Archy? the house seems to be in the possession of bailiffs, and Sir Theodore looks and speaks as if an earthquake had just happened.

Sir A. Yeer conjecture is vera right, Mr. Mordecai, 'tis a' over wi' him—he is undone—a beggar, and so is the girl.

Mor. You astonish me.

Sir A. It is an unexpected business; but 'tis a fact, I assure ye; here he is himsel, poor deevil, how dismal he looks.

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Enter SIR THEODORE *and an* ATTORNEY.

Sir T. You are the attorney concerned for the creditors, Mr. Atkins?

Attor. I am, Sir Theodore, and am extremely sorry for the accident.

Sir T. I am obliged to you, Sir, you do but your duty: the young lady is that way, Sir; if you will step to her, I'll follow you. [*Exit* ATTOR.] I hope you will excuse me, Sir Archy—this is a sudden and unhappy affair; I am unfit for the company; I must go, and open it myself to poor Charlotte. [*Exit.*

Mor. But pray, Sir Archy, what has occasioned all this?

Sir A. Faith, Mordecai, I dinna ken the particulars—but it seems—by the word of Sir Theodore himsel, that he and a rich merchant in Holland, his partner, and joint guardian over this girl, are baith bankrupts, and, as the lawyer that is without there confirms, hae failed for aboon a hundred thousand pounds mair than they can answer.

Mor. But how is this to affect the young lady?

Sir A. Why, Sir, the greatest part of her fortune was in trade, it seems, wi' Sir Theodore and his partner; besides, the suit in Chancery, that she had wi' the company, for aboon forty thousand pounds, has been determined against her this vera day, so that they are a' undone. Beggars! beggars!

Mor. I understood that the affair was clearly in her favour.

Sir A. O, Sir, ye dinna ken the law—the law is a sort o' hocuspocus science, that smiles in yeer face, while it picks yeer pocket: and the glorious uncertainty of it is of mair use to the professors than the justice of it—Here the parties come, and seemingly in great affliction.

Enter SIR THEODORE *and* CHARLOTTE.

Char. Dear Sir, be patient, moderate your sorrow; it may not be so terrible as your apprehensions make it; pray, bear up.

Sir T. For myself I care not. But that you should be involved in my ruin, left fortuneless, your fair expectation of a noble alliance blasted! your dignity and affluence fallen to scorn and penury——

Char. It cannot prove so bad, Sir; I will not despair, nor shall you,—for though the law has been so hard against me, yet, in spite of all its wiles and treachery, a competency will still remain, which shall be devoted to mitigate your misfortunes. Besides, Sir Archy Mac Sarcasm is a man of honour, and on his promise and assistance I will rely.

Sir A. Wull ye! ye may as weel rely upo' the assistance o' the philosopher's stone;—what the deevil! would she marry me to mak me tinkler up the fortunes o' broken citizens?—But I wull speak tull them, and end the affair at ance.—I am concerned to see ye in this disorder, Sir Theodore.

Char. O, Sir Archy, if all the vows of friendship, honour, and eternal love, which you have so often made me, were not composed of idle breath, and deceitful ceremony, now let their truth be seen.

Sir A. Madam, I am sorry to be the messenger o' ill tidings, but a' our connection is at an end; our house hae heard o' my addresses tull you; and I hae had letters frae the dukes, the marquis, and a' the dignitaries o' the family, remonstrating, nay expressly prohibiting my contaminating the blood o' Mac Sarcasm wi' ony thing sprung frae a hogshead, or a counting house. I assure ye, my passion for ye is mighty strong, Madam, but I canna bring disgrace upon an honourable family.

Char. No more—your apology is baser than your perfidy: there is no truth, no virtue, in man.

Sir A. Guid troth, nor in woman neither that has nae fortune. But here is Mordecai—now, Madam—a wandering Isrelite, a casuality—a mere casuality, sprung frae annuities, bulls, bubbles, bears, and lottery tickets, and can hae nae family objections;—he is passionately fond of ye; and tull this offspring of accident and Mammon I resign my interest in ye.

Mor. Sir, I am infinitely obliged to you;—but—a—matrimony is a subject I have never thoroughly considered, and I must take some time to deliberate, before I determine upon that inextricable business. Besides, Madam, I assure you, my affairs are not in a matrimonial situation.

Char. No apology, Sir. Begone—I despise them and you.

Enter SQUIRE GROOM.

Groom. Haux! haux! What's the matter here? What is all this? What, are we all at fault? Is this true, Sir Theodore?—I hear that you and the filly have both run on the wrong side of the post.

Sir T. It is too true; but, I hope, Sir, that will make no alteration in your affection.

Groom. Hark ye, Sir Theodore, I alwhys make my match according to the weight my thing can carry. When I offered to take her into my stable, she was sound, and in good case—but I hear her wind is touched; if so, I would not back her for a shilling. I'll take her into my stud, if you please.—She has a good fore hand, sets both her ends well, has good paces, a good deal of fashion, some blood, and will do well enough to breed out of—but she cannot carry weight sufficient to come through.—Matrimony, Sir Theodore, is a cursed long course, devilish heavy, and sharp turnings;—it wont do—can't come through, my dear, can't come through.

Sir A. I think, Squire, ye judge vera nicely. Now, in my thoughts, the best thing the lady can do is to snap the Irishman.

Mor. Well observed, Sir Archy.

Groom. Mac Sarcasm has an excellent nose, and hits off a fault as well as any hound I ever followed.

Sir A. It would be a deevilish lucky match for her.—The fellow has a guid fortune, is a great blockhead, and lo'es her vehemently; three as guid qualities for a matrimonial bubble, as a lady in her circumstances would wish. Snap him, snap him, Madam.

Mor. Hush! He's here.

Enter SIR CALLAGHAN.

Sir A. Ha! my guid freend, Sir Callaghan, I kiss yeer hand; I hae been speaking tull the lady in your behalf, wi' a' the eloquence I hae; she is enamour'd o' yeer person, and ye are just come i' the nick to receive her heart and her hand.

Sir C. By the honour of a soldier, Madam, I shall think that a greater happiness than any that fortune can bestow upon me.

Sir A. Come, come, Madam, true love is impatient, and despises ceremony; gi' him yeer hand at ance.

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Char. No, Sir, I scorn to deceive a man who offers me his heart: though my fortune is ruined, my mind is untainted; even poverty shall not pervert it to principles of baseness.

Sir C. Fortune ruined! Pray, Sir Theodore, what does the importance of all this language mean?

Sir T. The sad meaning is, Sir Callaghan, that, in the circuit of fortune's wheel, the lady's station is reversed; she who, some hours since, was on the highest round, is now degraded to the lowest: this, Sir, has turned the passion these gentlemen professed for her into scorn and ridicule; and I suppose will cool the fervency of yours.

Sir C. Sir Theodore, I assure you, I am heartily glad of her distress.

Sir T. Sir!

Sir C. When she was computed to have a hundred thousand pounds, I loved her 'tis true, but it was with fear and trembling, like a man that loves to be a soldier, yet is afraid of a gun; because I looked upon myself as an unequal match to her: but now she is poor, and that it is in my power to serve her, I find something warm about my heart here, that tells me, I love her better than when she was rich, and makes me beg she will take my life this instant, and all I have, into her service.

Sir T. Generous indeed, Sir Callaghan.

Sir C. Madam, my fortune is not much, but it is enough to maintain a couple of honest hearts, and have something to spare for the necessities of a friend; which is all we want, and all that fortune is good for.

Sir T. Here, take her, Sir; she is yours; and, what you first thought her, mistress of a noble fortune.

Groom. What!

Mor. How's this? [*Aside.*

Sir A. Gently! hush! softly! he is only taking him in—he is taking him in—the bubble's bit.

Sir T. And had she millions, your principles deserve her;—she has a heart, loving and generous as your own, which your manly virtue has subdued, and tempered to your warmest wishes.

Sir C. Pray, Sir Theodore, what does all this mean? Are you in jest, or in earnest? By my honour, I don't know how to believe one word you say. First she has a fortune, then she has no fortune—and then she has a great fortune again! this is just what the little jackanapes about town call humbugging a man.

Sir T. Sir I am serious.

Sir C. And pray, what are you, Madam? Are you in serious too, or in joke?

Char. Such as I am, Sir, if you dare venture upon me for life, I am yours.

Sir C. By the integrity of my honour, Madam, I will venture upon you not only for life, but for death too, which is a great deal longer than life, you know.

Sir T. I hope, nephew, you will excuse the deceit of my feigned bankruptcy, and the pretended ruin of the lady's fortune; it was a scheme devised to detect the illiberal, selfish views of prodigals, who never address the fair but as the mercenary lure attracts—a scheme to try and reward your passion, which hath shown itself proof against the time's infection.

Sir C. Faith then, it was no bad piece of generalship in you. But now she has surrendered herself prisoner of war, I think I have a right to lay her under contribution—for your kisses are lawful plunder, and mine by the laws of love.

Char. O, Sir Callaghan, you take away my breath.

Sir C. O you are a clever little creature. Upon my honour, her breath is as sweet as the sound of a trumpet.

Groom. Why, the knowing ones are all taken in here—double distanced; zounds! she has run a crimp upon us.

Mor. She has jilted us confoundedly.

Sir A. By the cross of St Andrew I'll be revenged; for I ken a lad o' honourable family, that understands the ancient classics in a' their perfection, he is writing a comedy, and he shall insinuate baith their characters intull it.

Mor. And I will write a satire upon her, in which she shall have an intrigue with a life-guard man, and an opera singer.

Groom. I can't write; but I tell you what I'll do, I'll poison her parrot, and cut off her squirrel's tail, damn me.

Sir C. Hark ye, gentlemen, I hope you will ax my lave for all this—if you touch a hair of the parrot's head, or a hair of any thing that belongs to this lady; or, if you write any of your nonsensical comedies, or lampoons, I shall be after making bold to make a few remarks on your bodies;—hah! I have an excellent pen by my side, that is a very good critic, and that can write a very legible hand upon impertinent authors.

Sir A. Hoot awa, hoot awa, Sir Callaghan, dinna talk in that idle manner, Sir—our swords are as sharp and as responsible as the swords of other men. But this is nae time for sic matters; ye hae got the lady, and we hae got the wullows—I am sorry for the little Girgishite here, because he has bespoke his nuptial chariot, and a' his liveries;—and upon honour, I am vera sorry for my vera guid friend the squeire—the lady's fortune would hae been very convenient tull him, for I fancy, he is fetlock deep in the turf;—and upon honour, I am sorry for the lady, for she has missed being matched untull the house o' Mac Sarcasm, which is the greatest loss of a'.

Sir T. The whole business together is something like the catastrophe of a stage-play; where knaves and fools are disappointed, and honest men rewarded. [*Exeunt omnes.*

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THE ROMAN FATHER:

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

ALTERED FROM MR. W. WHITEHEAD.

REMARKS.

MR. WHITEHEAD does not disguise his obligations to Corneille; and there are some who think that it would have been better if they had been even yet more considerable.—But Whitehead was wedded to classic models, and he thought the complexity of the French Intrigue would violate the unity of his subject. The tragedy of Corneille has therefore the most business—yet its scenes are cold and declamatory, and Whitehead, who saw this, could not keep the chill invasion from his own Scenes.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	COVENT GARDEN.
TULLUS HOSTILIUS, King of Rome,	*Mr. Aickin.*
HORATIUS, a Roman Senator,	*Mr. Farren.*
PUBLIUS HORATIUS, his Son,	*Mr. Pope.*
VALERIUS, a young Patrician,	*Mr. Davies.*
HORATIA, daughter to Horatius,	*Mrs. Merry.*
VALERIA, sister to Valerius,	*Mrs. Bernard.*

Citizens, Guards, and Attendants.

SCENE.—Rome.

PROLOGUE.

BRITONS, to-night, in native pomp we come,
True heroes all, from virtuous ancient Rome;
In those far distant times, when Romans knew
The sweets of guarded liberty, like you;
And, safe from ills which force or faction brings,
Saw freedom reign beneath the smile of kings.

Yet from such times, and such plain chiefs as these,
What can we frame a polish'd age to please?
Say, can you listen to the artless woes
Of an old tale, which every school-boy knows?
Where to your hearts alone the scenes apply;
No merit theirs but pure simplicity.

Our bard has play'd a most adventurous part,
And turn'd upon himself the critic's art:
Stripp'd each luxuriant plume from Fancy's wings,
And torn up similes from vulgar things:
Nay, even each moral, sentimental stroke,
Where not the character but poet spoke,
He lopp'd as foreign to his chaste design;
Nor spared a useless, though a golden line.

These are his arts; if these cannot atone
For all those nameless errors yet unknown,
If, shunning faults which nobler bards commit,
He wants the force to strike th' attentive pit,
Be just, and tell him so; he asks advice,
Willing to learn, and would not ask it twice.
Your kind applause may bid him write—beware!
Or kinder censure teach him to forbear.

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ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Room in* HORATIUS'S *House.*

A SOLDIER *crosses the Stage,* HORATIA *following.*

Horatia. Stay, soldier. As you parted from my father,
Something I overheard of near concern,
But all imperfectly. Said you not Alba
Was on the brink of fate, and Rome determined
This day to crush her haughty rival's power,
Or perish in th' attempt?
Sold. 'Twas so resolved
This morning, lady, ere I left the camp.
Our heroes are tired out with lingering war,
And half-unmeaning fight.
Horatia. Alas! I hoped [states,
The kind remorse which touch'd the kindred
And made their swords fall lightly on the breasts [duced
Of foes they could not hate, might have pro-
A milder resolution. Then this day
Is fix'd for death or conquest? [*He bows.*] To me death,
Whoever conquers! [*Aside.*] I detain you, Sir. [wish——
Commend me to my brothers; say, I
But wherefore should I wish? The gods will crown [merit——
Their virtues with the just success they
Yet let me ask you, Sir——
Sold. My duty, lady,
Commands me hence. Ere this they have engaged; [me,
And conquest's self would lose its charms to
Should I not share the danger.

As the SOLDIER *goes out,* VALERIA *enters, who looks first on him, and then on* HORATIA.

Valeria. My dear Horatia, wherefore wilt thou court
The means to be unhappy? Still inquiring,
Still more to be undone. I heard it too;
And flew to find thee, ere the fatal news
Had hurt thy quiet, that thou migh'st have learn'd it [terms.
From a friend's tongue, and dress'd in gentler
Horatia. Oh, I am lost, Valeria! lost to virtue.
Even while my country's fate, the fate of Rome,
Hangs on the conqueror's sword, this breast can feel
A softer passion, and divide its cares.
Alba to me is Rome. Wouldst thou believe it?
I would have sent, by him thou saw'st departing,
Kind wishes to my brothers; but my tongue
Denied its office, and this rebel heart
Even dreaded their success. Oh, Curiatius!
Why art thou there, or why an enemy?
Valeria. Forbear this self-reproach; he is thy husband,
And who can blame thy fears? If fortune make him
A while thy country's foe, she cannot cancel
Vows register'd above. What though the priest
Had not confirm'd it at the sacred altar;
Yet were your hearts united, and that union
Approved by each consenting parent's choice.
Your brothers loved him as a friend, a brother;
And all the ties of kindred pleaded for him,
And still must plead, whate'er our heroes teach us,
Of patriot strength. Our country may demand
We should be wretched, and we must obey;
But never can require us not to feel
That we are miserable: nature there
Will give the lie to virtue.
Horatia. True; yet sure
A Roman virgin should be more than woman.
Are we not early taught to mock at pain,
And look on danger with undaunted eyes?
But what are dangers, what the ghastliest form
Of death itself?—Oh, were I only bid
To rush into the Tiber's foaming wave,
Swolen with uncommon floods, or from the height
Of yon Tarpeian rock, whose giddy steep
Has turn'd me pale with horror at the sight,
I'd think the task were nothing! but to bear
These strange vicissitudes of torturing pain,
To fear, to doubt, and to despair as I do——
Valeria. And why despair? Have we so idly learn'd
The noblest lessons of our infant days,
Our trust above? Does there not still remain
The wretch's last retreat, the gods, Horatia?
'Tis from their awful wills our evils spring
And at their altars may we find relief.
Say, shall we thither?—Look not thus dejected,
But answer me. A confidence in them,
Even in this crisis of our fate, will calm
Thy troubled soul, and fill thy breast with hope.
Horatia. Talk not of hope; the wretch on yonder plain, [sword
Who hears the victor's threats, and sees his
Impending o'er him, feels no surer fate,
Though less delay'd than mine. What should I hope?
That Alba conquer?—Cursed be every thought
Which looks that way! The shrieks of captive matrons
Sound in my ears!
Valeria. Forbear, forbear, Horatia;
Nor fright me with the thought. Rome cannot fall.
Think on the glorious battles she has fought;
Has she once fail'd, though oft exposed to danger;
And has not her immortal founder promised
That she should rise the mistress of the world?
Horatia. And if Rome conquers, then Horatia dies.
Valeria. Why wilt thou form vain images of horror.
Industrious to be wretched? Is it then
Become impossible that Rome should triumph
And Curiatius live? He must, he shall;
Protecting gods shall spread their shields around him,
And love shall combat in Horatia's cause.
Horatia. Think'st thou so meanly of him?—No, Valeria,
His soul's too great to give me such a trial;
Or could it ever come, I think, myself,
Thus lost in love, thus abject as I am,
I should despise the slave who dared survive
His country's ruin. Ye immortal powers!
I love his fame too well, his spotless honour,
At least I hope I do, to wish him mine
On any terms which he must blush to own.
HORATIUS. [*Without.*] What, ho! Vindicus.
Horatia. What means that shout?—Might we not ask, Valeria?
Didst thou not wish me to the temple?—Come,

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I will attend thee thither; the kind gods
Perhaps may ease this throbbing heart, and spread
At least a temporary calm within.
Valeria. Alas, Horatia, 'tis not to the temple
That thou wouldst fly; the shout alone alarms thee.
But do not thus anticipate thy fate;
Why shouldst thou learn each chance of varying war, [scene
Which takes a thousand turns, and shifts the
From bad to good, as fortune smiles or frowns?
Stay but an hour perhaps, and thou shalt know
The whole at once—I'll send—I'll fly myself
To ease thy doubts, and bring thee news of joy.
Horatia. Again, and nearer too—I must attend thee.
Valeria. Hark! 'tis thy father's voice, he comes to cheer thee.

Enter HORATIUS, *and* VALERIUS.

Horatius. [*Entering.*] News from the camp, my child!
Save you, sweet maid! [*Seeing* VALERIA.
Your brother brings the tidings, for, alas!
I am no warrior now; my useless age,
Far from the paths of honour loiters here
In sluggish inactivity at home.
Yet I remember——
Horatia. You'll forgive us, Sir,
If with impatience we expect the tidings.
Horatius. I had forgot; the thoughts of what I was [soldier,
Engross'd my whole attention.—Pray, young
Relate it for me; you beheld the scene,
And can report it justly.
Valerius. Gentle lady, [peace.
The scene was piteous, though its end be
Horatia. Peace? O, my fluttering heart! by what kind means?
Valerius. 'Twere tedious, lady, and unnecessary
To paint the disposition of the field;
Suffice it, we were arm'd, and front to front
The adverse legions heard the trumpet's sound:
But vain was the alarm, for motionless,
And wrapp'd in thought they stood; the kindred ranks
Had caught each other's eyes, nor dared to lift [loved.
The faltering spear against the breast they
Again th' alarm was given, and now they seem'd
Preparing to engage, when once again
They hung their drooping heads, and inward mourn'd;
Then nearer drew, and at the third alarm,
Casting their swords and useless shields aside,
Rush'd to each other's arms.
Horatius. 'Twas so, just so,
(Though I was then a child, yet I have heard
My mother, weeping, oft relate the story)
Soft pity touch'd the breasts of mighty chiefs,
Romans and Sabines, when the matrons rush'd
Between their meeting armies, and opposed
Their helpless infants, and their heaving breasts [there
To their advancing swords, and bade them
Sheathe all their vengeance.—But I interrupt you—
Proceed, Valerius, they would hear th' event.
—And yet, methinks, the Albans—pray, go on.
Valerius. Our king, Hostilius from a rising mound
Beheld the tender interview, and join'd
His friendly tears with theirs; then swift advanced, [friends,
Even to the thickest press, and cried—My
If thus we love, why are we enemies?
Shall stern ambition, rivalship of power,
Subdue the soft humanity within us?
Are we not join'd by every tie of kindred?
And can we find no method to compose
These jars of honour, these nice principles
Of virtue, which infest the noblest mind?
Horatius. There spoke his country's father! this transcends
The flight of earth-born kings, whose low ambition
But tends to lay the face of nature waste,
And blast creation!—How was it received?
Valerius. As he himself could wish, with eager transport.
In short, the Roman and the Alban chiefs
In council have determin'd, that since glory
Must have her victims, and each rival state,
Aspiring to dominion, scorns to yield,
From either army shall be chose three champions
To fight the cause alone, and whate'er state
Shall prove superior, their acknowledged power
Shall fix th' imperial seat, and both unite
Beneath one common head.
Horatia. Kind Heaven, I thank thee!
Bless'd be the friendly grief that touch'd their souls!
Bless'd be Hostilius for the generous counsel!
Bless'd be the meeting chiefs! and bless'd the tongue,
Which brings the gentle tidings!
Valeria. Now, Horatia,
Your idle fears are o'er.
Horatia. Yet one remains.
Who are the champions? Are they yet elected? [Rome——
Valerius. The Roman chiefs now meet in council,
And ask the presence of the sage Horatius.
Horatius. [*After having seemed some time in thought.*]
But still, methinks, I like not this, to trust
The Roman cause to such a slender hazard—
Three combatants!——'tis dangerous——
Horatia. [*In a fright.*] My father!
Horatius. I might, perhaps, prevent it——
Horatia. Do not, Sir,
Oppose the kind decree.
Valerius. Rest satisfied
Sweet lady, 'tis so solemnly agreed to,
Not even Horatius' advice can shake it.
Horatius. And yet 'twere well to end these civil broils:
The neighbouring states might take advantage of them.
—Would I were young again! How glorious
Were death in such a cause!—And yet, who knows
Some of my boys may be selected for it——
Perhaps may conquer——Grant me that, kind gods, [rius,
And close my eyes in transport!—Come, Vale-
I'll but despatch some necessary orders,
And strait attend thee.—Daughter, if thou lovest [Heaven,
Thy brothers, let thy prayers be pour'd to
That one at least may share the glorious task.
[*Exit.*
Valerius. Rome cannot trust her cause to worthier hands.
They bade me greet you, Lady. [*To* HORATIA.

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Well, Valeria,
This is your home, I find: your lovely friend,
And you, I doubt not, have indulged strange fears,
And run o'er all the horrid scenes of war.
Valeria. Though we are women, brother, we are Romans,
Not to be scared with shadows, though not proof [ens.
'Gainst all alarms, when real danger threat-
Horatia. [*With some hesitation.*] My brothers, gentle Sir, you said were well.
Saw you their noble friends, the Curiatii?
The truce, perhaps, permitted it.
Valerius. Yes, Lady,
I left them jocund in your brothers' tent,
Like friends, whom envious storms awhile had parted,
Joying to meet again.
Horatia. Sent they no message?
Valerius. None, fair-one, but such general salutation
As friends would bring unbid.
Horatia. Said Caius nothing?
Valerius. Caius?
Horatia. Ay, Caius, did he mention me?
Valerius. 'Twas slightly, if he did, and 'scapes me now——
O yes, I do remember, when your brother
Ask'd him, in jest, if he had ought to send,
A sigh's soft waftage, or the tender token
Of tresses breeding to fantastic forms,
To soothe a love-sick maid (your pardon, lady)
He smiled, and cried, Glory's the soldier's mistress.
Horatia. Sir, you'll excuse me—something of importance——
My father may have business—Oh, Valeria! [*Aside to* VALERIA.
Talk to thy brother, know the fatal truth
I dread to hear, and let me learn to die,
If Curiatius has indeed forgot me. [*Exit.*
Valerius. She seems disorder'd!
Valeria. Has she not cause?
Can you administer the baneful potion,
And wonder at th' effect?
Valerius. You talk in riddles!
Valeria. They're riddles, brother, which your heart unfolds,
Though you affect surprise. Was Curiatius
Indeed so cold? Poor shallow artifice,
The trick of hopeless love! I saw it plainly.
Yet what could you propose? An hour's uneasiness
To poor Horatia; for be sure by that time
She sees him, and your deep-wrought schemes are air.
Valerius. What could I do? this peace has ruin'd me;
While war continued, I had gleams of hope;
Some lucky chance might rid me of my rival,
And time efface his image in her breast.
But me——
Valeria. Yes, now you must resolve to follow [sion
Th' advice I gave you first, and root this pas-
Entirely from your heart; for know she dotes,
Even to distraction dotes on Curiatius;
And every fear she felt, while danger threat-
Will now endear him more. [en'd,
Valerius. Cruel Valeria,
You triumph in my pain!
Valeria. By Heaven, I do not;
I only would extirpate every thought
Which gives you pain, nor leave one foolish wish [mad,
For hope to dally with, when friends are
'Tis most unkind to humour their distraction;
Harsh means are necessary.
Valerius. Yet we first
Should try the gentler.
Valeria. Did I not? Ye powers!
Did I not soothe your griefs, indulge your fondness,
While the least prospect of success remain'd?
Did I not press you still to urge your suit,
Intreat you daily to declare your passion,
Seek out unnumber'd opportunities,
And lay the follies of my sex before you?
Valerius. Alas! thou know'st, Valeria, woman's heart
Was never won by tales of bleeding love:
'Tis by degrees the sly enchanter works
Assuming friendship's name, and fits the soul
For soft impressions, ere the faltering tongue,
And guilty-blushing cheek, with many a glance
Shot inadvertent, tells the secret flame.
Valeria. True, these are arts for those that love at leisure;
You had no time for tedious stratagem;
A dangerous rival press'd, and has succeeded.
Valerius. I own my error—yet once more assist me—
Nay, turn not from me, by my soul I meant not [accident,
To interrupt their loves.—Yet, should some
'Tis not impossible, divide their hearts,
I might, perhaps, have hope: therefore 'till marriage [wretched,
Cuts off all commerce, and confirms me
Be it thy task, my sister, with fond stories,
Such as our ties of blood may countenance,
To paint thy brother's worth, his power in arms,
His favour with the king, but most of all,
That certain tenderness of soul which steals
All women's hearts, then mention many a fair,
No matter whom, that sighs to call you sister.
Valeria. Well, well, away—Yet tell me, ere you go,
How did this lover talk of his Horatia?
Valerius. Why will you mention that ungrateful subject?
Think what you've heard me breathe a thousand times
When my whole soul dissolved in tenderness;
'Twas rapture all; what lovers only feel,
Or can express when felt. He had been here,
But sudden orders from the camp detain'd him.
Farewell, Horatius waits me—but remember,
My life, nay, more than life, depends on you. [*Exit.*
Valeria. Poor youth! he knows not how I feel his anguish,
Yet dare not seem to pity what I feel. [er?
How shall I act betwixt this friend and broth-
Should she suspect his passion, she may doubt
My friendship too; and yet to tell it her
Were to betray his cause. No, let my heart
With the same blameless caution still proceed;
To each inclining most as most distress'd;
Be just to both, and leave to Heaven the rest [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—Continues.

Enter HORATIA *and* VALERIA.

Horatia. Alas, how easily do we admit

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The thing we wish were true! yet sure, Valeria,
This seeming negligence of Curiatius
Betrays a secret coldness at the heart.
May not long absence, or the charms of war,
Have damp'd, at least, if not effaced his passion?
I know not what to think,
Valeria. Think, my Horatia,
That you're a lover, and have learn'd the art
To raise vain scruples, and torment yourself
With every distant hint of fancied ill.
Your Curiatius still remains the same.
My brother idly trifled with your passion,
Or might, perhaps, unheedingly relate
What you too nearly feel. But see, your father.
Horatia. He seems transported; sure some happy news
Has brought him back thus early. Oh, my heart!
I long, yet dread to ask him. Speak, Valeria.

Enter HORATIUS.

Valeria. You're soon return'd, my lord.
Horatius. Return'd, Valeria!
My life, my youth's return'd, I tread in air!—
I cannot speak: my joy's too great for utterance.
Oh, I could weep!—my sons, my sons are chosen
Their country's combatants; not one, but all!
Horatia. My brothers, said you, Sir?
Horatius. All three, my child;
All three are champions in the cause of Rome.
Oh, happy state of fathers! thus to feel
New warmth revive, and springing life renew'd
Even on the margin of the grave!
Valeria. The time
Of combat, is it fix'd?
Horatius. This day, this hour
Perhaps decides our doom.
Valeria. And is it known
With whom they must engage?
Horatius. Not yet, Valeria;
But with impatience we expect each moment
The resolutions of the Alban senate.
And soon may they arrive, that ere we quit
Yon hostile field, the chiefs who dared oppose
Rome's rising glories, may with shame confess
The gods protect the empire they have raised.
Where are thy smiles, Horatia? Whence proceeds
This sullen silence, when my thronging joys
Want words to speak them? Pr'ythee, talk of empire,
Talk of those darlings of my soul, thy brothers.
Call them whate'er wild fancy can suggest,
Their country's pride, the boast of future times,
The dear defence, the guardian gods of Rome!—
By Heaven, thou stand'st unmoved, nor feels thy breast
The charms of glory, the ecstatic warmth
Which beams new life, and lifts us nearer heaven!
Horatia. My gracious father, with surprise and transport
I heard the tidings, as becomes your daughter.
And like your daughter, were our sex allow'd
The noble privilege which man usurps,
Could die with pleasure in my country's cause.
But yet, permit a sister's weakness, Sir,
To feel the pangs of nature, and to dread
The fate of those she loves, however glorious.
And sure they cannot all survive a conflict
So desperate as this.
Horatius. Survive! by Heaven,
I could not hope that they should all survive.
No; let them fall. If from their glorious deaths
Rome's freedom spring, I shall be nobly paid
For every sharpest pang the parent feels.
Had I a thousand sons, in such a cause
I could behold them bleeding at my feet,
And thank the gods with tears!

Enter PUBLIUS HORATIUS.

Pub. My father! *Offering to kneel.*
Horatius. Hence!
Kneel not to me—stand off; and let me view
At distance, and with reverential awe,
The champion of my country!—Oh, my boy!
That I should live to this—my soul's too full;
Let this and this speak for me.—Bless thee, bless thee! [*Embracing him.*
But wherefore art thou absent from the camp?
Where are thy brothers? Has the Alban state
Determined? Is the time of combat fix'd?
Pub. Think not, my lord, that filial reverence,
However due, had drawn me from the field,
Where nobler duty calls; a patriot's soul
Can feel no humbler ties, nor knows the voice
Of kindred, when his country claims his aid.
It was the king's command I should attend you,
Else had I staid 'till wreaths immortal graced
My brows, and made thee proud indeed to see
Beneath thy roof, and bending for thy blessing,
Not thine, Horatius, but the son of Rome!
Horatius. Oh, virtuous pride!—'tis bliss too exquisite
For human sense!—thus, let me answer thee. [*Embracing him again.*
Where are my other boys?
Pub. They only wait
'Till Alba's loitering chiefs declare her champions,
Our future victims, Sir, and with the news
Will greet their father's ear.
Horatius. It shall not need,
Myself will to the field. Come, let us haste,
My old blood boils, and my tumultuous spirits
Pant for the onset. O, for one short hour
Of vigorous youth, that I might share the toil
Now with my boys, and be the next my last!
Horatia. My brother!
Pub. My Horatia! ere the dews
Of evening fall, thou shalt with transport own me;
Shalt hold thy country's saviour in thy arms,
Or bathe his honest bier with tears of joy.
Thy lover greets thee, and complains of absence
With many a sigh, and many a longing look
Sent tow'rd the towers of Rome.
Horatia. Methinks, a lover
Might take th' advantage of the truce, and bear
His kind complaints himself, not trust his vows
To other tongues, or be obliged to tell
The passing winds his passion.
Pub. Dearest sister,
He with impatience waits the lucky moment

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That may with honour bear him to your arms.
Didst thou but hear how tenderly he talks,
How blames the dull delay of Alban councils,
And chides the lingering minutes as they pass,
'Till fate determines, and the tedious chiefs
Permit his absence, thou wouldst pity him.
But soon, my sister, soon shall every bar
Which thwarts thy happiness be far away.
We are no longer enemies to Alba,
This day unites us, and to-morrow's sun
May hear thy vows, and make my friend my brother.

Horatius. [*Having talked apart with* VALERIA.] 'Tis truly Roman.—Here's a maid, Horatia,
Laments her brother lost the glorious proof
Of dying for his country.—Come, my son,
Her softness will infect thee; pr'ythee leave her.

Horatia. [*Looking first on her father, and then tenderly on her brother.*] Not 'till my soul has pour'd its wishes for him.
Hear me, dread god of war, protect and save him! [*Kneeling.*
For thee, and thy immortal Rome, he fights!
Dash the proud spear from every hostile hand
That dare oppose him; may each Alban chief
Fly from his presence, or his vengeance feel!
And when in triumph he returns to Rome, [*Rising.*
Hail him, ye maids, with grateful songs of praise,
And scatter all the blooming spring before him; [then,
Cursed be the envious brow that smiles not
Cursed be the wretch that wears one mark of sorrow,
Or flies not thus with open arms to greet him.

Enter TULLUS HOSTILIUS, VALERIUS, *and Guards.*

Valerius. The king, my lord, approaches.

Horatius. Gracious Sir,
Whence comes this condescension?

Tullus. Good old man;
Could I have found a nobler messenger,
I would have spared myself th' ungrateful task
Of this day's embassy, for much I fear
My news will want a welcome.

Horatius. Mighty king!
Forgive an old man's warmth——They have not sure
Made choice of other combatants!—My sons,
Must they not fight for Rome?

Tullus. Too sure they must.

Horatius. Then I am bless'd!

Tullus. But that they must engage
Will hurt thee most, when thou shalt know with whom.

Horatius. I care not whom.

Tullus. Suppose your nearest friends,
The Curiatii, were the Alban choice,
Could you bear that? Could you, young man, support
A conflict there?

Pub. I could perform my duty,
Great Sir, though even a brother should oppose me.

Tullus. Thou art a Roman! Let thy king embrace thee.

Horatius. And let thy father catch thee from his arms.

Tullus. [*To* PUBLIUS.] Know then, that trial must be thine. The Albans
With envy saw one family produce
Three chiefs, to whom their country dared entrust
The Roman cause, and scorn'd to be outdone.

Horatia. Then I am lost indeed; was it for this,
For this, I pray'd! [*Swoons.*

Pub. My sister!

Valeria. My Horatia!

Horatius. Oh, foolish girl, to shame thy father thus!
Here, bear her in.

[HORATIA *is carried in,* VALERIUS *and* VALERIA *follow.*

I am concern'd, my sovereign,
That even the meanest part of me should blast
With impious grief a cause of so much glory.
But let the virtue of my boy excuse it.

Tullus. It does most amply. She has cause for sorrow.
The shock was sudden, and might well alarm
A firmer bosom. The weak sex demand
Our pity, not our anger; their soft breasts
Are nearer touch'd, and more exposed to sorrows
Than man's experter sense. Nor let us blame
That tenderness which smooths our rougher natures,
And softens all the joys of social life.
We leave her to her tears. For you, young soldier,
You must prepare for combat. Some few hours
Are all that are allow'd you. But I charge you
Try well your heart, and strengthen every thought
Of patriot in you. Think how dreadful 'tis
To plant a dagger in the breast you love;
To spurn the ties of nature, and forget
In one short hour whole years of virtuous friendship.
Think well on that.

Pub. I do, my gracious sovereign;
And think the more I dare subdue affection,
The more my glory.

Tullus. True; but yet consider,
Is it an easy task to change affections?
In the dread onset can your meeting eyes
Forget their usual intercourse, and wear
At once the frown of war and stern defiance?
Will not each look recall the fond remembrance
Of childhood past, when the whole open soul
Breathed cordial love, and plighted many a vow
Of tenderest import? Think on that, young soldier,
And tell me if thy breast be still unmoved?

Pub. Think not, oh, king, howe'er resolved on combat,
I sit so loosely to the bonds of nature,
As not to feel their force. I feel it strongly.
I love the Curiatii, and would serve them
At life's expense: but here a nobler cause
Demands my sword: for all connections else,
All private duties are subordinate
To what we owe the public. Partial ties
Of son and father, husband, friend or brother,
Owe their enjoyments to the public safety,
And without that were vain.—Nor need we, Sir,
Cast off humanity, and to be heroes
Cease to be men. As in our earliest days,
While yet we learn'd the exercise of war,
We strove together, not as enemies,
Yet conscious each of his peculiar worth,
And scorning each to yield; so will we now

Engage with ardent, not with hostile minds,
Not fired with rage, but emulous of fame.
Tullus. Now I dare trust thee; go and teach thy brothers
To think like thee, and conquest is your own.
This is true courage, not the brutal force
Of vulgar heroes, but the firm resolve
Of virtue and of reason. He who thinks
Without their aid to shine in deeds of arms,
Builds on a sandy basis his renown;
A dream, a vapour, or an ague fit
May make a coward of him.—Come, Horatius,
Thy other sons shall meet thee at the camp,
For now I do bethink me, 'tis not fit
They should behold their sister thus alarm'd.
Haste, soldier, and detain them.
[*To one of the guards.*
Horatius. Gracious Sir,
We'll follow on the instant.
Tullus. Then farewell.
When next we meet, 'tis Rome and liberty!
[*Exit with guards.*
Horatius. Come, let me arm thee for the glorious toil.
I have a sword, whose lightning oft has blazed
Dreadfully fatal to my country's foes;
Whose temper'd edge has cleft their haughty crests,
And stain'd with life-blood many a reeking plain.
This shalt thou bear! myself will gird it on,
And lead thee forth to death or victory.
[*Going.*
——And yet, my Publius, shall I own my weakness;
Though I detest the cause from whence they spring,
I feel thy sister's sorrows like a father.
She was my soul's delight.
Pub. And may remain so.
This sudden shock has but alarm'd her virtue,
Not quite subdued its force. At least, my father,
Time's lenient hand will teach her to endure
The ills of chance, and reason conquer love.
Horatius. Should we not see her?
Pub. By no means, my lord;
You heard the king's commands about my brothers,
And we have hearts as tender sure as they.
Might I advise, you should confine her closely,
Lest she infect the matrons with her grief,
And bring a stain we should not wish to fix
On the Horatian name.
Horatius. It shall be so.
We'll think no more of her. 'Tis glory calls,
And humbler passions beat alarms in vain.
[*Exit.*

HORATIUS *goes off*, HORATIA *enters at another Door.*

Horatia. Where is my brother?—Oh, my dearest Publius,
If e'er you loved Horatia, ever felt
That tenderness which you have seem'd to feel,
Oh, hear her now?
Pub. What wouldst thou, my Horatia?
Horatia. I know not what I would—I'm on the rack,
Despair and madness tear my labouring soul.
—And yet, my brother, sure you might relieve me.
Pub. How! by what means? By Heaven, I'll die to do it.
Horatia. You might decline the combat.
Pub. Ha!
Horatia. I do not
Expect it from thee. Pr'ythee, look more kindly.
—And yet, is the request so very hard?
I only ask thee not to plunge thy sword
Into the breast thou lov'st, not kill thy friend;
Is that so hard?—I might have said thy brother.
Pub. What canst thou mean? Beware, beware, Horatia;
Thou know'st I dearly love thee, nay, thou know'st
I love the man with whom I must engage.
Yet hast thou faintly read thy brother's soul,
If thou canst think entreaties have the power,
Though urged with all the tenderness of tears,
To shake his settled purpose: they may make
My task more hard, and my soul bleed within me,
But cannot touch my virtue.
Horatia. 'Tis not virtue
Which contradicts our nature, 'tis the rage
Of over-weening pride. Has Rome no champions
She could oppose but you? Are there not thousands
As warm for glory, and as tried in arms,
Who might without a crime aspire to conquest,
Or die with honest fame?
Pub. Away, away!
Talk to thy lover thus. But 'tis not Caius
Thou wouldst have infamous.
Horatia. Oh, kill me not
With such unkind reproaches. Yes, I own
I love him, more——
Pub. Than a chaste Roman maid
Should dare confess.
Horatia. Should dare! What means my brother?
I had my father's sanction on my love,
And duty taught me first to feel its power.
—Should dare confess! Is that the dreadful crime?
Alas, but spare him, spare thy friend, Horatius,
And I will cast him from my breast for ever.
Will that oblige thee?—Only let him die
By other hands, and I will learn to hate him.
Pub. Why wilt thou talk thus madly? Love him still!
And if we fall the victims of our country,
(Which Heaven avert!) wed, and enjoy him freely.
Horatia. Oh, never, never. What, my country's bane!
The murderer of my brothers! may the gods
First tear me, blast me, scatter me on winds,
And pour out each unheard-of vengeance on me!
Pub. Do not torment thyself thus idly—Go,
Compose thyself, and be again my sister.

Re-enter HORATIUS, *with the sword.*

Horatius. This sword in Veii's field——What dost thou here?
Leave him, I charge thee, girl——Come, come my Publius,
Let's haste where duty calls.
Horatia. What! to the field?
He must not, shall not go; here will I hang—
Oh, if you have not quite cast off affection!
If you detest not your distracted sister——
Horatius. Shame of thy race, why dost thou hang upon him?
Wouldst thou entail eternal infamy
On him, on me, and all?
Horatia. Indeed I would not,
I know I ask impossibilities;
Yet pity me, my father!
Pub. Pity thee!

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Begone, fond wretch, nor urge my temper thus.
By Heaven, I love thee, as a brother ought.
Then hear my last resolve; if Fate, averse
To Rome and us, determine my destruction,
I charge thee wed thy lover; he will then
Deserve thee nobly. Or, if kinder gods
Propitious hear the prayers of suppliant Rome,
And he should fall by me, I then expect
No weak upbraidings for a lover's death,
But such returns as shall become thy birth,
A sister's thanks for having saved her country. [*Exit.*

Horatia. Yet stay—Yet hear me, Publius—But one word.

Horatius. Forbear, rash girl, thou'lt tempt thy father
To do an outrage might perhaps distract him.

Horatia. Alas, forgive me, Sir, I'm very wretched,
Indeed I am—Yet I will strive to stop
This swelling grief, and bear it like your daughter,
Do but forgive me Sir.

Horatius. I do, I do——
Go in, my child, the gods may find a way
To make thee happy yet. But on thy duty,
Whate'er reports may reach, or fears alarm thee,
I charge thee come not to the field.

Horatia. I will not,
If you command it, Sir. But will you then,
As far as cruel honour may permit,
Remember that your poor Horatia's life
Hangs on this dreadful contest?

Horatius. Lead her in. [*Exit* HORATIA.

[*Looking after her.*] Spite of my boasted strength, her griefs unman me.
—But let her from my thoughts! The patriot's breast
No hopes, no fears, but for his country knows,
And in her danger loses private woes. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—Continues.

VALERIUS *and* VALERIA *meeting.*

Valerius. Now, my Valeria, where's the charming she
That calls me to her? with a lover's haste
I fly to execute the dear command.

Valeria. 'Tis not the lover, but the friend she wants,
If thou dar'st own that name.

Valerius. The friend, my sister!
There's more than friendship in a lover's breast,
More warm, more tender is the flame he feels.

Valeria. Alas! these raptures suit not her distress: [sense,
She seeks th' indulgent friend, whose sober
Free from the mists of passion, might direct
Her jarring thoughts, and plead her doubtful cause,

Valerius. Am I that friend? Oh, did she turn her thought
On me for that kind office?

Valeria. Yes, Valerius.
She chose you out to be her advocate
To Curiatius; 'tis the only hope
She now dares cherish; her relentless brother
With scorn rejects her tears, her father flies her,
And only you remain to soothe her cares,
And save her ere she sinks.

Valerius. Her advocate
To Curiatius!

Valeria. 'Tis to him she sends you,
To urge her suit, and win him from the field.
But come, her sorrows will more strongly plead
Than all my grief can utter.

Valerius. To my rival!
To Curiatius plead her cause, and teach
My tongue a lesson which my heart abhors!
Impossible! Valeria pr'ythee say
Thou saw'st me not; the business of the camp
Confined me there. Farewell. [*Going*

Valeria. What means my brother?
You cannot leave her now; for shame, turn back;
Is this the virtue of a Roman youth?
Oh, by these tears!——

Valerius. They flow in vain, Valeria:
Nay, and thou know'st they do. Oh, earth and heaven!
This combat was the means my happier stars
Found out to save me from the brink of ruin;
And can I plead against it, turn assassin
On my own life?

Valeria. Yet thou canst murder her
Thou dost pretend to love; away deceiver!
I'll seek some worthier messenger to plead
In beauty's cause; but first inform Horatia,
How much Valerius is the friend she thought him. [*Going.*

Valerius. Oh, heavens! stay, sister; 'tis an arduous task.

Valeria. I know the task is hard, and thought I knew
Thy virtue too.

Valerius. I must, I will obey thee.
Lead on.—Yet pr'ythee, for a moment leave me,
'Till I can recollect my scatter'd thoughts,
And dare to be unhappy.

Valeria. My Valerius!
I fly to tell her you but wait her pleasure. [*Exit.*

Valerius. Yes, I will undertake this hateful office;
It never can succeed.—Yet at this instant
It may be dangerous, while the people melt
With fond compassion.—No, it cannot be;
His resolution's fix'd, and virtuous pride
Forbids an alteration. To attempt it
Makes her my friend, and may afford hereafter
A thousand tender hours to move my suit.
That hope determines all. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—Another Apartment.

Enter HORATIA *and* VALERIA, HORATIA *with a Scarf in her Hand.*

Horatia. Where is thy brother? Wherefore stays he thus?
Did you conjure him? did he say he'd come?
I have no brothers now, and fly to him
As my last refuge. Did he seem averse
To thy entreaties? Are all brother's so?
Alas, thou told'st me he spake kindly to thee!
'Tis me, 'tis me he shuns: I am the wretch
Whom virtue dares not make acquaintance with.
Yet fly to him again, entreat him hither,
Tell him for thy sake to have pity on me.
Thou art no enemy to Rome, thou hast
No Alban husband to claim half thy tears,
And make humanity a crime.

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Valeria. Dear maid,
Restrain your sorrows; I've already told you
My brother will with transport execute
Whatever you command.
Horatia. Oh! wherefore then
Is he away? Each moment now is precious;
If lost, 'tis lost for ever, and if gain'd,
Long scenes of lasting peace, and smiling years
Of happiness unhoped for wait upon it.
Valeria. I will again go seek him; pray, be calm;
Success is thine if it depends on him. [*Exit.*
Horatia. Success! alas, perhaps even now too late
I labour to preserve him; the dread arm
Of vengeance is already stretch'd against him,
And he must fall. Yet let me strive to save him.
Yes, thou dear pledge, design'd for happier hours, [*To the scarf.*
The gift of nuptial love, thou shalt at least
Essay thy power.
Oft as I framed thy web,
He sate beside me, and would say in sport,
This present, which thy love designs for me,
Shall be the future bond of peace betwixt us:
By this we'll swear a lasting love, by this,
Through the sweet round of all our days to come,
Ask, what thou wilt, and Curiatius grants it.
O I shall try thee nearly now, dear youth;
Glory and I are rivals for thy heart,
And one must conquer.

Enter VALERIUS *and* VALERIA.

Valerius. Save you, gracious lady;
On the first message which my sister sent me
I had been here, but was obliged by office,
Ere to their champions each resign'd her charge,
To ratify the league 'twixt Rome and Alba.
Horatia. Are they engaged then?
Valerius. No, not yet engaged;
Soft pity for a while suspends the onset;
The sight of near relations, arm'd in fight
Against each other, touch'd the gazers' hearts;
And senators on each side have proposed
To change the combatants.
Horatia. My blessings on them!
Think you they will succeed?
Valerius. The chiefs themselves
Are resolute to fight.
Horatia. Insatiate virtue!
I must not to the field; I am confined
A prisoner here; or sure these tears would move
Their flinty breasts.—Is Curiatius too
Resolved on death?—O, Sir, forgive a maid,
Who dares, in spite of modesty, confess
Too soft a passion. Will you pardon me,
If I entreat you to the field again,
An humble suitor from the veriest wretch
That ever knew distress.
Valerius. Dear lady, speak!
What would you I should do?
Horatia. O bear this to him.
Valerius. To whom?
Horatia. To Curiatius bear this scarf:
And tell him, if he ever truly loved;
If all the vows he breathed were not false lures
To catch th' unwary mind—and sure they were not!
O tell him how he may with honour cease
To urge his cruel right; the senators
Of Rome and Alba will approve such mildness.
Tell him his wife, if he will own that name,
Entreats him from the field; his lost Horatia
Begs on her trembling knees he would not tempt
A certain fate, and murder her he loves.
Tell him, if he consents, she fondly swears,
By every god the varying world adores,
By this dear pledge of vow'd affection, swears,
To know no brothers and no sire but him;
With him, if honour's harsh commands require it,
She'll wander forth, and seek some distant home,
Nor ever think of Rome or Alba more.
Valeria. Well, well, he will. Do not torment thyself.
[HORATIA *catches hold of the scarf, which she looked upon attentively while* VALERIA *spoke.*
Horatia. Look here, Valeria, where my needle's art
Has drawn a Sabine virgin, drown'd in tears
For her lost country, and forsaken friends;
While by her side the youthful ravisher
Looks ardent love, and charms her griefs away.
I am that maid distress'd, divided so
'Twixt love and duty. But why rave I thus?
Haste, haste to Curiatius—and yet stay;
Sure I have something more to say to him:
I know not what it was.
Valerius. Could I, sweet lady,
But paint your grief with half the force I feel it,
I need but tell it him, and he must yield.
Horatia. It may be so. Stay, stay; be sure you tell him,
If he rejects my suit, no power on earth
Shall force me to his arms. I will devise——
I'll die and be revenged!
Valeria. Away, my brother!
But, oh, for pity, do your office justly!
[*Aside to* VALERIUS.
Let not your passion blind your reason now;
But urge your cause with ardour.
Valerius. By my soul,
I will, Valeria. Her distress alarms me;
And I have now no interest but hers. [*Exit.*
Valeria. Come, dearest maid, indulge not thus your sorrows,
Hope smiles again, and the sad prospect clears.
Who knows th' effect your message may produce?
The milder senators ere this perhaps
Have moved your lover's mind; and if he doubts,
He's yours.
Horatia. He's gone—I had a thousand things—
And yet I'm glad he's gone. Think you, Valeria,
Your brother will delay?—They may engage
Before he reaches them.
Valeria. The field's so near,
That a few minutes brings him to the place.
And 'tis not probable the senators
So soon should yield a cause of so much justice.
Horatia. Alas! they should have thought on that before.
'Tis now too late. The lion when he's roused
Must have his prey, whose den we might have pass'd

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In safety while he slept. To draw the sword,
And fire the youthful warrior's breast to arms
With awful visions of immortal fame,
And then to bid him sheathe it, and forget
He ever hoped for conquest and renown—
Vain, vain attempt!

Valeria. Yet when that just attempt
Is seconded by love, and beauty's tears
Lend their soft aid to melt the hero down,
What may we not expect?

Horatia. My dear Valeria!
Fain would I hope I had the power to move him.

Valeria. My dear Horatia, success is yours already.

Horatia. And yet, should I succeed, the hard-gain'd strife
May chance to rob me of my future peace.
He may not always with the eyes of love
Look on that fondness which has stabb'd his fame.
He may regret too late the sacrifice [ness;
He made to love, and a fond woman's weak-
And think the milder joys of social life
But ill repay him for the mighty loss
Of patriot reputation!

Valeria. Pray, forbear;
And search not thus into eventful time
For ills to come. This fatal temper, friend,
Alive to feel, and curious to explore
Each distant object of refined distress,
Shuts out all means of happiness, nor leaves it [tion.
In fortune's power to save you from destruc-
Like some distemper'd wretch, your wayward mind
Rejects all nourishment, or turns to gall
The very balm that should relieve its anguish.
He will admire thy love, which could persuade him
To give up glory for the milder triumph
Of heart-felt ease and soft humanity.

Horatia. I fain would hope so. Yet we hear not of him.
Your brother, much I fear, has sued in vain.
Could we not send to urge this slow express?
This dread uncertainty! I long to know
My life or death at once.

Valeria. The wings of love
Cannot fly faster than my brother's zeal
Will bear him for your service.

Horatia. I believe it,
Yet doubt it too. My sickly mind unites
Strange contradictions.

Valeria. Shall I to the walls?
I may from thence with ease survey the field,
And can despatch a messenger each moment,
To tell thee all goes well.

Horatia. My best Valeria!
Fly then; I know thy heart is there already.
Thou art a Roman maid; and though thy friendship
Detains thee here with one who scarce deserves
That sacred name, art anxious for thy country.
But yet for charity think kindly of me;
For thou shalt find by the event, Valeria,
I am a Roman too, however wretched.

[*Exit* VALERIA.

Am I a Roman then? Ye powers! I dare not
Resolve the fatal question I propose.
If dying would suffice, I were a Roman:
But to stand up against this storm of passions,
Transcends a woman's weakness. Hark! what noise? [thee!
'Tis news from Curiatius?—Love, I thank

Enter a SERVANT.

Well, does he yield? Distract me not with silence.
Say, in one word——

Serv. Your father——

Horatia. What of him?
Would he not let him yield? Oh, cruel father!

Serv. Madam, he's here——

Horatia. Who?

Serv. Borne by his attendants.

Horatia. What mean'st thou?

Enter HORATIUS, *led in by his Servants.*

Horatius. Lead me yet a little onward;
I shall recover straight.

Horatia. My gracious sire!

Horatius. Lend me thy arm, Horatia—So—My child,
Be not surprised; an old man must expect
These little shocks of nature; they are hints
To warn us of our end.

Horatia. How are you, Sir?

Horatius. Better, much better. My frail body could not
Support the swelling tumult of my soul.

Horatia. No accident, I hope, alarm'd you, Sir!
My brothers——

Horatius. Here, go to the field again,
You, Cautus and Vindicius, and observe
Each circumstance. I shall be glad to hear
The manner of the fight.

Horatia. Are they engaged?

Horatius. They are, Horatia. But first let me thank thee
For staying from the field. I would have seen
The fight myself; but this unlucky illness
Has forced me to retire. Where is thy friend?

Enter a Servant, who gives a paper to HORATIA, *and retires.*

What paper's that? Why dost thou tremble so?
Here, let me open it.

[*Takes the paper, and opens it.*

From Curiatius!

Horatia. Oh, keep me not in this suspense, my father!
Relieve me from the rack.

Horatius. He tells thee here,
He dare not do an action that would make him
Unworthy of thy love; and therefore——

Horatia. Dies!——
Well—I am satisfied.

Horatius. I see by this
Thou hast endeavour'd to persuade thy lover
To quit the combat. Couldst thou think, Horatia,
He'd sacrifice his country to a woman?

Horatia. I know not what I thought. He proves too plainly,
Whate'er it was, I was deceived in him
Whom I applied to.

Horatius. Do not think so, daughter;
Could he with honour have declined the fight,
I should myself have join'd in thy request,
And forced him from the field. But think, my child,
Had he consented, and had Alba's cause,
Supported by another arm, been baffled,
What then couldst thou expect? Would he not curse [ness?
His foolish love, and hate thee for thy fond-
Nay, think, perhaps, 'twas artifice in thee
To aggrandize thy race, and lift their fame

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Triumphant o'er his ruin and his country's.
Think well on that, and reason must convince thee.
Horatia. [*Wildly.*] Alas! had reason ever yet the power
To talk down grief, or bid the tortured wretch
Not feel his anguish? 'Tis impossible.
Could reason govern, I should now rejoice
They were engaged, and count the tedious moments [free.
Till conquest smiled, and Rome again was
Could reason govern, I should beg of Heaven
To guide my brother's sword, and plunge it deep
Even in the bosom of the man I love:
I should forget he ever won my soul,
Forget 'twas your command that bade me love him,
Nay, fly, perhaps, to yon detested field,
And spurn with scorn his mangled body from me.
Horatius. Why wilt thou talk thus? Pr'ythee, be more calm.
I can forgive thy tears; they flow from nature;
And could have gladly wish'd the Alban state
Had found us other enemies to vanquish.
But Heaven has will'd it, and Heaven's will be done!
The glorious expectation of success
Buoys up my soul, nor lets a thought intrude
To dash my promised joys! What steady valour
Beams from their eyes: just so, if fancy's power
May form conjecture from his after-age,
Rome's founder must have look'd, when, warm in youth,
And flush'd with future conquest, forth he march'd [spoils
Against proud Acron, with whose bleeding
He graced the altar of Feretrian Jove——
Methinks I feel recover'd: I might venture
Forth to the field again. What, ho! Volscinius!
Attend me to the camp.
Horatia. My dearest father,
Let me entreat you stay; the tumult there
Will discompose you, and a quick relapse
May prove most dangerous. I'll restrain my tears,
If they offend you.
Horatius. Well, I'll be advised.
Twere now too late; ere this they must have conquer'd,
And here's the happy messenger of glory.

Enter VALERIA.

Valeria. All's lost, all's ruin'd! freedom is no more!
Horatius. What dost thou say?
Valeria. That Rome's subdued by Alba.
Horatius. It cannot be. Where are my sons? All dead?
Valeria Publius is still alive—the other two
Have paid the fatal debt they owed their country.
Horatius. Publius alive! You must mistake, Valeria.
He knows his duty better.
He must be dead, or Rome victorious.
Valeria. Thousands, as well as I, beheld the combat.
After his brothers' death he stood alone,
And acted wonders against three assailants;
Till forced at last to save himself by flight——
Horatius. By flight! And did the soldiers let him pass?
Oh, I am ill again!—The coward villain.
[*Throwing himself into his chair.*
Horatia. Alas, my brothers!
Horatius. Weep not for them, girl.
They've died a death which kings themselves might envy;
And whilst they lived they saw their country free.
Oh, had I perish'd with them!——But for him
Whose impious flight dishonours all his race,
Tears a fond father's heart, and tamely barters
For poor precarious life his country's glory,
Weep, weep for him, and let me join my tears!
Valeria. What could he do, my lord, when three opposed him?
Horatius. Die! [lain!
He might have died. Oh, villain, villain, vil-
And he shall die; this arm shall sacrifice
The life he dared preserve with infamy.
[*Endeavouring to rise.*
What means this weakness? 'Tis untimely now,
When I should punish an ungrateful boy.
Was this his boasted virtue, which could charm
His cheated sovereign, and brought tears of joy
To my old eyes?—So young a hypocrite!
Oh, shame, shame, shame!
Valeria. Have patience, Sir; all Rome
Beheld his valour, and approved his flight,
Against such opposition.
Horatius. Tell not me!
What's Rome to me? Rome may excuse her traitor;
But I'm the guardian of my house's honour,
And I will punish. Pray ye, lead me forth;
I would have air. But grant me strength, kind gods,
To do this act of justice, and I'll own,
Whate'er 'gainst Rome your awful wills decree,
You still are just and merciful to me. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Room in HORATIUS'S *House.*

Enter HORATIUS, VALERIA *following.*

Horatius. Away, away!—I feel my strength renew'd,
And I will hunt the villain through the world:
No deserts shall conceal, nor darkness hide him.
He is well skill'd in flight; but he shall find
'Tis not so easy to elude the vengeance
Of a wrong'd father's arm, as to escape
His adversary's sword.
Valeria. Restrain your rage
But for a moment, Sir. When you shall hear
The whole unravell'd, you will find he's innocent.
Horatius. It cannot be.
Valeria. And see, my brother comes.
He may perhaps relate——
Horatius. I will not hear him;
I will not listen to my shame again,

Enter VALERIUS.

Valerius. I come with kind condolence from the king,
To soothe a father's grief, and to express——
Horatius. I've heard it all; I pray you spare my blushes.
I want not consolation: 'tis enough
They perish'd for their country. But the third——

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Valerius. True, he indeed may well supply your loss,
And calls for all your fondness.
Horatius. All my vengeance:
And he shall have it, Sir.
Valerius. What means my lord?
Are you alone displeased with what he has done?
Horatius. 'Tis I alone, I find, must punish it.
Valerius. Vengeance!
Punish, my lord! What fault has he committed?
Horatius. Why will you double my confusion thus?
Is flight no fault?
Valerius. In such a cause as his
'Twas glorious.
Horatius. Glorious! Oh, rare sophistry!
To find a way through infamy to glory!
Valerius. I scarce can trust my senses—Infamy!
What, was it infamous to save his country?
Is art a crime? Is it the name of flight
We can't forgive, though it's adored effect
Restored us all to freedom, fame, and empire?
Horatius. What fame, what freedom? Who has saved his country?
Valerius. Your son, my lord, has done it.
Horatius. How, when, where?
Valerius. Is't possible! Did not you say you knew?
Horatius. I care not what I knew—Oh, tell me all!
Is Rome still free?—Has Alba?—Has my son?—
Tell me——
Valerius. Your son, my lord, has slain her champions.
Horatius. What, Publius?
Valerius. Ay, Publius.
Horatius. Oh, let me clasp thee to me!
Were there not three remaining?
Valerius. True, there were;
But wounded all.
Horatius. Your sister here had told us
That Rome was vanquish'd, that my son was fled——
Valerius. And he did fly; but 'twas that flight preserved us.
All Rome as well as she has been deceived.
Horatius. Let me again embrace thee—Come, relate it.
Did I not say, Valeria, that my boy
Must needs be dead, or Rome victorious?
I long to hear the manner—Well, Valerius—
Valerius. Your other sons, my lord, had paid the debt
They owed to Rome, and he alone remain'd
'Gainst three opponents, whose united strength,
Though wounded each, and robb'd of half their force,
Was still too great for his. A while he stood
Their fierce assaults, and then pretended flight
Only to tire his wounded adversaries.
Horatius. Pretended flight, and this succeeded, ha!
Oh, glorious boy!
Valerius. 'Twas better still, my lord;
For all pursued, but not with equal speed.
Each, eager for the conquest, press'd to reach him;
Nor did the first, till 'twas too late, perceive
His fainter brothers panting far behind.
Horatius. He took them singly then? An easy conquest;
'Twas boy's play only.
Valerius. Never did I see
Such universal joy, as when the last
Sunk on the ground beneath Horatius' sword;
Who seem'd a while to parley as a friend,
And would have given him life, but Caius scorn'd it.
Valeria. Caius! Oh, poor Horatia!
Horatius. Peace, I charge thee.
Go, dress thy face in smiles, and bid thy friend
Wake to new transports. Let ambition fire her.
What is a lover lost? There's not a youth
In Rome but will adore her. Kings will seek
For her alliance now, and mightiest chiefs
Be honour'd by her smiles. Will they not, youth? [*Exit* VALERIA.
Valerius. Most sure, my lord, this day has added worth
To her whose merit was before unequall'd.
Horatius. How could I doubt his virtue!—Mighty gods!
This is true glory, to preserve his country,
And bid, by one brave act, the Horatian name
In fame's eternal volumes be enroll'd.
Methinks already I behold his triumph.
Rome gazes on him like a second founder;
The wondering eye of childhood views with awe
The new divinity; and trembling age
Crowds eager on to bless him ere it dies!
Ere long, perhaps, they will raise altars to him,
And even with hymns and sacrifice adore
The virtue I suspected!—Gracious Heaven!
Where is he? Let me fly, and at his feet
Forget the father, and implore a pardon
For such injustice.
Valerius. You may soon, my lord,
In his embraces lose the fond remembrance
Of your mistaken rage. The king, ere this,
Has from the field despatch'd him; he but staid
Till he could send him home with some slight honours
Of scatter'd wreaths, and grateful songs of praise.
For till to-morrow he postpones the pomp
Of solemn thanks, and sacrifice to Heaven
For liberty restored. But hark! that shout
Which sounds from far, and seems the mingled voice
Of thousands, speaks him onward on his way.
Horatius. How my heart dances!—Yet I blush to meet him.
But I will on. Come, come, Horatia; leave
[*Calling at the door*
Thy sorrow far behind, and let us fly
With open arms to greet our common glory.
[*Exit.*

Enter HORATIA *and* VALERIA.

Horatia. Yes, I will go; this father's hard command
Shall be obey'd; and I will meet the conqueror,
But not in smiles.
Valerius. Oh, go not, gentle lady!
Might I advise——
Valeria. Your griefs are yet too fresh,
And may offend him. Do not, my Horatia.

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Valerius. Indeed 'twere better to avoid his presence;
It will revive your sorrows, and recall——
Horatia. Sir, when I saw you last I was a woman,
The fool of nature, a fond prey to grief,
Made up of sighs and tears. But now my soul
Disdains the very thought of what I was;
'Tis grown too callous to be moved with toys.
Observe me well; am I not nobly changed
From my sad eyes? or heaves my breast one groan?
No: for I doubt no longer. 'Tis not grief,
'Tis resolution now, and fix'd despair.
Valeria. My dear Horatia, you strike terrors through me;
What dreadful purpose hast thou form'd? Oh, speak!
Valerius. Talk gently to her.—Hear me yet, sweet lady—
You must not go; whatever you resolve,
There is a sight will pierce you to the soul.
Horatia. What sight?
Valerius. Alas, I should be glad to hide it;
But it is——
Horatia. What?
Valerius. Your brother wears in triumph
The very scarf I bore to Curiatius.
Horatia. [*Wildly.*] Ye gods, I thank ye! 'tis with joy I hear it.
If I should falter now, that sight would rouse
My drooping rage, and swell the tempest louder. [passion
——But soft; they may prevent me; my wild
Betrays my purpose.——I'll dissemble with them. [*She sits down.*
Valerius. She softens now.
Valeria. How do you, my Horatia?
Horatia. Alas, my friend 'tis madness which I utter——
Since you persuade me then, I will not go,
But leave me to myself; I would sit here;
Alone in silent sadness pour my tears,
And meditate on my unheard-of woes.
Valerius. [*To* VALERIA.] 'Twere well to humour this. But may she not,
If left alone, do outrage on herself?
Valeria. I have prevented that; she has not near her
One instrument of death.
Valerius. Retire we then.
But, Oh, not far, for now I feel my soul
Still more perplex'd with love. Who knows, Valeria,
But when this storm of grief has blown its fill,
She may grow calm, and listen to my vows.
[*Exeunt* VALERIUS *and* VALERIA.

After a short silence, HORATIA *rises, and comes forward.*

Horatia. Yes, they are gone; and now be firm, my soul!
This way I can elude their search. The heart,
Which dotes like mine, must break to be at ease.
Just now I thought, had Curiatius lived,
I could have driven him from my breast for ever.
But death has cancell'd all my wrongs at once.
——They were not wrongs; 'twas virtue which undid us,
And virtue shall unite us in the grave.
I heard them say, as they departed hence,
That they had robb'd me of all means of death,
Vain thought! they knew not half Horatia's purpose.
Be resolute, my brother, let no weak
Unmanly fondness mingle with thy virtue,
And I will touch thee nearly. Oh, come on,
'Tis thou alone canst give Horatia peace.
[*Exit*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Street of Rome.

Chorus of YOUTHS *and* VIRGINS *singing and scattering Branches of Oak, Flowers, &c.*

Enter HORATIUS, *leaning on the arm of* PUBLIUS HORATIUS.

CHORUS.

Thus, for freedom nobly won,
Rome her hasty tribute pours;
And on one victorious son
Half exhausts her blooming stores.

YOUTH.

Scatter here the laurel crown,
Emblem of immortal praise!
Wond'rous youth! to thy renown
Future times shall altars raise.

VIRGIN.

Scatter here the myrtle wreath,
Though the bloodless victor's due;
Grateful thousands saved from death
Shall devote that wreath to you.

YOUTH.

Scatter here the oaken bough;
Even for one averted fate,
We that civic meed bestow——
He saved all who saved the state.

CHORUS.

Thus, for freedom, &c.

Horatius. Thou dost forgive me then, my dearest boy,
I cannot tell thee half my ecstacy.
The day which gave thee first to my glad hopes
Was misery to this——I'm mad with transport?
Why are ye silent there? Again renew
Your songs of praise, and in a louder strain
Pour forth your joy, and tell the listening spheres
That Rome is freed by my Horatius' hand.
Pub. No more, my friends.——You must permit me, Sir,
To contradict you here. Not but my soul,
Like yours, is open to the charms of praise:
There is no joy beyond it, when the mind
Of him who hears it can with honest pride
Confess it just, and listen to its music.
But now the toils I have sustain'd require
Their interval of rest, and every sense
Is deaf to pleasure—Let me leave you, friends;
We're near our home, and would be private now:
To-morrow we'll expect your kind attendance
To share our joys, and waft our thanks to Heaven.

As they are going off, HORATIA *rushes in.*

Horatia. Where is this mighty chief?
Horatius. My daughter's voice!

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I bade her come; she has forgot her sorrows,
And is again my child.
Horatia. Is this the hero
That tramples nature's ties, and nobly soars
Above the dictates of humanity?
Let me observe him well.
Pub. What means my sister?
Horatia. Thy sister! I disclaim the impious title;
Base and inhuman! Give me back my husband,
My life, my soul, my murder'd Curiatius!
Pub. He perish'd for his country.
Horatia. Gracious gods!
Was't not enough that thou hadst murder'd him,
But thou must triumph in thy guilt, and wear
His bleeding spoils?—Oh, let me tear them from thee,
Drink the dear drops that issued from his wounds, [swells
More dear to me than the whole tide that
With impious pride a hostile brother's heart.
Horatius. Am I awake, or is it all illusion!
Was it for this thou cam'st?
Pub. Horatia, hear me,
Yet I am calm, and can forgive thy folly;
Would I could call it by no harsher name.
But do not tempt me farther. Go, my sister,
Go hide thee from the world, nor let a Roman
Know with what insolence thou dar'st avow
Thy infamy, or what is more, my shame,
How tamely I forgave it.—Go, Horatia.
Horatia. I will not go.—What, have I touch'd thee, then?
And canst thou feel?—Oh, think not thou shalt lose
Thy share of anguish. I'll pursue thee still,
Urge thee all day with thy unnatural crimes,
Tear, harrow up thy breast; and then at night
I'll be the fury that shall haunt thy dreams;
Wake thee with shrieks, and place before thy sight
Thy mangled friends in all their pomp of horror.
Pub. Away with her! 'tis womanish complaining.
Think'st thou such trifles can alarm the man
Whose noblest passion is his country's love?—
Let it be thine, and learn to bear affliction.
Horatia. Curse on my country's love, the trick ye teach us
To make us slaves beneath the mask of virtue;
To rob us of each soft endearing sense,
And violate the first great law within us.
I scorn the impious passion.
Pub. Have a care;
Thou'st touch'd a string which may awake my vengeance.
Horatia. [*Aside.*] Then it shall do it.
Pub. Oh, if thou dar'st profane
That sacred tie which winds about my heart,
By Heaven I swear, by the great gods who rule
The fate of empires, 'tis not this fond weakness [tice,
Which hangs upon me, and retards my jus-
Nor even thy sex, which shall protect thee from me.
[*Clapping his hand on his sword.*
Horatius. Drag her away—thou'lt make me curse thee, girl——
Indeed she's mad. [*To* PUBLIUS.
Horatia. Stand off, I am not mad.——
Nay, draw thy sword; I do defy thee, murderer,
Barbarian, Roman!——Mad! The name of Rome
Makes madmen of you all; my curses on it.
I do detest its impious policy.
Rise, rise, ye states (Oh, that my voice could fire [ness,
Your tardy wrath!) confound its selfish great-
Raze its proud walls, and lay its towers in ashes!
Pub. I'll bear no more——
[*Drawing his sword.*
Horatius. Distraction!—Force her off——
Horatia. [*Struggling.*] Could I but prove the Helen to destroy
This cursed unsocial state, I'd die with transport:
Gaze on the spreading fires—'till the last pile
Sunk in the blaze—then mingle with its ruins.
Pub. Thou shalt not live to that.
[*Exit after her.*
Thus perish all the enemies of Rome.
[*Without.*

Re-enter VALERIUS.

Valerius. Oh, horror! horror! execrable act;
If there be law in Rome; if there be justice,
By Rome, and all its gods, thou shalt not 'scape. [*Exit.*

Re-enter PUBLIUS, *followed by* HORATIA *wounded.*

Horatia. Now thou'st indeed been kind, and I forgive you
The death of Curiatius; this last blow
Has cancell'd all, and thou'rt again my brother.
Horatius. Heavens! what a sight!
A daughter bleeding by a brother's hand!
My child! my child!
Horatia. What means this tenderness? I thought to see you
Inflamed with rage against a worthless wretch
Who has dishonour'd your illustrious race,
And stain'd its brightest fame: in pity look not
Thus kindly on me, for I have injured you.
Horatius. Thou hast not, girl;
I said 'twas madness, but he would not hear me.
Horatia. Oh, wrong him not; his act was noble justice,
I forced him to the deed; for know, my father,
It was not madness, but the firm result
Of settled reason, and deliberate thought.
I was resolved on death, and witness, Heaven,
I'd not have died by any hand but his,
For the whole round of fame his worth shall boast
Through future ages.
Horatius. What hast thou said? Wert thou so bent on death?
Was all thy rage dissembled?
Horatia. Alas, my father!
All but my love was false; what that inspired
I utter'd freely.
But for the rest, the curses which I pour'd
On heaven-defended Rome, were merely lures
To tempt his rage, and perfect my destruction.

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Heaven! with what transport I beheld him moved! [point,
How my heart leap'd to meet the welcome
Stain'd with the life-blood of my Curiatius,
Cementing thus our union even in death.
Pub. My sister, live! I charge thee live, Horatia!
Oh, thou hast planted daggers here.
Horatia. My brother!
Can you forgive me too! then I am happy.
I dared not hope for that! Ye gentle ghosts
That rove Elysium, hear the sacred sound!
My father and my brother both forgive me!
I have again their sanction on my love.
Oh, let me hasten to those happier climes,
Where, unmolested, we may share our joys,
Nor Rome, nor Alba, shall disturb us more.
[*Dies.*
Horatius. 'Tis gone, the prop, the comfort of my age.
Let me reflect; this morn I had three children,
No happier father hail'd the sun's uprising:
Now, I have none, for, Publius, thou must die:
Blood calls for blood—to expiate one parricide,
Justice demands another—Art thou ready?
Pub. Strike! 'tis the consummation of my wishes
To die, and by your hand.
Horatius. Oh, blind old man!
Wouldst thou lift up thy sacrilegious hand
Against the chief, the god that saved thy country? [soul,
There's something in that face that awes my
Like a divinity. Hence, thou vile weapon,
Disgrace my hand no more.
[*A cry of "Justice, Justice," without.*
What noise is that?

Enter VOLSCINIUS

Vols. All Rome, my lord, has taken the alarm, and crowds
Of citizens enraged, are posting hither,
To call for justice on the head of Publius.
Horatius. Ungrateful men! how dare they? Let them come.

Enter TULLUS, VALERIUS, *and* CITIZENS.

Valerius. See, fellow-citizens, see where she lies,
The bleeding victim.
Tullus. Stop unmanner'd youth!
Think'st thou we know not wherefore we are here?
Seest thou yon dropping sire?
Horatius. Permit them, Sir.
Tullus. What would you, Romans?
Valerius. We are come, dread Sir,
In the behalf of murder'd innocence;
Murder'd by him, the man——
Horatius. Whose conquering arm
Has saved you all from ruin. Oh, shame! shame!
Has Rome no gratitude? Do ye not blush
To think whom your insatiate rage pursues?
Down, down, and worship him.
1st Citizen. Does he plead for him?
2d Citizen. Does he forgive his daughter's death?
Horatius. He does,
And glories in it, glories in the thought
That there's one Roman left who dares be grateful;
If you are wrong'd, then what am I? Must I
Be taught my duty by th' affected tears
Of strangers to my blood? Had I been wrong'd,
I know a father's right, and had not ask'd
This ready-talking Sir to bellow for me,
And mouth my wrongs in Rome.
Valerius. Friends, countrymen, regard not what he says;
Stop, stop your ears, nor hear a frantic father
Thus plead against his child.
Horatius. He does belie me.
What child have I? Alas! I have but one
And him you would tear from me.
All Citizens. Hear him! hear him!
Pub. No; let me speak. Think'st thou, ungrateful youth,
To hurt my quiet? I am hurt beyond
Thy power to harm me. Death's extremest tortures
Were happiness to what I feel. Yet know,
My injured honour bids me live; nay, more,
It bids me even descend to plead for life.
But wherefore waste I words? 'Tis not to him,
But you, my countrymen, to you, I speak;
He loved the maid.
1st Citizen. How! loved her?
Pub. Fondly loved her;
And, under show of public justice, screens
A private passion, and a mean revenge.
Think you I loved her not? High Heaven's my witness
How tenderly I loved her; and the pangs
I feel this moment, could you see my heart,
'Twould prove too plainly I am still her brother.
1st Citizen. He shall be saved.
Valerius has misled us.
All Citizens. Save him! save him!
Tullus. If yet a doubt remains,
Behold that virtuous father, who could boast
This very morn, a numerous progeny,
The dear supports of his declining age;
Then read the sad reverse with pitying eyes,
And tell your conscious hearts they fell for you.
Horatius. I am o'erpaid by that, nor claim I ought
On their accounts; by high Heaven, I swear,
I'd rather see him added to the heap,
Than Rome enslaved.
1st Citizen. Oh, excellent Horatius!
All Citizens. Save him! save him!
Tullus. Then I pronounce him free. And now, Horatius,
The evening of thy stormy day at last
Shall close in peace. Here take him to thy breast.
Horatius. My son, my conqueror! 'twas a fatal stroke, [brace
But shall not wound our peace. This kind em-
Shall spread a sweet oblivion o'er our sorrows;
Or, if in after times, though 'tis not long
That I shall trouble you, some sad remembrance,
Should steal a sigh, and peevish age forget
Its resolution, only boldly say
Thou sav'dst the state, and I'll intreat forgiveness.
Learn hence, ye Romans, on how sure a base
The patriot builds his happiness;
Grief may to grief in endless round succeed,
And nature suffer when our children bleed;
But still superior must that hero prove,
Whose first, best passion, is his country's love.
[*Exeunt omnes*

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EPILOGUE.

Ladies, by me our courteous author sends
His compliments to all his female friends,
And thanks them from his soul for every bright
Indulgent tear which they have shed to-night.
Sorrow in virtue's cause proclaims a mind,
And gives to beauty graces more refined.
Oh, who could bear the loveliest form of art,
A cherub's face, without a feeling heart!
'Tis there alone, whatever charms we boast,
'Though men may flatter, and though men may toast,
'Tis there alone they find the joy sincere,
The wife, the parent, and the friend are there.
All else, the veriest rakes themselves must own,
Are but the paltry play-things of the town;
The painted clouds, which, glittering, tempt the chace,
Then melt in air, and mock the vain embrace.
Well then; the private virtues, 'tis confess'd,
Are the soft inmates of the female breast.
But then, they fill so full that crowded space,
That the poor public seldom finds a place.
And I suspect there's many a fair one here,
Who pour'd her sorrows on Horatia's bier;
That still retains so much of flesh and blood,
She'd fairly hang the brother, if she could.
Why, ladies, to be sure, if that be all,
At your tribunal he must stand or fall.
Whate'er his country, or his sire decreed,
You are his judges now, and he must plead.
Like other culprit youths he wanted grace;
But could have no self-interest in the case.
Had she been wife, or mistress, or a friend,
It might have answer'd some convenient end:
But a mere sister, whom he loved—to take
Her life away,—and for his country's sake!
Faith, ladies, you may pardon him; indeed
There's very little fear the crime should spread.
True patriots are but rare among the men,
And really might be useful now and then.
Then do not check, by your disapprobation,
A spirit which might rule the British nation,
And still might rule—would you but set the fashion.

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LOVE FOR LOVE:

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY WILLIAM CONGREVE, ESQ.

REMARKS.

IN this brilliant comedy there is plenty of bright and sparkling characters, rich as wit and imagination can make them; but there is wanting one pure and perfect model of simple nature, and that one, wherever it is to be found, is, like Alasnam's lady, in the "Arabian Tales," worth them all.

The poet has provided a very splendid and voluptuous entertainment; but he has invited too many guests for his table, where they have not elbow-room enough for their ease, nor opportunities sufficient for all to take a share in the conversation, and respectively to display their talents. It is not the *convenientia cuique* that Congreve studies; to every scene in the play we might prefix *poeta loquitur*. He is also a determined leveller, and distributes his favours, with democratic indifference, to the lacquey as liberally as to the Lord. He serves out wit, however, as the purser serves out grog, to every individual his measured dole, without any regard to his occasions, or his capacity of disposing of it.

In what company Mr. Congreve lived whilst he was a writer of comedy, we cannot pretend to say; we all know however with whom he consorted in his idle days: but if the ladies of fashion in his time talked the language which their representatives talk in his comedies, they were intolerably gross; and if they did not, he is unpardonably libellous.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SIR SAMPSON LEGEND.
VALENTINE.
SCANDAL.
TATTLE.
BEN.
FORESIGHT.
JEREMY.
TRAPLAND.
BUCKRAM.

ANGELICA.
MRS. FORESIGHT.
MRS. FRAIL.
MISS PRUE.
NURSE.
JENNY.

Steward, Officers, Sailors, and several Servants.

SCENE.—London.

PROLOGUE.

The husbandman in vain renews his toil,
To cultivate each year a hungry soil;
And fondly hopes for rich and generous fruit,
When what should feed the tree devours the root;
Th' unladen boughs, he sees, bode certain dearth,
Unless transplanted to more kindly earth.
So, the poor husbands of the stage, who found
Their labours lost upon ungrateful ground,
This last and only remedy have proved;
And hope new fruit from ancient stocks removed.
Well may they hope, when you so kindly aid,
Well plant a soil, which you so rich have made.
As Nature gave the world to man's first age,
So from your bounty we receive this stage;
The freedom man was born to you've restored,
And to our world such plenty you afford,
It seems like Eden, fruitful of its own accord.
But since in Paradise frail flesh gave way,
And when but two were made, both went astray;
Forbear your wonder, and the fault forgive,
If, in our larger family, we grieve
One falling Adam, and one tempted Eve.
We who remain would gratefully repay,
What our endeavours can, and bring this day,
The first-fruit offering of a virgin play:
We hope there's something that may please each taste,

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And though of homely fare we make the feast,
Yet you will find variety at least.
There's humour, which for cheerful friends we got,
And for the thinking party there's a plot.
We've something too to gratify ill-nature,
(If there be any here)—and that is satire.
Though satire scarce dares grin, 'tis grown so mild,
Or only shows its teeth, as if it smiled.
As asses thistles, poets mumble wit,
And dare not bite for fear of being bit.
They hold their pens, as swords are held by fools,
And are afraid to use their own edge-tools.
Since the Plain Dealer's scenes of manly rage,
Not one has dared to lash this crying age.
This time, the poet owns the bold essay,
Yet hopes there's no ill-manners in his play:
And he declares by me, he has design'd
Affront to none, but frankly speaks his mind.
And, should th' ensuing scenes not chance to hit,
He offers but this one excuse—'twas writ
Before your late encouragement of wit.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

VALENTINE, *in his Chamber, reading*; JEREMY *waiting. Several Books upon the Table.*

Val. Jeremy!

Jer. Sir.

Val. Here, take away! I'll walk a turn, and digest what I have read.

Jer. You'll grow devilish fat upon this paper diet.

[*Aside, and taking away the books.*

Val. And d'ye hear? go you to breakfast—There's a page doubled down in Epictetus, that is a feast for an emperor.

Jer. Was Epictetus a real cook, or did he only write receipts?

Val. Read, read, sirrah, and refine your appetite; learn to live upon instruction; feast your mind, and mortify your flesh. Read, and take your nourishment in at your eyes; shut up your mouth, and chew the cud of understanding. So Epictetus advises.

Jer. O Lord! I have heard much of him, when I waited upon a gentleman at Cambridge. Pray what was that Epictetus?

Val. A very rich man—not worth a groat.

Jer. Humph! and so he has made a very fine feast, where there is nothing to be eaten.

Val. Yes.

Jer. Sir, you're a gentleman, and probably understand this fine feeding: but, if you please, I had rather be at board-wages. Does your Epictetus, or your Seneca here, or any of these poor rich rogues, teach you how to pay your debts without money? Will they shut up the mouths of your creditors? Will Plato be bail for you? or Diogenes, because he understands confinement, and lived in a tub, go to prison for you? 'Slife, Sir, what do you mean, to mew yourself up here with three or four musty books, in commendation of starving and poverty.

Val. Why, sirrah, I have no money, you know it; and therefore resolve to rail at all that have: and in that I but follow the examples of the wisest and wittiest men in all ages—these poets and philosophers, whom you hate, for just such another reason; because they abound in sense, and you are a fool.

Jer. Ay, Sir, I am a fool, and I know it: and yet, Heaven help me, I'm poor enough to be a wit.—But I was always a fool, when I told you what your expenses would bring you to; your coaches, your liveries, your treats, and your balls; your being in love with a lady that did not care a farthing for you in your prosperity, and keeping company with wits, that cared for nothing but your prosperity, and now you are poor, hate you as much as they do one another.

Val. Well! and now I am poor, I have an opportunity to be revenged on them all; I'll pursue Angelica with more love than ever, and appear more notoriously her admirer in this restraint, than when I openly rivalled the rich fops that made court to her. So shall my poverty be a mortification to her pride, and perhaps make her compassionate the love, which has principally reduced my fortune. And for the wits, I'm sure I am in a condition to be even with them.

Jer. Nay, your condition is pretty even with theirs, that's the truth on't.

Val. I'll take some of their trade out of their hands.

Jer. Now Heaven of mercy continue the tax upon paper!—You don't mean to write?

Val. Yes, I do; I'll write a play.

Jer. Hem!—Sir, if you please to give me a small certificate of three lines—only to certify to those whom it may concern, That the bearer hereof, Jeremy Fetch by name, has for the space of seven years truly and faithfully served Valentine Legend, Esquire; and that he is not now turned away for any misdemeanour, but does voluntarily dismiss his master from any future authority over him——

Val. No, sirrah; you shall live with me still.

Jer. Sir, it's impossible——I may die with you, starve with you, or be damned with your works: but to live, even three days, the life of a play, I no more expect it, than to be canonized for a Muse after my decease.

Val. You are witty, you rogue; I shall want your help—I'll have you learn to make couplets, to tag the ends of acts. D'ye hear? get the maids to crambo in an evening, and learn the knack of rhyming; you may arrive at the height of a song sent by an unknown hand, or a chocolate-house lampoon.

Jer. But, Sir, is this the way to recover your father's favour? Why Sir Sampson will be irreconcileable. If your younger brother should come from sea, he'd never look upon you again. You're undone, Sir; you're ruined: you wont have a friend left, if you turn poet—Ah, confound that Will's coffee-house, it has ruined more young men than the Royal Oak lottery?—Nothing thrives that belongs to it. The man of the house would have been an alderman by this time with half the trade, if he had set up in the city.—For my part, I never sit at the door, that I don't get double the stomach that I do at a horse-race. The air upon Banstead Downs is nothing to it for a whetter; yet I never see it, but the spirit of famine appears to me—sometimes like a decayed porter, worn out with pimping, and

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carrying billet-doux and songs; not like other porters for hire, but for the jest's sake.—Now like a thin chairman, melted down to half his proportion, with carrying a poet upon tick, to visit some great fortune; and his fare to be paid him like the wages of sin, either at the day of marriage, or the day of death.

Val. Very well, Sir; can you proceed?

Jer. Sometimes like a bilked bookseller, with a meagre terrified countenance, that looks as if he had written for himself, or were resolved to turn author, and bring the rest of his brethren into the same condition. And lastly, in the form of a worn-out punk, with verses, in her hand, which her vanity had preferred to settlements, without a whole tatter to her tail, but as ragged as one of the Muses; or as if she was carrying her linen to the paper-mill, to be converted into folio books of warning to all young maids, not to prefer poetry to good sense; or lying in the arms of a needy wit, before the embraces of a wealthy fool.

Enter SCANDAL.

Scand. What Jeremy holding forth?

Val. The rogue has (with all the wit he could muster up) been declaiming against wit.

Scand. Ay? Why then I'm afraid Jeremy has wit: for wherever it is, it's always contriving its own ruin.

Jer. Why so I have been telling my master, Sir, Mr. Scandal, for Heaven's sake, Sir, try if you can dissuade him from turning poet.

Scand. Poet! He shall turn soldier first, and rather depend upon the outside of his head, than the lining! Why, has not your poverty made you enemies enough? must you show your wit to get more?

Jer. Ay, more indeed: for who cares for any body that has more wit than himself?

Scand. Jeremy speaks like an oracle. Don't you see how worthless great men and dull rich rogues avoid a witty man of small fortune? Why, he looks like a writ of inquiry into their titles and estates; and seems commissioned by Heaven to seize the better half.

Val. Therefore I would rail in my writings, and be revenged.

Scand. Rail! at whom! the whole world? Impotent and vain! Who would die a martyr to sense in a country where the religion is folly? You may stand at bay for a while; but, when the full cry is against you, you sha'n't have fair play for your life. If you can't be fairly run down by the hounds, you will be treacherously shot by the huntsmen. No, turn pimp, flatterer, quack, lawyer, parson, be chaplain to an atheist, or stallion to an old woman, any thing but poet. A modern poet is worse, more servile, timorous, and fawning, than any I have named: without you could retrieve the ancient honours of the name, recall the stage of Athens, and be allowed the force of an open, honest satire.

Val. You are as inveterate against poets, as if your character had been exposed upon the stage.—Nay, I am not violently bent upon the trade.—[*One Knocks.*] Jeremy, see who's there. [JER. *goes to the door.*]—But tell me what you would have me do.—What do the world say of me, and my forced confinement?

Scand. the world behaves itself, at it uses to do on such occasions. Some pity you, and condemn your father: others excuse him, and blame you. Only the ladies are merciful, and wish you well: since love and pleasureable expense have been your greatest faults.

JEREMY *returns.*

Val. How now?

Jer. Nothing new, Sir. I have despatched some half a dozen duns with as much dexterity as a hungry judge does causes at dinner-time.

Val. What answers have you given them?

Scand. Patience, I suppose—the old receipt!

Jer. No, faith, Sir: I have put them off so long with patience and forbearance, and other fair words, that I was forced to tell them in plain downright English——

Val. What?

Jer. That they should be paid.

Val. When?

Jer. To-morrow.

Val. And how the devil do you mean to keep your word?

Jer. Keep it? Not at all: it has been so very much stretched, that I reckon it will break by to-morrow, and nobody be surprised at the matter!—[*Knocking.*] Again! Sir, if you don't like my negotiation, will you be pleased to answer them yourself?

Val. See who they are. [*Exit* JEREMY.] By this, Scandal, you may see what it is to be great. Secretaries of state, presidents of the council, and generals of an army, lead just such a life as I do; have just such crowds of visitants in a morning, all soliciting of past promises; which are but a civiler sort of duns, that lay claim to voluntary debts.

Scand. And you, like a truly great man, having engaged their attendance, and promised more than you intended to perform, are more perplexed to find evasions, than you would be with the honest means of keeping your word, and gratifying your creditors.

Val. Scandal, learn to spare your friends, and do not provoke your enemies. This liberty of your tongue will one day bring confinement on your body.

Enter JEREMY.

Jer. O, Sir, there's Trapland the scrivener, with two suspicious fellows like lawful pads, that would knock a man down with pocket tipstaves!—And there's your father's steward! and the nurse, with one of your children, from Twit'nam.

Val. Plague on her! could she find no other time to fling my sins in my face? Here! give her this [*Gives money.*] and bid her trouble me no more; a thoughtless, two-handed whore! She knows my condition well enough, and might have overlaid the child a fortnight ago, if she had any forecast in her.

Scand. What, is it bouncing Margery, with my godson?

Jer. Yes, Sir.

Scand. My blessing to the boy, with this token [*Gives money.*] of my love. And, d'ye hear, bid Margery put more flocks in her bed, shift twice a week, and not work so hard, that she may not smell so intolerably.—I shall take the air shortly.

Val. Scandal, don't spoil my boy's milk.—Bid Trapland come in.—If I can give that Cerberus a sop, I shall be at rest for one day.

[JEREMY *goes out, and brings in* TRAPLAND.

Val. O Mr. Trapland? my old friend! welcome—Jeremy, a chair quickly: a bottle of sack and a toast—fly—a chair first.

Trap. A good morning to you, Mr. Valentine; and to you Mr. Scandal.

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Scand. The morning's a very good morning, if you don't spoil it.

Val. Come, sit you down; you know his way.

Trap. [*Sits.*] There is a debt, Mr. Valentine of fifteen hundred pounds, of pretty long standing——

Val. I cannot talk about business with a thirsty palate.—Sirrah, the sack.

Trap. And I desire to know what course you have taken for the payment.

Val. Faith, I am heartily glad to see you—my service to you! fill, fill, to honest Mr. Trapland—fuller!

Trap. Hold, sweetheart—this is not our business.—My service to you, Mr. Scandal.—[*Drinks.*]—I have forborn as long—

Val. T'other glass, and then we'll talk—Fill, Jeremy.

Trap. No more, in truth—I have forborn, I say—

Val. Sirrah, fill when I bid you.—And how does your handsome daughter?—A good husband to her. [*Drinks.*

Trap. Thank you—I have been out of this money—

Val. Drink first. Scandal, why do you not drink? [*They drink.*

Trap. And, in short I can be put off no longer.

Val. I was much obliged to you for your supply: it did me signal service in my necessity. But you delight in doing good. Scandal, drink to me my friend Trapland's health. An honester man lives not, nor one more ready to serve his friend in distress; which I say to his face. Come, fill each man his glass.

Scand. What? I know Trapland has been a whore-master, and loves a wench still. You never knew a libertine that was not an honest fellow.

Trap. Fy, Mr. Scandal, you never knew—

Scand. What don't I know? I know the buxom black widow in the Poultry—Eight hundred pounds a year, jointure, and twenty thousand pounds in money. Ahah! old Trap!

Val. Say you so? Come, we'll remember the widow: I know whereabouts you are; come, to her.

Trap. No more indeed.

Val. What! the widow's health?—Give it him—off with it. [*They drink*]—A lovely girl, i'faith, black sparkling eyes, soft, pouting ruby lips! Better sealing there, than a bond for a million, ha!

Trap. No, no, there's no such thing; we'd better mind our business—You're a wag!

Val. No, faith, we'll mind the widow's business: fill again.—Pretty round heaving breasts, a Barbary shape, and a jut with her bum, would stir an anchorite; and the prettiest foot! Oh, if a man could but fasten his eyes on her feet as they steal in and out, and play at bo-peep under her petticoats—ha! Mr. Trapland.

Trap. Verily, give me a glass—you're a wag—and here's to the widow. [*Drinks.*

Scand. He begins to chuckle—ply him close, or he'll relapse into a dun.

Enter OFFICER.

Off. By your leave, gentlemen.—Mr. Trapland, if we must do our office, tell us.—We have half a dozen gentlemen to arrest in Pall-mall and Covent-Garden; and if we don't make haste, the chairmen will be abroad, and block up the chocolate-houses; and then our labour's lost.

Trap. That's true. Mr. Valentine, I love mirth; but business must be done; are you ready to——

Jer. Sir, your father's steward says, he comes to make proposals concerning your debts.

Val. Bid him come in: Mr. Trapland, send away your officer; you shall have an answer presently.

Trap. Mr. Snap, stay within call. [*Exit* OFFICER.

Enter Steward, who whispers VALENTINE.

Scand. Here's a dog now, a traitor in his wine! Sirrah, refund the sack: Jeremy, fetch him some warm water; or I'll rip up his stomach, and go the shortest way to his conscience.

Trap. Mr. Scandal, you are uncivil. I did not value your sack; but you cannot expect it again, when I have drunk it.

Scand. And how do you expect to have your money again, when a gentleman has spent it?

Val. You need say no more. I understand the conditions; they are very hard, but my necessity is pressing: I agree to them. Take Mr. Trapland with you, and let him draw the writing—Mr. Trapland, you know this man; he shall satisfy you.

Trap. Sincerely, I am loath to be thus pressing; but my necessity——

Val. No apology, Mr. Scrivener; you shall be paid.

Trap. I hope you forgive me, my business requires——

[*Exeunt* TRAPLAND, *Steward, and* JEREMY.

Scand. He begs pardon like a hangman at an execution.

Val. But I have got a reprieve.

Scand. I am surprised! does your father relent?

Val. No; he has sent me the hardest conditions in the world. You have heard of a booby brother of mine, that was sent to sea three years ago? This brother, my father hears, is landed; whereupon he very affectionately sends me word, "If I will make a deed of conveyance of my right to his estate after his death to my younger brother, he will immediately furnish me with four thousand pounds to pay my debts, and make my fortune." This was once proposed before, and I refused it; but the present impatience of my creditors for their money, and my own impatience of confinement, and absence from Angelica, force me to consent.

Scand. A very desperate demonstration of your love to Angelica! and I think she has never given you any assurance of hers.

Val. You know her temper; she never gave me any great reason either to hope or despair.

Scand. Women of her airy temper, as they seldom think before they act, so they rarely give us any light to guess at what they mean: but you have little reason to believe that a woman of this age, who has had an indifference for you in your prosperity, will fall in love with your ill-fortune. Besides, Angelica has a great fortune of her own; and great fortunes either expect another great fortune, or a fool.

Enter JEREMY.

Jer. More misfortunes, Sir.

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Val. What, another dun?

Jer. No, Sir; but Mr. Tattle is come to wait upon you.

Val. Well, I cannot help it—you must bring him up; he knows I don't go abroad.

[*Exit* JER.

Scand. Plague on him! I'll be gone.

Val. No, pr'ythee stay: Tattle and you should never be asunder; you are light and shadow, and show one another. He is perfectly thy reverse both in humour and understanding; and as you set up for defamation, he is a mender of reputations.

Scand. A mender of reputations! ay, just as he is a keeper of secrets, another virtue that he sets up for in the same manner. For the rogue will speak aloud in the posture of a whisper; and deny a woman's name, while he gives you the marks of her person. He will forswear receiving a letter from her, and at the same time show you her hand in the superscription: and yet, perhaps, he has counterfeited her hand, and sworn to a truth, but he hopes not to be believed; and refuses the reputation of a lady's favour, as a doctor says no to a bishopric, only that it may be granted him. In short, he is a public professor of secrecy, and makes proclamation that he holds private intelligence.—He is here.

Enter TATTLE.

Tat. Valentine, good morrow! Scandal, I am yours—that is, when you speak well of me.

Scand. That is, when I am yours; for while I am my own, or any body's else, that will never happen.

Tat. How inhuman!

Val. Why, Tattle, you need not be much concerned at any thing he says: for to converse with Scandal, is to play at Losing Loadum; you must lose a good name to him, before you can win it for yourself.

Tat. But how barbarous that is, and how unfortunate for him, that the world shall think the better of any person for his calumniation! I thank Heaven it has always been a part of my character to treat the reputations of others very tenderly indeed.

Scand. Ay, such rotten reputations as you have to deal with are to be treated tenderly indeed.

Tat. Nay, why rotten? why should you say rotten, when you know not the persons of whom you speak? How cruel that is!

Scand. Not know them? Why, thou never hadst to do with any one that did not stink to all the town.

Tat. Ha, ha, ha! nay, now you make a jest of it, indeed. For there is nothing more known than that nobody knows any thing of that nature of me. As I hope to be saved, Valentine, I never exposed a woman, since I knew what woman was.

Val. And yet you have conversed with several?

Tat. To be free with you, I have—I don't care if I own that—nay more (I'm going to say a bold word now,) I never could meddle with a woman that had to do with any body else.

Scand. How!

Val. Nay, faith, I'm apt to believe him—except her husband, Tattle.

Tat. Oh, that——

Scand. What think you of that noble commoner, Mrs. Drab?

Tat. Pooh, I know Madam Drab has bragged in three or four places, that I said this and that, and writ to her, and did I know not what—but upon my reputation, she did me wrong—well, well, that was malice—but I know the bottom of it. She was bribed to that by one we all know—a man too—only to bring me into disgrace with a certain woman of quality—

Scand. Whom we all know.

Tat. No matter for that—Yes, yes, every body knows—no doubt on't, every body knows my secrets!—But I soon satisfied the lady of my innocence; for I told her—Madam, says I, there are some persons who make it their business to tell stories, and say this and that of one and the other; and, says I, if your grace——

Scand. Grace!

Tat. O Lord, what have I said?—My unlucky tongue?

Val. Ha, ha, ha!

Scand. Why, Tattle, thou hast more impudence than one can in reason expect: I shall have an esteem for thee—well, and, ha, ha, ha! well, go on, and what did you say to her grace?

Val. I confess this is something extraordinary.

Tat. Not a word as I hope to be saved; an errant *lapsus linguæ*!—Come let us talk of something else.

Val. Well, but how did you acquit yourself?

Tat. Pooh, pooh, nothing at all, I only rallied with you.—A woman of ordinary rank was a little jealous of me, and I told her something or other—faith, I know not what.—Come, let's talk of something else. [*Hums a song.*

Scand. Hang him, let him alone; he has a mind we should inquire.

Tat. Valentine, I supped last night with your mistress, and her uncle, old Foresight: I think your father lies at Foresight's.

Val. Yes.

Tat. Upon my soul, Angelica's a fine woman.—And so is Mrs. Foresight, and her sister, Mrs. Frail.

Scand. Yes, Mrs. Frail is a very fine woman; we all know her.

Tat. Oh, that is not fair.

Scand. What?

Tat. To tell.

Scand. To tell what? Why, what do you know of Mrs. Frail?

Tat. Who, I? Upon honour I don't know whether she be a man or woman, but by the smoothness of her chin, and roundness of her hips.

Scand. No!

Tat. No.

Scand. She says otherwise.

Tat. Impossible!

Scand. Yes, faith. Ask Valentine else.

Tat. Why then, as I hope to be saved, I believe a woman only obliges a man to secrecy, that she may have the pleasure of telling herself.

Scand. No doubt on it. Well, but has she done you wrong, or no? You have had her? ha?

Tat. Though I have more honour than to tell first, I have more manners than to contradict what a lady has declared.

Scand. Well, you own it?

Tat. I am strangely surprised! Yes, yes, I cannot deny it, if she taxes me with it.

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Scand. She'll be here by and by; she sees Valentine every morning.

Tat. How!

Val. She does me the favour—I mean, of a visit sometimes. I did, not think she had granted more to any body.

Scand. Nor I, faith. But Tattle does not use to belie a lady; it is contrary to his character.—How one may be deceived in a woman, Valentine.

Tat. Nay, what do you mean, gentlemen!

Scand. I'm resolved I'll ask her.

Tat. O barbarous! Why did you not tell me—

Scand. No, you told us.

Tat. And bid me ask Valentine?

Val. What did I say? I hope you wont bring me to confess an answer, when you never asked me the question!

Tat. But, gentlemen, this is the most inhuman proceeding.—

Val. Nay, if you have known Scandal thus long, and cannot avoid such a palpable decoy as this was; the ladies have a fine time whose reputations are in your keeping.

Enter JEREMY.

Jer. Sir, Mrs. Frail has sent to know if you are stirring.

Val. Show her up when she comes.

[*Exit* JER.

Tat. I'll be gone.

Val. You'll meet her.

Tat. Is there not a back way?

Val. If there were, you have more discretion than to give Scandal such an advantage: why, your running away will prove all that he can tell her.

Tat. Scandal, you will not be so ungenerous—O, I shall lose my reputation of secrecy for ever.—I shall never be received but upon public days; and my visits will never be admitted beyond a drawing-room; I shall never see a bed-chamber again, never be locked in a closet, nor run behind a screen, or under a table; never be distinguished among the waiting women by the name of trusty Mr. Tattle more.——You will not be so cruel?

Val. Scandal, have pity on him; he'll yield to any conditions.

Tat. Any, any terms.

Scand. Come, then, sacrifice half a dozen women of good reputation to me presently.—Come, where are you familiar?—And see that they are women of quality too, the first quality.

Tat. 'Tis very hard.——Won't a baronet's lady pass?

Scand. No, nothing under a right honourable.

Tat. O, inhuman! You don't expect their names?

Scand. No, their titles shall serve.

Tat. Alas, that is the same thing. Pray, spare me their titles; I'll describe their persons.

Scand. Well, begin then. But take notice. if you are so ill a painter, that I cannot know the person by your picture of her, you must be condemned, like other bad painters, to write the name at the bottom.

Tat. Well, first then——

Enter MRS. FRAIL.

O unfortunate! she's come already. Will you have patience till another time?—I'll double the number.

Scand. Well, on that condition—Take heed you don't fail me.

Mrs. F. I shall get a fine reputation, by coming to see fellows in a morning! Scandal, you devil, are you here too? Oh, Mr. Tattle, every thing is safe with you, we know.

Scand. Tattle!

Tat. Mum——O, Madam, you do me too much honour.

Val. Well, Lady Galloper, how does Angelica?

Mrs. F. Angelica?—Manners!

Val. What, you will allow an absent lover—

Mrs. F. No, I'll allow a lover present with his mistress to be particular—but otherwise I think his passion ought to give place to his manners.

Val. But what if he has more passion than manners.

Mrs. F. Then let him marry and reform.

Val. Marriage indeed may qualify the fury of his passion; but it very rarely mends a man's manners.

Mrs. F. You are the most mistaken in the world: there is no creature perfectly civil, but a husband: for in a little time he grows only rude to his wife; and that is the highest good breeding, for it begets his civility to other people. Well, I'll tell you news; but, I suppose, you heard your brother Benjamin is landed, And my brother Foresight's daughter is come out of the country—I assure you, there's a match talked of by the old people.—Well, if he be but as great a sea beast, as she is a land monster, we shall have a most amphibious breed—the progeny will be all otters; he has been bred at sea, and she has never been out of the country.

Val. Plague take them! their conjunction bodes me no good, I'm sure.

Mrs. F. Now you talk of conjunction, my brother Foresight has cast both their nativities, and prognosticates an admiral and an eminent justice of the peace to be the issue male of their two bodies. 'Tis the most superstitious old fool. He would have persuaded me, that this was an unlucky day, and would not let me come abroad: but I invented a dream, and sent him to Artemidorus for interpretation, and so stole out to see you. Well, and what will you give me now? Come, I must have something.

Val. Step into the next room—and I'll give you something.

Scand. Ay, we'll all give you something.

Mrs. F. Well, what will you give me?

Val. Mine's a secret.

Mrs. F. I thought you would give me something that would be a trouble to you to keep.

Val. And Scandal shall give you a good name.

Mrs. F. That's more than he has for himself. And what will you give me, Mr. Tattle?

Tat. I? My soul, Madam.

Mrs. F. Pooh, no, I thank you, I have enough to do to take care of my own. Well; but I'll come and see you one of these mornings: I hear, you have a great many pictures.

Tat. I have a pretty good collection, at your service; some originals.

Scand. Hang him, he has nothing but the Seasons and the Twelve Cæsars, paltry copies; and the Five Senses, as ill represented as they are in himself; and he himself is the only original you will see there.

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Mrs. F. Ay, but I hear he has a closet of beauties.

Scand. Yes, all that have done him favours, if you will believe him.

Mrs. F. Ay, let me see those, Mr. Tattle.

Tat. Oh, Madam, those are sacred to love and contemplation. No man but the painter and myself was ever blessed with the sight.

Mrs. F. Well, but a woman—

Tat. Nor woman, till she consented to have her picture there too—for then she is obliged to keep the secret.

Scand. No, no! come to me if you'd see pictures.

Mrs. F. You!

Scand. Yes, faith, I can show you your own picture, and most of your acquaintance, to the life, and as like as at Kneller's.

Mrs. F. O lying creature! Valentine, does not he lie?—I can't believe a word he says.

Val. No, indeed he speaks truth now; for, as Tattle has pictures of all that have granted him favours, he has the pictures of all that have refused him—if satires, descriptions, characters, and lampoons, are pictures.

Scand. Yes, mine are most in black and white—and yet there are some set out in their true colours, both men and women. I can show you pride, folly, affectation, wantonness, inconstancy, covetousness, dissimulation, malice, and ignorance, all in one piece. Then I can show you lying, foppery, vanity, cowardice, braggery, lechery, impotence, and ugliness, in another piece; and yet one of these is a celebrated beauty, and t'other a professed beau. I have paintings too, some pleasant enough.

Mrs. F. Come, let's hear them.

Scand. Why, I have a beau in a bagnio, cupping for a complexion, and sweating for a shape.

Mrs. F. So!

Scand. Then I have a lady burning brandy in a cellar with a hackney-coachman.

Mrs. F. O devil! Well but that story is not true.

Scand. I have some hieroglyphics too. I have a lawyer with a hundred hands, two heads, and but one face; a divine, with two faces and one head; and I have a soldier, with his brains in his belly, and his heart where his head should be.

Mrs. F. And no head.

Scand. No head.

Mrs. F. Pooh, this is all invention. Have you not a poet.

Scand. Yes, I have a poet, weighing words, and selling praise for praise; and a critic picking his pocket. I have another large piece too, representing a school, where there are huge proportioned critics, with long wigs, laced coats, Steinkirk cravats, and terrible faces; with catcalls in their hands, and horn-books about their necks. I have many more of this kind, very well painted, as you shall see.

Mrs. F. Well, I'll come, if it be but to disprove you.

Enter JEREMY.

Jer. Sir, here's the steward again from your father.

Val. I'll come to him.——Will you give me leave? I'll wait on you again presently.

Mrs. F. No, I'll be gone. Come, who squires me to the Exchange? I must call on my sister Foresight there.

Scand. I will: I have a mind to your sister.

Mrs. F. Civil!

Tat. I will: because I have a *tendre* for your ladyship.

Mrs. F. That's somewhat the better reason, to my opinion.

Scand. Well, if Tattle entertains you, I have the better opportunity to engage your sister.

Val. Tell Angelica I am about making hard conditions, to come abroad, and be at liberty to see her.

Scand. I'll give an account of you and your proceedings. If indiscretion be a sign of love, you are the most of a lover of any body that I know. You fancy that parting with your estate will help you to your mistress—In my mind he is a thoughtless adventurer,

Who hopes to purchase wealth by selling land;
Or win a mistress with a losing hand.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Room in FORESIGHT'S *House.*

Enter FORESIGHT *and* SERVANT.

For. Hey-day! What, are all the women of my family abroad? Is not my wife come home? nor my sister? nor my daughter?

Serv. No, Sir.

For. Mercy on us! what can be the meaning of it? Sure the moon is in all her fortitudes! Is my niece Angelica at home?

Serv. Yes Sir.

For. I believe you lie, Sir.

Serv. Sir!

For. I say you lie, Sir. It is impossible that any thing should be as I would have it; for I was born, Sir, when the Crab was ascending; and all my affairs go backward.

Serv. I can't tell indeed, Sir.

For. No, I know you can't, Sir. But I can tell, and foretell, Sir.

Enter NURSE.

Nurse, where's your young mistress?

Nurse. Wee'st heart! I know not: they're none of them come home yet. Poor child, I warrant she's fond of seeing the town!——Marry, pray Heaven they have given her any dinner!——Good lack-a-day, ha, ha, ha! O strange; I'll vow and swear now, ha, ha, ha! marry and did you ever see the like!

For. Why, how now, what's the matter?

Nurse. Pray Heaven send your worship good luck! marry, and amen, with all my heart! for you have put on one stocking with the wrong side outward.

For. Ha, how? Faith and troth I'm glad of it; and so I have; that may be good luck in troth; in troth it may, very good luck: nay, I have had some omens. I got out of bed backwards too this morning, without premeditation; pretty good that too. But then I stumbled coming down stairs, and met a weasel; bad omens those! Some bad, some good; our lives are chequered; mirth and sorrow, want and plenty, night and day, make up our time.

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—But, in troth, I am pleased at my stocking—very well pleased at my stocking!—Oh, here's my niece!—Sirrah, go tell Sir Sampson Legend I'll wait on him if he's at leisure. 'Tis now three o'clock, a very good hour for business; Mercury governs this hour.

[*Exit* SERVANT.

Enter ANGELICA.

Ang. Is it not a good hour for pleasure too, uncle? Pray lend me your coach; mine's out of order.

For. What, would you be gadding too? Sure all females are mad to-day—It is of evil portent, and bodes mischief to the master of a family.—I remember an old prophecy written by Messahalah the Arabian, and thus translated by a reverend Buckinghamshire bard.

When housewives all the house forsake,
And leave good men to brew and bake,
Withouten guile, then be it said,
That house doth stand upon its head;
And when the head is set in ground,
No mar'l if it be fruitful found.

Fruitful, the head fruitful: that bodes horns; the fruit of the head is horns. Dear niece, stay at home—for by the head of the house is meant the husband; the prophecy needs no explanation.

Ang. Well, but I can neither make you a cuckold, uncle, by going abroad; nor secure you from being one, by staying at home.

For. Yes, yes; while there's one woman left, the prophecy is not in full force.

Ang. But my inclinations are in force. I have a mind to go abroad; and if you wont lend me your coach, I'll take a hackney, or a chair; and leave you to erect a scheme, and find who's in conjunction with your wife. Why don't you keep her at home, if you're jealous of her when she's abroad? You know my aunt is a little retrograde (as you call it) in her nature. Uncle, I'm afraid you are not lord of the ascendant! ha, ha, ha!

For. Well, jill-flirt, you are very pert—and always ridiculing that celestial science.

Ang. Nay, uncle, don't be angry—If you are, I'll reap up all your false prophecies, ridiculous dreams, and idle divinations. I'll swear, you are a nuisance to the neighbourhood.—What a bustle did you keep against the last invisible eclipse, laying in provision, as it were for a siege! What a world of fire, and candle, matches and tinderboxes, did you purchase!—One would have thought we were ever after to live under ground; or at least make a voyage to Greenland, to inhabit there all the dark season.

For. Why, you malapert slut!

Ang. Will you lend me your coach? or I'll go on.—Nay, I'll declare how you prophesied popery was coming, only because the butler had mislaid some of the apostle spoons, and thought they were lost. Away went religion and spoon-meat together!——Indeed, uncle, I'll indite you for a wizard.

For. How, hussy! was there ever such a provoking minx?

Nurse. O merciful father, how she talks!

Ang. Yes, I can make oath of your unlawful midnight practices; you and the old nurse there.

Nurse. Marry, Heaven defend!—I at midnight practices. O Lord, what's here to do?—I in unlawful doings with my master's worship!—Why, did you ever hear the like now?—Sir, did ever I do any thing of your midnight concerns—but warm your bed, and tuck you up, and set the candle and your tobacco-box and your urinal by you, and now and then rub the soles of your feet?—O Lord, I!

Ang. Yes, I saw you together, through the key-hole of the closet, one night, like Saul with the witch of Endor, turning the sieve and sheers, and pricking your thumbs, to write poor innocent servants' names in blood, about a little nutmeg-grater, which she had forgot in the caudle-cup.—Nay, I know something worse, if I would speak of it!

For. I defy you, hussy; but I'll remember this, I'll be revenged on you, cockatrice; I'll hamper you—You have your fortune in your own hands—but I'll find a way to make your lover, your prodigal spendthrift gallant, Valentine, pay for all, I will.

Ang. Will you? I care not; but all shall out then.

For. I will have patience, since it is the will of the stars I should be thus tormented—this is the effect of the malicious conjunctions and oppositions in the third house of my nativity; there the curse of kindred was foretold.—But I will have my doors locked up—I'll punish you; not a man shall enter my house.

Ang. Do, uncle, lock them up quickly, before my aunt comes home—you'll have a letter for alimony to-morrow morning!—But let me begone first; and then let no mankind come near the house: but converse with spirits and the celestial signs, the bull and the ram, and the goat. Bless me, there are a great many horned beasts among the twelve signs, uncle! But cuckolds go to heaven!

For. But there's but one virgin among the twelve signs, spit-fire! but one virgin!

Ang. Nor there had not been that one, if she had had to do with any thing but astrologers, uncle! That makes my aunt go abroad.

For. How! how! is that the reason? Come, you know something; tell me, and I'll forgive you; do, good niece.—Come, you shall have my coach and horses—faith and troth, you shall.—Does my wife complain? Come, I know women tell one another.—She is young and sanguine, has a wanton, hazel eye, and was born under Gemini, which may incline her to society; she has a mole upon her lip, with a moist palm, and an open liberality on the mount of Venus.

Ang. Ha, ha, ha!

For. Do you laugh?—Well, gentlewoman, I'll—But come, be a good girl, don't perplex your poor uncle! Tell me—won't you speak? Odd, I'll—

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Sir Sampson is coming down, to wait upon you, Sir. [*Exit.*

Ang. Good b'ye, uncle—Call me a chair.—I'll find out my aunt, and tell her, she must not come home. [*Exit.*

For. I am so perplexed and vexed, I am not fit to receive him; I shall scarce recover myself before the hour be past. Go, nurse; tel Sir Sampson I'm ready to wait on him.

Nurse. Yes, Sir. [*Exit*

For. Well—why, if I was born to be a cuckold, there's no more to be said!—He is her already.

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Enter SIR SAMPSON LEGEND *with a paper.*

Sir S. Nor no more to be done, old boy, that s plain—here it is, I have it in my hand, old Ptolemy; I'll make the ungracious prodigal know who begat him; I will, old Nostrodamus. What, I warrant my son thought nothing belonged to a father, but forgiveness and affection: no authority, no correction, no arbitrary power—nothing to be done, but for him to offend, and me to pardon! I warrant you, if he danced till doomsday, he thought I was to pay the piper. Well, but here it is, under black and white, *signatum, sigillatum,* and *deliberatum*—that, as soon as my son Benjamin is arrived, he is to make over to him his right of inheritance.—Where is my daughter, that is to be—ha? old Merlin! Body of me, I'm so glad I'm revenged on this undutiful rogue!

For. Odso, let me see; let me see the paper. Ay, here it is, if it will but hold—I wish things were done and the conveyance made.—When was this signed? what hour? Odso, you should have consulted me for the time. Well, but we'll make haste.

Sir S. Haste! ay, ay, haste enough; my son Ben will be in town to-night—I have ordered my lawyer to draw up writings of settlements and jointure—all shall be done to-night—No matter for the time; pr'ythee, brother Foresight, leave superstition.—Pox o' th' time; there's no time but the time present; there's no more to be said of what's past; and all that is to come will happen. If the sun shine by day, and the stars by night—why, we shall know one another's faces without the help of a candle; and that's all the stars are good for.

For. How, how, Sir Sampson? that all?—Give me leave to contradict you, and tell you, you are ignorant.

Sir S. I tell you, I am wise: and *sapiens dominabitur astris;* there's Latin for you to prove it, and an argument to confound your Ephemeris.—Ignorant! I tell you I have travelled, old Fercu; and know the globe. I have seen the Antipodes, where the sun rises at midnight, and sets at noon-day.

For. But I tell you, I have travelled, and travelled in the celestial spheres; know the signs and the planets, and their houses: can judge of motions direct and retrograde, of sextiles, quadrates, trines, and oppositions; fiery trigons, and acquatical trigons; know whether life shall be long or short, happy or unhappy; whether diseases are curable or incurable; if journeys shall be prosperous, undertakings successful, or goods stolen recovered: I know——

Sir S. I know the length of the emperor of China's foot; have kissed the great Mogul's slipper, and rid a hunting upon an elephant with the Cham of Tartary.—I have made a cuckold of a king; and the present majesty of Bantam is the issue of these loins.

For. I know when travellers lie or speak truth, when they don't know it themselves.

Sir S. I have known an astrologer made a uckold in the twinkling of a star; and seen a conjurer, that could not keep the devil out of his wife's circle.

For. What, does he twit me with my wife too? I must be better informed of this. [*Aside.*]—Do you mean my wife, Sir Sampson? Though you made a cuckold of the king of Bantam, yet by the body of the sun—

Sir S. By the horns of the moon, you would say, brother Capricorn.

For. Capricorn in your teeth, thou modern Mandeville! Ferdinand Mendez Pinto was but a type of thee, thou liar of the first magnitude. Take back your paper of inheritance; send your son to sea again. I'll wed my daughter to an Egyptian mummy, ere she shall incorporate with a contemner of sciences, and a defamer of virtue.

Sir S. Body o' me, I have gone too far—I must not provoke honest Albumazar.—An Egyptian mummy is an illustrious creature, my trusty hieroglyphic; and may have significations of futurity about him. Odsbud, I would my son were an Egyptian mummy for thy sake. What, thou art not angry for a jest, my good Haly?—I reverence the sun, moon, and stars with all my heart.—What! I'll make thee a present of a mummy. Now I think on't, I have a shoulder of an Egyptian king, that I purloined from one of the pyramids, powdered with hieroglyphics; thou shalt have it brought home to thy house, and make an entertainment for all the Philomaths, and students in physic and astrology, in and about London.

For. But what do you know of my wife, Sir Sampson?

Sir S. Thy wife is a constellation of virtues; she is the moon, and thou art the man in the moon; she is more illustrious than the moon, for she has her chastity without her incontinency: I was but in jest.

Enter JEREMY.

How now? who sent for you, ha? what would you have?

For. Nay, if you were but in jest—Who's that fellow? I don't like his physiognomy.

Sir S. [*To* JEREMY.] My son, Sir? what son, Sir? my son Benjamin, ha?

Jer. No, Sir; Mr. Valentine, my master;—it is the first time he has been abroad since his confinement, and he comes to pay his duty to you.

Sir S. Well, Sir.

Enter VALENTINE.

Jer. He is here, Sir.

Val. Your blessing, Sir.

Sir S. You've had it already, Sir; I think I sent it you to-day in a bill of four thousand pounds.—A great deal of money, brother Foresight!

For. Ay, indeed, Sir Sampson, a great deal of money for a young man; I wonder what he can do with it.

Sir S. So do I.—Hark ye, Valentine, if there be too much, refund the superfluity; dost hear, boy?

Val. Superfluity, Sir! it will scarce pay my debts.—I hope you will have more indulgence, than to oblige me to those hard conditions which my necessity signed to.

Sir S. Sir! how, I beseech you, what were you pleased to intimate, concerning indulgence?

Val. Why, Sir, that you would not go to the extremity of the conditions, but release me at least from some part.

Sir S. O, Sir, I understand you—that's all, ha?

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Val. Yes, Sir, all that I presume to ask—But what you, out of fatherly fondness, will be pleased to add, will be doubly welcome.

Sir S. No doubt of it, sweet Sir; but your filial piety and my fatherly fondness would fit like two tallies—Here's a rogue, brother Foresight, makes a bargain under hand and seal in the morning, and would be released from it in the afternoon, here's conscience and honesty! This is your wit now, this is the morality of your wit! You are a wit, and have been a beau, and may be a—Why, sirrah, is it not here under hand and seal?——Can you deny it?

Val. Sir, I don't deny it.

Sir S. Sirrah, you'll be hanged; I shall live to see you go up Holborn-hill.—Has he not a rogue's face?——Speak, brother; you understand physiognomy;——of all my boys the most unlike me. He has a damned Tyburn face, without the benefit of the clergy.

For. Hum!—truly, I don't care to discourage a young man—he has a violent death in his face; but I hope no danger of hanging.

Val. Sir, is this usage for your son?—For that old weather-headed fool, I know how to laugh at him; but you, Sir—

Sir S. You, Sir; and you, Sir.—Why, who are you, Sir?

Val. Your son, Sir.

Sir S. That's more than I know, Sir; and I believe not.

Val. Faith, I hope not.

Sir S. What, would you have your mother a whore? Did you ever hear the like?

Val. I would have an excuse for your barbarity and unnatural usage.

Sir S. Excuse!—Impudence! Why, sirrah, may'nt I do what I please? are not you my slave? did not I beget you? and might not I have chosen whether I would have begot you or no? Who are you? whence came you? what brought you into the world? how came you here, Sir? here, with that audacious face, hah? Answer me that. Did you come a volunteer into the world? or did I, with the lawful authority of a parent, press you to the service?

Val. I know no more why I came, than you do why you called me. But here I am; and if you don't mean to provide for me, I desire you would leave me as you found me.

Sir S. With all my heart. Come, uncase, strip, and go naked out of the world as you came into it.

Val. My clothes are soon put off—but you must also divest me of my reason, thought, passions, inclinations, affections, appetites, senses, and the train of attendants that you begot along with me.

Sir S. What a many-headed monster have I propagated!

Val. I am, of myself, a plain, easy, simple creature; and to be kept at small expense: but the retinue that you gave me are craving and invincible; they are so many devils that you have raised, and will have employment.

Sir S. Oons what had I to do to get children?—can't a private man be born without all these followers?—Why nothing under an emperor should be born with appetites—why, at this rate, a fellow that has but a groat in his pocket may have a stomach capable of a ten shilling ordinary.

Jer. Nay, that's as clear as the sun; I'll make oath of it before any justice in Middlesex.

Sir S. Here's a cormorant too!——This fellow was not born with you?—I did not beget him, did I?

Jer. By the provision that's made for me, you might have begot me too.—Nay, and to tell your worship another truth, I believe you did; for I find I was born with those same whoreson appetites too that my master speaks of.

Sir S. Why, look you there now!—I'll maintain it, that, by the rule of right reason, this fellow ought to have been born without a palate.——'Sheart, what should he do with a distinguishing taste?—I warrant now, he'd rather eat a pheasant than a piece of poor John—and smell, now; why, I warrant he can smell, and loves perfumes above a stink—why, there's it; and music—don't you love music, scoundrel?

Jer. Yes, I have a reasonable good ear, Sir, as to jiggs and country dances, and the like; I don't much matter your solos or sonatas:—they give me the spleen.

Sir S. The spleen? ha, ha, ha! a plague confound you!—Solos or sonatas? Oons, whose son are you? how were you engendered, muckworm?

Jer. I am, by my father, the son of a chairman; my mother sold oysters in winter, and cucumbers in summer: and I came up stairs into the world; for I was born in a cellar.

For. By your looks you shall go up stairs out of the world, too, friend.

Sir S. And if this rogue were anatomized now, and dissected, he has organs of digestion and concoction, large enough for the inside of a cardinal; this son of a cucumber!—These things are unaccountable and unreasonable.—Why was I not a bear, that my cubs might have lived upon sucking their paws? Nature has been provident only to bears and spiders: the one has its nutriment in its own hands; the other spins its habitations out of its own entrails.

Val. Fortune was provident enough to supply all the necessities of my nature, if I had my right inheritance.

Sir S. Again! Have you not four thousand pounds?—If I had it again I would not give thee a groat.—What, wouldst thou have me turn pelican, and feed thee out of my own vitals——Ods, live by your wits——you are always fond of the wits.—Now let's see if you have wit enough to keep yourself.—Your brother will be in town to-night, or to-morrow morning; and then, look you, perform covenants; and so your friend and servant.—Come, brother Foresight.

[*Exeunt* Sir Sampson *and* Foresight.

Jer. I told you what your visit would come to.

Val. 'Tis as much as I expected—I did not come to see him: I came to see Angelica; but since she was gone abroad, it was easily turned another way, and at least looked well on my side. What's here? Mrs. Foresight and Mrs. Frail! They are earnest—I'll avoid them.—Come this way, and go and inquire when Angelica will return. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Mrs. Foresight *and* Mrs. Frail.

Mrs. F. What have you to do to watch me? 'Slife, I'll do what I please.

Mrs. For. You will?

Mrs. F. Yes, marry, will I.—A great piece

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of business to go to Covent-garden, to take a turn in a hackney-coach with one's friend!

Mrs. For. Nay, two or three turns, I'll take my oath.

Mrs. F. Well, what if I took twenty—I warrant, if you had been there it had only been innocent recreation!—Where's the comfort of this life, if we can't have the happiness of conversing where we like?

Mrs. For. But can't you converse at home?—I own it, I think there's no happiness like conversing with an agreeable man: I don't quarrel at that, nor I don't think but your conversation was very innocent. But the place is public; and to be seen with a man in a hackney-coach is scandalous. What if any body else should have seen you alight, as I did?—How can any body be happy, while they are in perpetual fear of being seen and censured?—Besides, it would not only reflect upon you, sister, but on me!

Mrs. F. Pooh, here's a clutter!—Why should it reflect upon you?—I don't doubt but you have thought yourself happy in a hackney-coach before now!—If I had gone to Knightsbridge, or to Chelsea, or to Spring-garden, or to Barn-elms, with a man alone—something might have been said.

Mrs. For. Why, was I ever in any of those places?—What do you mean, sister?

Mrs. F. Was I? what do you mean?

Mrs. For. You have been at a worse place.

Mrs. F. I at a worse place, and with a man?

Mrs. For. I suppose you would not go alone to the World's-end.

Mrs. F. The World's-end! What, do you mean to banter me?

Mrs. For. Poor innocent! you don't know that there is a place called the World's-end? I'll swear, you can keep your countenance purely; you'd make an admirable player!

Mrs. F. I'll swear you have a great deal of confidence, and in my mind too much for the stage.

Mrs. For. Very well, that will appear who has most—You never were at the World's-end?

Mrs. F. No.

Mrs. For. You deny it positively to my face?

Mrs. F. Your face! what's your face?

Mrs. For. No matter for that; it's as good a face as yours.

Mrs. F. Not by a dozen years' wearing.—But I do deny it positively to your face, then.

Mrs. For. I'll allow you now to find fault with my face; for I'll swear your impudence has put me out of countenance—But look you here now,—where did you lose this gold bodkin! Oh, sister, sister!

Mrs. F. My bodkin!

Mrs. For. Nay, 'tis yours, look at it.

Mrs. F. Well, if you go to that, where did you find this bodkin?—Oh, sister, sister!—sister every way!

Mrs. For. O, devil on't! that I could not discover her, without betraying myself. [*Aside.*

Mrs. F. I have heard gentlemen say, sister, that one should take great care, when one makes a thrust in fencing, not to lay open one's self.

Mrs. For. It is very true, sister. Well, since all's out, and, as you say, since we are both wounded, let us do what is often done in duels, take care of one another, and grow better friends than before.

Mrs. F. With all my heart. Ours are but slight flesh wounds; and if we keep them from air, not at all dangerous. Well, give me your hand, in token of sisterly secrecy and affection.

Mrs. For. Here it is, with all my heart.

Mrs. F. Well, as an earnest of friendship and confidence, I'll acquaint you with a design that I have.—To tell truth, and speak openly to one another. I'm afraid the world have observed us more than we have observed one another. You have a rich husband, and are provided for: I am at a loss, and have no great stock either of fortune or reputation, and therefore must look sharply about me. Sir Sampson has a son, that is expected to-night; and by the account I have heard of his education, can be no conjuror. The estate is to be made over to him.——Now, if I could wheedle him, sister, ha? you understand me?

Mrs. For. I do; and will help you, to the utmost of my power.—And I can tell you one thing that falls out luckily; my aukward daughter-in-law, who, you know, is designed to be his wife, is grown fond of Mr. Tattle; now if we can improve that, and make her have an aversion for the booby, it may go a great way towards his liking you. Here they come together, and let us contrive some way to leave them together.

Enter TATTLE *and* MISS PRUE.

Miss P. Mother, mother, mother, look you here.

Mrs. For. Fy, fy, Miss, how you bawl!—Besides, I have told you, you must not call me mother.

Miss P. What must I call you then? are you not my father's wife?

Mrs. For. Madam; you must say Madam.—By my soul, I shall fancy myself old indeed, to have this great girl call me mother.—Well, but, Miss, what are you so overjoyed at?

Miss P. Look you here, Madam, then, what Mr. Tattle has given me.—Look you here, cousin; here's a snuff-box; nay, there's snuff in't—here, will you have any?—Oh good! how sweet it is!—Mr. Tattle is all over sweet; his peruke is sweet, and his gloves are sweet—and his handkerchief is sweet, pure sweet, sweeter than roses—smell him, mother—Madam, I mean.—He gave me this ring for a kiss.

Tat. O fy, Miss, you must not kiss and tell.

Miss P. Yes; I may tell my mother—and he says he'll give me something to make me smell so. Oh, pray lend me your handkerchief.—Smell, cousin; he say's he'll give me something that will make my smocks smell this way.—Is not it pure?—It's better than lavender, mun.—I'm resolved I wont let nurse put any more lavender among my smocks—ha, cousin?

Mrs. F. Fy, Miss; amongst your linen you must say—you must never say smock.

Miss P. Why, it is not bawdy, is it, cousin?

Tat. Oh, Madam! you are too severe upon Miss: you must not find fault with her pretty simplicity; it becomes her strangely.—Pretty Miss, don't let them persuade you out of your innocency.

Mrs. For. Oh, demn you, toad!—I wish you don't persuade her out of her innocency.

Tat. Who, I, Madam?—O, how can your ladyship have such a thought?—sure you don't know me!

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Mrs. F. Ah, uevil, sly devil—He's as close, sister, as a confessor.—He thinks we don't observe him.

Mrs. For. A cunning cur! how soon he could find out a fresh harmless creature—and left us, sister, presently.

Tat. Upon reputation——

Mrs. F. They're all so, sister, these men—they love to have the spoiling of a young creature; they are as fond of it as of being in the first fashion, or of seeing a new play the first day.—I warrant it would break Mr. Tattle's heart, to think that any body else should be beforehand with him!

Tat. Oh, Lord, I swear I would not for the world—

Mrs. F. O, hang you! who'll believe you?—You'll be hanged before you'd confess—we know you—she's very pretty—Lord, what pure red and white!—she looks so wholesome;—ne'er stir, I don't know, but I fancy if I were a man—

Miss P. How you love to jeer one, cousin.

Mrs. For. Hark'ee, sister—by my soul, the girl is spoiled already—d'ye think she'll ever endure a great lubberly tarpawlin?—Gad, I warrant you, she wont let him come near her, after Mr. Tattle.

Mrs. F. On my soul, I'm afraid not—eh! filthy creature, that smells all of pitch and tar?—Devil take you, you confounded toad—why did you see her before she was married?

Mrs. For. Nay, why did we let him?—My husband will hang us—he'll think we brought them acquainted.

Mrs. F. Come, faith, let us be gone—If my brother Foresight should find us with them, he'd think so.

Mrs. For. So he would—but then the leaving them together is as bad—and he's such a sly devil, he'll never miss an opportunity.

Mrs. F. I don't care; I wont be seen in it.

Mrs. For. Well, if you should, Mr. Tattle, you'll have a world to answer for: remember, I wash my hands of it; I'm thoroughly innocent.

[*Exeunt* Mrs. Frail *and* Mrs. Foresight.

Miss P. What makes them go away, Mr. Tattle?—What do they mean, do you know?

Tat. Yes, my dear—I think I can guess—but hang me if I know the reason of it.

Miss P. Come, must not we go too?

Tat. No, no; they don't mean that.

Miss P. No! what then? What shall you and I do together?

Tat. I must make love to you, pretty Miss; will you let me make love to you?

Miss P. Yes, if you please.

Tat. Frank, egad, at least. What does Mrs. Foresight mean by this civility? Is it to make a fool of me, or does she leave us together out of good morality, and do as she would be done by? Egad I'll understand it so. [*Aside.*

Miss P. Well, and how will you make love to me?—Come, I long to have you begin,—Must I make love too? You must tell me how.

Tat. You must let me speak, Miss; you must not speak first. I must ask you questions, and you must answer.

Miss P. What, is it like the catechism? Come then, ask me.

Tat. D'ye think you can love me.

Miss P. Yes.

Tat. Pooh, you must not say yes already. I sha'n't care a farthing for you then, in a twinkling.

Miss P. What must I say then?

Tat. Why you must say no, or believe not, or you can't tell.

Miss P. Why, must I tell a lie then?

Tat. Yes, if you'd be well-bred. All well-bred persons lie—Besides, you are a woman you must never speak what you think: you words must contradict your thoughts; but your actions may contradict your words. So, when I ask you, if you can love me, you must say no; but you must love me too—If I tell you you are handsome, you must deny it, and say I flatter you. But you must think yourself more charming than I speak you—and like me for the beauty which I say you have, as much as if I had it myself. If I ask you to kiss me, you must be angry; but you must not refuse me; if I ask you for more, you must be more angry, but more complying; and as soon as ever I make you say, you'll cry out, you must be sure to hold your tongue.

Miss P. O Lord, I swear this is pure! I like it better than our old-fashioned country way of speaking one's mind!—And must not you lie too?

Tat. Hum?—Yes; but you must believe I speak truth.

Miss P. O Gemini! Well, I always had a great mind to tell lies—but they frighted me, and said it was a sin.

Tat. Well, my pretty creature, will you make me happy by giving me a kiss.

Miss P. No, indeed; I'm angry at you. [*Runs and kisses him.*

Tat. Hold, hold, that's pretty well—but you should not have given it me, but have suffered me to have taken it.

Miss P. Well, we'll do it again.

Tat. With all my heart—Now, then my little angel! [*Kisses her.*

Miss P. Pish!

Tat. That's right. Again, my charmer! [*Kisses her again.*

Miss P. O fy? nay, now I can't abide you.

Tat. Admirable! That was as well as if you had been born and bred in Convent-garden.—And wont you show me pretty Miss, where your bed-chamber is?

Miss P. No, indeed wont I; but I'll run there, and hide myself from you behind the curtains.

Tat. I'll follow you.

Miss P. Ah, but I will hold the door with both hands, and be angry, and you shall push me down before you come in.

Tat. No, I'll come in first, and push you down afterwards.

Miss P. Will you? then I'll be more angry and more complying.

Tat. Then I'll make you cry out.

Miss P. O but you sha'n't for I'll hold my tongue.

Tat. Oh, my dear apt scholar!

Miss P. Well, now I'll run, and make more haste than you.

Tat. You shall not fly so fast as I'll pursue. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Nurse alone.

Nurse. Miss, Miss, Miss Prue!—Mercy on me!—Why, what's become of the child?—Why, Miss Foresight!—Sure she has locked

herself up in her chamber, and gone to sleep, or to prayers!—Miss, Miss!—I hear her.—Come to your father. Open the door—Open the door, Miss.—I hear you cry husht.—O Lord, who's there? [*Peeps.*]—What's here to do!—O the Father! a man with her!—Why, Miss, I say; here's fine doings towards!—O Lord, we're all undone!—O you young harlot! [*Knocks.*]—Ods! wont you open the door? I'll come in the back way. [*Exit.*

Enter TATTLE *and* MISS PRUE.

Miss P. O Lord, she's coming—and she'll tell my father! What shall I do now?

Tat. Plague take her! if she had staid two minutes longer, I should have wished for her coming.

Miss P. O dear, what shall I say; tell me Mr. Tattle, tell me a lie.

Tat. There's no occasion for a lie; I could never tell a lie to no purpose—But since we have done nothing, we must say nothing, I think. I hear her.—I'll leave you together, and come off as you can.

[*Thrusts her in and shuts the door.*

Enter VALENTINE, SCANDAL, *and* ANGELICA.

Ang. You can't accuse me of inconstancy; I never told you that I loved you.

Val. But I can accuse you of uncertainty, for not telling me whether you did or not.

Ang. You mistake indifference for uncertainty; I never had concern enough to ask myself the question.

Scand. Nor good-nature enough to answer him that did ask you; I'll say that for you, Madam.

Ang. What, are you setting up for good-nature?

Scand. Only for the affectation of it, as the women do for ill-nature.

Ang. Persuade your friend that it is all affectation.

Scand. I shall receive no benefit from the opinion, for I know no effectual difference between continued affectation and reality.

Tat. [*Coming up.*] Scandal are you in private discourse? Any thing of secrecy?

[*Aside to* SCANDAL.

Scand. Yes, but I dare trust you. We were talking of Angelica's love to Valentine; you wont speak of it.

Tat. No, no, not a syllable—I know that's a secret, for it is whispered every where.

Scand. Ha, ha, ha!

Ang. What is, Mr. Tattle? I heard you say something was whispered every where.

Scand. Your love for Valentine.

Ang. How!

Tat. No, Madam: his love for your ladyship—Gad, I beg your pardon—for I never heard a word of your ladyship's passion till this instant.

Ang. My passion!—And who told you of my passion, pray, Sir?

Scand. Why, is the devil in you? did not I tell it you for a secret?

Tat. Gad, but I thought she might have been trusted with her own affairs.

Scand. Is that your discretion? trust a woman with herself?

Tat. You say true; I beg your pardon.—It was impossible, Madam, for me to imagine that a person of your ladyship's wit and gallantry could have so long received the passionate addresses of the accomplished Valentine, and yet remain insensible: therefore, you will pardon me, if from a just weight of his merit with your ladyship's good judgment, I formed the balance of a reciprocal affection.

Val. O the devil! what damned costive poet has given thee this lesson of fustian to get by rote?

Ang. I dare swear you wrong him; it is his own—and Mr. Tattle only judges of the success of others, from the effects of his own merit; for, certainly Mr. Tattle was never denied any thing in his life.

Tat. O Lord! yes, indeed, Madam, several times.

Ang. I swear I don't think it is possible.

Tat. Yes, I vow and swear I have. Lord, Madam, I'm the most unfortunate man in the world, and the most cruelly used by the ladies.

Ang. Nay, now you're ungrateful.

Tat. No, I hope not.—It is as much ingratitude to own some favours, as to conceal others.

Val. There, now it is out.

Ang. I don't understand you now. I thought you had never asked any thing but what a lady might modestly grant, and you confess.

Scand. So, faith, your business is done here; now you may go brag somewhere else.

Tat. Brag! O Heavens! Why, did I name any body?

Ang. No; I suppose that is not in your power; but you would, if you could, no doubt on't.

Tat. Not in my power, Madam!—What! does your ladyship mean that I have no woman's reputation in my power?

Scand. Why you wont own it, will you?

[*Aside.*

Tat. Faith, Madam, you are in the right; no more I have, as I hope to be saved; I never had it in my power to say any thing to a lady's prejudice in my life.—For, I have been the most unsuccessful creature living in things of that nature; and never had the good fortune to be trusted once with a lady's secret, not once.

Ang. No?

Val. Not once, I dare answer for him.

Scand. And I'll answer for him; for I'm sure if he had, he would have told me. I find, Madam, you don't know Mr. Tattle.

Tat. No, indeed, Madam, you don't know me at all, I find; for sure, my intimate friends would have known—

Ang. Then it seems you would have told, if you had been trusted.

Tat. O, Scandal, that was too far put!—Never have told particulars, Madam. Perhaps I might have talked as of a third person—or introduced an amour of my own, in conversation, by way of novel; but never have explained particulars.

Ang. But whence comes the reputation of Mr. Tattle's secrecy, if he was never trusted?

Scand. Why, thence it arises.—The thing is proverbially spoken; but may be applied to him—As if we should say in general terms, He only is secret, who never was trusted; a satirical proverb upon our sex.—There is another upon yours—as, She is chaste, who was never asked the question.

Val. A couple of very civil proverbs, truly.

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it is hard to tell whether the lady or Mr. Tattle be the more obliged to you. For you found her virtue upon the backwardness of the men; and his secrecy upon the mistrust of the women.

Tat. Gad, it's very true, Madam; I think we are obliged to acquit ourselves.—And for my part—but your ladyship is to speak first.

Ang. Am I? Well I freely confess. I have resisted a great deal of temptation.

Tat. And I have given some temptation that has not been resisted.

Val. Good.

Ang. I cite Valentine here, to declare to the court, how fruitless he has found his endeavours, and to confess all his solicitations and my denials.

Val. I am ready to plead, Not Guilty, for you; and Guilty, for myself.

Scand. So, why this is fair! here's demonstration, with a witness.

Tat. Well, my witnesses are not present.—Yet, I confess I have had favours from persons; but as the favours are numberless, so the persons are nameless.

Scand. Pooh, this proves nothing.

Tat. No? I can show letters, lockets, pictures, and rings; and if there be occasion for witnesses, I can summon the maids at the chocolate-houses, all the porters at Pall Mall and Covent-garden, the door-keepers at the playhouse, the drawers at Locket's, the Rummer, Spring-garden, my own landlady and valet de chambre; all who shall make oath, that I receive more letters than the secretary's office; and that I have more vizor masks to inquire for me, than ever went to see the hermaphrodite, or the naked prince. And it is notorious, that, in a country church, once, an inquiry being made who I was, it was answered, I was the famous Tattle, who had ruined so many women.

Val. It was there, I suppose, you got the nick-name of the Great Turk.

Tat. True; I was called Turk Tattle, all over the parish.—The next Sunday, all the old women kept their daughters at home, and the parson had not half his congregation. He would have brought me into the spiritual court: but I was revenged upon him, for he had a handsome daughter, whom I initiated into the science. But I repented it afterwards; for it was talked of in town.—And a lady of quality, that shall be nameless, in a raging fit of jealousy, came down in her coach and six horses, and exposed herself upon my account. Gad, I was sorry for it with all my heart.—You know whom I mean—you know where we raffled—

Scand. Mum, Tattle!

Val. 'Sdeath, are you not ashamed?

Ang. O barbarous! I never heard so insolent a piece of vanity!—Fy, Mr. Tattle!—I'll swear I could not have believed it.—Is this your secrecy?

Tat. Gad so, the heat of my story carried me beyond my discretion, as the heat of the lady's passion hurried her beyond her reputation.—But I hope you don't know whom I mean; for there were a great many ladies raffled—Plague on't, now could I bite off my tongue.

Scand. No, don't; for then you'll tell us no more. Come, I'll recommend a song to you, upon the hint of my two proverbs: and I see one in the next room that will sing it.

[*Goes to the door.*

Tat. For Heaven's sake, if you do guess, say nothing. Gad, I'm very unfortunate!

Scand. Pray sing the first song in the last new play.

SONG.

A nymph and a swain to Apollo once pray'd,
The swain had been jilted, the nymph been betray'd:
Their intent was to try if his oracle knew
E'er a nymph that was chaste, or a swain that was true.

Apollo was mute, and had like t'have been posed,
But sagely at length he this secret disclosed:
He alone wont betray, in whom none will confide;
And the nymph may be chaste that has never been tried.

Enter SIR SAMPSON, MRS. FRAIL, MISS PRUE, *and Servant.*

Sir S. Is Ben come? my son Ben come? I'm glad on't.—Where is he? I long to see him. Now, Mrs. Frail, you shall see my son Ben.—He's the hopes of my family—I ha'n't seen him these three years—I warrant he's grown!—Call him in; bid him make haste [*Exit Servant.*] I'm ready to cry for joy.

Mrs. F. Now, Miss, you shall see your husband.

Miss P. Pish, he shall be none of my husband. [*Aside to* FRAIL.

Mrs. F. Hush! Well, he sha'n't! leave that to me—I'll beckon Mr. Tattle to us.

Ang. Wont you stay and see your brother?

Val. We are the twin stars, and cannot shine in one sphere; when he rises, I must set.—Besides, if I should stay, I don't know but my father in good-nature may press me to the immediate signing the deed of conveyance of my estate; and I'll defer it as long as I can.—Well; you'll come to a resolution.

Ang. I cannot. Resolution must come to me, or I shall never have one.

Scand. Come, Valentine, I'll go with you; I have something in my head, to communicate to you. [*Exeunt* SCANDAL *and* VALENTINE.

Sir S. What! is my son Valentine gone? What! is he sneaked off, and would not see his brother? There's an unnatural whelp! there's an ill natured dog! What! were you here too, Madam, and could not keep him? could neither love, nor duty, nor natural affection, oblige him? Madam, have no more to say to him; he is not worth your consideration. The rogue has not a drachm of generous love about him—all interest, all interest! He's an undone scoundrel, and courts your estate. He does not care a doit for your person.

Ang. I am pretty even with him, Sir Sampson; for, if ever I could have liked any thing in him, it should have been his estate too. But, since that's gone, the bait's off, and the naked hook appears.

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Sir S. Well spoken! and you are a wiser woman than I thought you were; for most young women now a-days are to be tempted with a naked hook.

Ang. If I marry, Sir Sampson, I am for a good estate with any man, and for any man with a good estate; therefore, if I were obliged to make a choice, I declare I'd rather have you than your son.

Sir S. Faith, you are a wise woman; and I'm glad to hear you say so. I was afraid you were in love with a reprobate. Odd, I was sorry for you with all my heart. Hang him, mongrel; cast him off. You shall see the rogue show himself, and make love to some desponding Cadua of fourscore for sustenance. Odd, I love to see a young spendthrift forced to cling to an old woman for support, like ivy round dead oak—faith I do. I love to see them hug and cotton together, like down upon a thistle.

Enter BEN *and* SERVANT.

Ben. Where's father?

Serv. There, Sir; his back's toward you. [*Exit.*

Sir S. My son Ben! Bless thee, my dear boy! thou art heartily welcome.

Ben. Thank you, father; and I'm glad to see you.

Sir S. I'm glad to see thee. Kiss me, boy! kiss me again and again, dear Ben. [*Kisses him.*

Ben. So, so, enough, father. Mess, I'd rather kiss these gentlewomen.

Sir S. And so thou shalt.—Mrs. Angelica, my son Ben.

Ben. If you please. [*Salutes her.*]—Nay, Mistress, I'm not for dropping anchor here; about ship. [*Kisses* FRAIL.]—Nay, and you too, my little cock-boat. [*Kisses* Miss.

Tat. Sir, you're welcome ashore.

Ben. Thank you, thank you friend.

Sir S. Thou hast been many a weary league, Ben, since I saw thee.

Ben. Ey, ey, been? been far enough, and that be all. Well, father, and how do all at home? how does brother Dick, and brother Val?

Sir S. Dick! Dick has been dead these two years. I writ you word, when you were at Leghorn.

Ben. Mess, that's true: marry, I had forgot. Dick is dead, as you say.—Well, and how, I have a many questions to ask you; well, you ben't married again, father, be you?

Sir S. No, I intend you shall marry, Ben; I would not marry, for thy sake.

Ben. Nay, what does that signify?—An you marry again—why, then, I'll go to sea again, so there's one for t'other.—Pray, don't let me be your hinderance: e'en marry, a God's name, an the wind set that way. As for my part, mayhap I have no mind to marry.

Mrs. F. That would be pity, such a handsome young gentleman.

Ben. Handsome! he, he, he! Nay, an you are for joking, I'll joke with you; for I love my jest, an the ship were sinking, as we said at sea. But I'll tell you why I don't much stand towards matrimony. I love to roam about, from port to port, and from land to land: I could never abide to be port-bound, as we call it. Now, a man that is married has, as it were d'ye see, his feet in the bilboes, and mayhap, may'nt get them out again when he would.

Sir S. Ben is a wag.

Ben. A man that is married, d'ye see, is no more like another man, than a galley-slave is like one of us free sailors: he is chained to an oar all his life; and, mayhap, forced to tug a leaky vessel into the bargain.

Sir S. A very wag! Ben is a very wag; only a little rough; he wants a little polishing.

Mrs. F. Not at all; I like his humour mightily: it is plain and honest; I should like such a humour in a husband extremely.

Ben. Say you so, and I should like such a handsome gentlewoman for a bed-fellow.—What say you, Mistress! would you like going to sea? Mess, you're a tight vessel, and well rigged, an you were but as well manned.

Mrs. F. I should not doubt that, if you were master of me.

Ben. But I'll tell you one thing, if you come to sea in a high wind, or that, lady—you mayn't carry so much sail o' your head—Top and top-gallant, by the mess!

Mrs. F. No? why so?

Ben. Why, if you do, you may run the risk to be overset: and then you'll carry your keels above water—he, he, he!

Ang. I swear, Mr. Benjamin is the greatest wag in nature; an absolute sea-wit.

Sir S. Nay, Ben has parts; but, as I told you before, they want a little polishing. You must not take any thing ill, Madam.

Ben. No, I hope the gentlewoman is not angry; I mean all in good part: for, if I give a jest, I'll take a jest; and so you may be as free with me.

Ang. I thank you, Sir: I am not at all offended.—But I think, Sir Sampson, you should leave him alone with his mistress. Mr. Tattle, we must not hinder lovers. [*Exit.*

Tat. Well, Miss, I have your promise. [*Aside to* MISS.

Sir S. Madam, you say true.—Look you, Ben, this is your mistress. Come, Miss, you must not be shame-faced; we'll leave you together.

Miss P. I can't abide to be left alone.—Mayn't my cousin stay with me?

Sir S. No, no. Come, let's away.

Ben. Look you, father, mayhap the young woman mayn't take a liking to me.

Sir S. I warrant thee, boy. Come, come, we'll begone. I'll venture that.

[*Exeunt* SIR SAMPSON, TATTLE, *and* MRS. FRAIL.

Ben. Come, mistress, will you please to sit down? For, if you stand a stern a that'n, we shall never grapple together. Come, I'll hawl a chair; there, an you please to sit, and I'll sit by you.

Miss P. You need not sit so near; if you have any thing to say, I can hear you farther off; I an't deaf.

Ben. Why, that's true, as you say, nor I an't dumb; I can be heard as far as another. I'll heave off, to please you. [*Sits farther off.*] An we were a league asunder, I'd undertake to hold discourse with you, an 'twere not a main high wind indeed, and full in my teeth. Look you; I am as it were, bound for the land of matrimony: 'tis a voyage, d'ye see, that was none of my seeking; I was commanded by father, and if you like, mayhap I may steer into your harbour. How say you, Mistress? The short of the thing is, that, if you like me, and I like you, we may chance to swing in a hammock together.

Miss P. I don't know what to say to you, nor I don't care to speak with you at all.

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Ben. No? I'm sorry for that. But, pray, why are you so scornful?

Miss P. As long as one must not speak one's mind, one had better not speak at all, I think, and truly I wont tell a lie for the matter.

Ben. Nay, you say true in that; it's but a folly to lie: for to speak one thing, and to think 'ust the contrary way, is, as it were, to look one way, and to row another. Now, for my part, d'ye see, I'm for carrying things above board; I'm not for keeping any thing under hatches—so that if you ben't as willing as I, say so, there's no harm done. Mayhap you may be shame-faced; some maidens though they love a man well enough, yet they don't care tell'n so to's face. If that's the case, why, silence gives consent.

Miss P. But I'm sure it is not so; for I'll speak sooner than you should believe that; and I'll speak truth, though one should always tell a lie to a man; and I don't care, let my father do what he will, I'm too big to be whipped; so I'll tell you plainly, I don't like you, nor love you at all; nor never will, that's more. So, there's your answer for you; and don't trouble me no more, you ugly thing.

Ben. Look you young woman, you may learn to give good words, however. I spoke you fair, d'ye see, and civil. As for your love, or your liking, I don't value it of a rope's end—and mayhap I like you as little as you do me. What I said was in obedience to father. I fear a whipping no more than you do. But I tell you one thing—if you should give such language at sea, you'd have a cat o'nine tails laid across your shoulders. Who are you? You heard t'other handsome young woman speak civilly to me, of her own accord. Whatever you think of yourself, gad, I don't think you are any more to compare to her, than a can of small beer to a bowl of punch.

Miss P. Well, and there's a handsome gentleman, and a fine gentleman, and a sweet gentleman, that was here, that loves me, and I love him: and if he sees you speak to me any more, he'll thrash your jacket for you; he will, you great sea-calf.

Ben. What! do you mean that fair-weather spark that was here just now? Will he thrash my jacket?—Let'n—let'n. But an he comes near me, mayhap I may giv'n a salt eel for's supper, for all that. What does father mean, to leave me alone, as soon as I come home, with such a dirty dowdy?—Sea-calf! I an't half calf enough to lick your chalked face, you cheese-curd, you.—Marry thee! I'll marry a Lapland witch as soon, and live upon selling contrary winds, and wrecked vessels.

Miss P. I wont be called names, nor I wont be abused thus, so I wont. If I were a man—[*Cries.*]—you durst not talk at this rate—no, you durst not, you stinking tar-barrel.

Enter MRS. FORESIGHT *and* MRS. FRAIL.

Mrs. For. They have quarrelled just as we wished.

Ben. Tar-barrel! Let your sweetheart call me so, if he'll take your part, your Tom Essence, and I'll say something to him—I'll lace his musk doublet for him. I'll make him stink; he shall smell more like a weasel than a civet cat, afore I ha' done with 'en.

Mrs. For. Bless me! what's the matter, Miss? What, does she cry?—Mr. Benjamin, what have you done to her?

Ben. Let her cry: the more she cries the less she'll—she has been gathering foul weather in her mouth, and now it rains out at her eyes.

Mrs. For. Come, Miss, come along with me; and tell me, poor child.

Mrs. F. Lord, what shall we do? There's my brother Foresight and Sir Sampson coming. Sister, do you take Miss down into the parlour, and I'll carry Mr. Benjamin into my chamber; for they must not know that they are fallen out. Come, Sir, will you venture yourself with me. [*Looking kindly on him.*

Ben. Venture! Mess, and that I will, though it were to sea in a storm. [*Exeunt.*

Enter SIR SAMPSON *and* FORESIGHT.

Sir S. I left them together here. What, are they gone? Ben is a brisk boy: he has got her into a corner——father's own son, faith! he'll touzle her and mouzle her. The rogue's sharp set coming from sea. If he should not stay for saying grace, old Foresight, but fall to without the help of a parson, ha? Odd, if he should, I could not be angry with him; 'twould be but like me, a chip of the old block. Ha! thou'rt melancholic, old prognostication; as melancholic as if thou hadst spilled the salt, or pared thy nails on a Sunday. Come cheer up, look about thee: look up, old star-gazer. Now is he poring upon the ground for a crooked pin, or an old horse-nail, with the head towards him.

For. Sir Sampson, we'll have the wedding to-morrow morning.

Sir S. With all my heart.

For. At ten o'clock; punctually at ten.

Sir S. To a minute, to a second; thou shalt set thy watch; and the bridegroom shall observe its motions; they shall be married to a minute, go to bed to a minute; and when the alarm strikes, they shall keep time like the figure's of St. Dunstan's clock, and *consummatum est* shall ring all over the parish.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Sir, Mr. Scandal desires to speak with you upon earnest business.

For. I go to him; Sir Sampson, your servant. [*Exit.*

Sir S. What's the matter, friend?

Serv. Sir, 'tis about your son Valentine; something has appeared to him in a dream, that makes him prophesy.

Enter SCANDAL.

Scand. Sir Sampson, sad news.

For. Bless us!

Sir S. Why, what's the matter?

Scand. Can't you guess at what ought to afflict you and him, and all of us, more than any thing else?

Sir S. I don't know any universal grievance, but a new tax, or the loss of the Canary fleet—unless Popery should be landed in the west, or the French fleet were at anchor at Blackwall.

Scand. No? Undoubtedly, Mr. Foresight knew all this, and might have prevented it.

For. 'Tis no earthquake?

Scand. No, not yet; no whirlwind. But we don't know what it may come to—but it has had a consequence already that touches us all.

Sir S. Why, out with it.

Scand. Something has appeared to your son Valentine——he's gone to bed very ill.——He

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speaks little, yet he says he has much to say. Asks for his father and the wise Foresight; talks of Raymond Lully, and the ghost of Lilly. He has secrets to impart, I suppose to you. I can get nothing out of him but sighs. He desires he may see you in the morning; but would not be disturbed to-night, because he has some business to do in a dream.

Sir S. What have I to do with his dreams or his divination?—This is a trick to defer signing the conveyance. I warrant the devil will tell him in a dream, that he must not part with his estate. But I'll bring him a parson to tell him that the devil's a liar—or, if that wont do, I'll bring a lawyer, that shall out-lie the devil; and so I'll try whether my blackguard or his shall get the better of the day. [*Exit.*

Scand. Alas! Mr. Foresight, I'm afraid all is not right.—You are a wise man, and a conscientious man; a searcher into obscurity and futurity; and, if you commit an error, it is with a great deal of consideration, and discretion, and caution.

For. Ah, good Mr. Scandal.

Scand. Nay, nay, 'tis manifest; I do not flatter you.—But Sir Sampson is hasty, very hasty—I'm afraid he is not scrupulous enough, Mr. Foresight.—He has been wicked; and Heaven grant he may mean well in his affair with you!—You are wise, and should not be overreached.

For. Alas, Mr. Scandal—*Humanum est errare.*

Scand. You say true, man will err; mere man will err—but you are something more.—There have been wise men; but they were such as you,—men who consulted the stars, and were observers of omens.—Solomon was wise; but how? by his judgment in astrology.—So says Pineda, in his third book and eigth chapter.

For. You are learned, Mr. Scandal.

Scand. A trifler—but a lover of art.—And the wise men of the east owed their instructions to a star; which is rightly observed by Gregory the Great, in favour of astrology! And Albertus Magnus makes it the most valuable science—because, says he, it teaches us to consider the causation of causes, in the causes of things.

For. I protest, I honour you, Mr. Scandal.—I did not think you had been read in these matters.—Few young men are inclined——

Scand. I thank my stars that have inclined me. But I fear this marriage and making over the estate, this transferring of a rightful inheritance, will bring judgments upon us. I prophesy it. Valentine is disturbed; what can be the cause of that? and Sir Sampson is hurried on by an unusual violence——I fear he does not act wholly from himself; and I think he does not look as he used to do.

For. He was always of an impetuous nature.—But as to the marriage, I have consulted the stars; and all appearances are prosperous.

Scand. Come, come, Foresight; let not the prospect of worldly lucre carry you beyond your judgment, nor against your conscience.—You are not satisfied that you act justly.

For. How!

Scand. You are not satisfied, I say.—I am loth to discourage you—but it is palpable that you are not satisfied.

For. How does it appear, Mr. Scandal? I think I am very well satisfied.

Scand. Either you suffer yourself to deceive yourself, or you do not know yourself.

For. Pray explain yourself.

Scand. Do you sleep well o' nights?

For. Very well.

Scand. Are you certain? You do not look so.

For. I am in health, I think.

Scand. So was Valentine this morning; and looked just so.

For. How! am I altered any way? I don't perceive it.

Enter MRS. FORESIGHT.

Mrs. For. Husband, will you go to bed? it's ten o'clock. Mr. Scandal, your servant.

Scand. Plague on her, she has interrupted my design—but I must work her into the project. You keep early hours, Madam.

Mrs. For. Mr. Foresight is punctual; we sit up after him.

For. My dear, pray lend me your glass, your little looking-glass.

Scand. Pray, lend it him, Madam—I'll tell you the reason—[*She gives him the glass;* SCANDAL *and she whisper.*]—My passion for you is grown so violent—that I am no longer master of myself—I was interrupted in the morning, when you had charity enough to give me your attention; and I had hopes of finding another opportunity of explaining myself to you—but was disappointed all this day; and the uneasiness that has attended me ever since, brings me now hither at this unseasonable hour.

Mrs. For. Was there ever such impudence, to make love to me before my husband's face? I'll swear, I'll tell him.

Scand. Do. I'll die a martyr rather than disclaim my passion. But come a little farther this way; and I'll tell you what project I had to get him out of the way, that I might have an opportunity of waiting on you.

[*Whisper.* FORESIGHT *looking in the glass.*

For. I do not see any revolution here.—Methinks I look with a serene and benign aspect,—pale, a little pale—but the roses of these cheeks have been gathered many years—Ha, I do not like that sudden flushing—gone already!—Hem, hem, hem! faintish. My heart is pretty good; yet it beats: and my pulse, ha!—I have none—mercy on me!—hum!—Yes, here they are.—Gallop, gallop, gallop, gallop! hey, whither will they hurry me?—Now they're gone again—and now I'm faint and pale again, and, hem! and my, hem!—breath grows short; hem! he, he, hem!

Scand. It takes: pursue it, in the name of love and pleasure.

Mrs. For. How do you do, Mr. Foresight?

For. Hum, not so well as I thought I was. Lend me your hand.

Scand. Look you there now.—Your lady says your sleep has been unquiet of late.

For. Very likely.

Mrs. For. O, mighty restless! but I was afraid to tell him so.—He has been subject to talking and starting.

Scand. And did not use to be so?

Mrs. For. Never, never; till within these three nights, I cannot say that he has once broken my rest since we have been married.

For. I will go to bed.

Scand. Do so, Mr. Foresight, and say your prayers—he looks better than he did.

Mrs. For. Nurse, nurse!

For. Do you think so, Scandal?

Scand. Yes, yes; I hope this will be gone by morning; take it in time.

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For. I hope so.

Enter NURSE.

Mrs. For. Nurse, your master is not well; put him to bed.

Scand. I hope you will be able to see Valentine in the morning. You had best take a little diacodium and cowslip water, and lie upon your back.

For. I thank you Mr. Scandal; I will.—Nurse, let me have a watch-light, and lay *The Crumbs of Comfort* by me.

Nurse. Yes, Sir. [*Exit.*

For. And—hem, hem! I am very faint.

Scand. No, no, you look much better.

For. Hem, hem! good night Mr. Scandal. [*Exit.*

Scand. Good night, good Mr. Foresight. I hope Mars and Venus will be in conjunction ——while your wife and I are together.

Mrs. For. Well; and what use do you hope to make of this project? You don't think that you are ever like to succeed in your design upon me?

Scand. Yes, faith, I do; I have a better opinion both of you and myself than to despair.

Mrs. For. Did you ever hear such a toad?—Hark'ye, devil: do you think any woman honest?

Scand. Yes, several, very honest—they'll cheat a little at cards sometimes; but that's nothing.

Mrs. For. Pshaw! but virtuous, I mean?

Scand. Yes, faith, I believe some women are virtuous too; but 'tis as I believe some men are valiant, through fear—For why should a man court danger, or a woman shun pleasure?

Mrs. For. O monstrous! What are conscience and honour?

Scand. Why, honour is a public enemy; and conscience a domestic thief: and he that would secure his pleasure, must pay a tribute to one, and go halves with t'other. As for honour, that you have secured; for you have purchased a perpetual opportunity for pleasure.

Mrs. For. An opportunity for pleasure!

Scand. Ay, your husband; a husband is an opportunity for pleasure. So you have taken care of honour, and 'tis the least I can do to take care of conscience.

Mrs. For. And so you think we are free for one another?

Scand. Yes, faith, I think so; I love to speak my mind.

Mrs. For. Why, then I'll speak my mind. Now, as to this affair between you and me. Here you make love to me; why, I'll confess it does not displease me. Your person is well enough, and your understanding is not amiss.

Scand. I have no great opinion of myself; but I think I am neither deformed, nor a fool.

Mrs. For. But you have a villanous character; you are a libertine in speech, as well as practice.

Scand. Come, I know what you would say —you think it more dangerous to be seen in conversation with me, than to allow some other men the last favour. You mistake; the liberty I take in talking is purely affected, for the service of your sex. He that first cries out stop thief, is often he that stole the treasure. I am a juggler, that acts by confederacy, and if you please, we'll put a trick upon the world.

Mrs. For. Ay; but you are such a universal juggler—that I'm afraid you have a great many confederates.

Scand. Faith, I'm sound.

Mrs. For. O fy!—I'll swear you're impudent.

Scand. I'll swear you're handsome.

Mrs. For. Pish, you'd tell me so, though you did not think so.

Scand. And you'd think so, though I did not tell you so: and now I think we know one another pretty well.

Mrs. For. O Lord! who's here?

Enter MRS. FRAIL *and* BEN.

Ben. Mess, I love to speak my mind—Father has nothing to do with me.—Nay, I can't say that neither; he has something to do with me; but what does that signify? If so be, that I ben't minded to be steered by him: 'tis as thof he should strive against wind and tide.

Mrs. F. Ay, but my dear, we must keep it secret, till the estate be settled; for, you know, marrying without an estate, is like sailing in a ship without ballast.

Ben. He, he, he! why that's true; just so, for all the world, it is as like as two cable ropes.

Mrs. F. And though I have a good portion; you know one would not venture all in one bottom.

Ben. Why, that's true again; for mayhap one bottom may spring a leak. You have hit it indeed; mess, you've nicked the channel.

Mrs. F. Well, but if you should forsake me after all, you'd break my heart.

Ben. Break your heart? I'd rather the Marygold should break her cable in a storm, as well as I love her? You don't think I'm false-hearted. A sailor would be honest, mayhap he has never a penny of money in his pocket. I may not have so fair a face as a citizen or a courtier; but, for all that, I've as good blood in my veins, and a heart as sound as a biscuit.

Mrs. F. And will you love me always?

Ben. Nay, an I love once, I'll stick like pitch; I'll tell you that. Come, I'll sing you a song of a sailor.

Mrs. F. Hold, there's my sister; I'll call her to hear it.

Mrs. For. Well! I wont go to bed to my husband to-night; because I'll retire to my own chamber, and think of what you have said.

Scand. Well you'll give me leave to wait upon you to your chamber-door, and leave you my last instructions?

Mrs. For. Hold, here's my sister coming.

Mrs. F. If it wont interrupt you, Mr. Ben will entertain you with a song.

Ben. The song was made upon one of our ship's crew's wife; our boatswain made the song; mayhap you know her, Sir. Before she married she was called Buxom Joan of Deptford.

Scand. I have heard of her. [BEN *sings.*

BALLAD.

A soldier and a sailor,
A tinker and a tailor,
Had once a doubtful strife, Sir.
To make a maid a wife, Sir,

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Whose name was *Buxom Joan*.
For now the time was ended,
When she no more intended
To lick her lips at men, Sir,
And gnaw the sheets in vain, Sir,
And lie o' nights alone.

The soldier swore like thunder,
He loved her more than plunder,
And show'd her many a scar, Sir,
That he had brought from far, Sir,
With fighting for her sake.
The tailor thought to please her,
With offering her his measure,
The tinker too with mettle
Said he could mend her kettle,
And stop up every leak.

But while these three were prating,
The sailor slily waiting,
Thought if it came about, Sir,
That they should all fall out, Sir,
He then might play his part:
And just e'en as he meant, Sir,
To loggerheads they went, Sir,
And then he let fly at her,
A shot 'twixt wind and water,
That won the fair maid's heart.

Ben. If some of our crew that came to see me are not gone, you shall see that we sailors can dance sometimes, as well as other folks.——[*Whistles.*] I warrant that brings them, if they be within hearing.

Enter SEAMEN.

Oh, here they be!—and fiddles along with them. Come, my lads, let's have a round, and I'll make one. [*Dance.*] We're merry folks, we sailors; we han't much to care for. Thus we live at sea; eat biscuit, and drink flip; put on a clean shirt once a quarter—come home, and lie with our landladies once a year; get rid of a little money, and then put off with the next fair wind. How d'ye like us?

Mrs. F. Oh, you are the happiest, merriest men alive!

Mrs. For. We're beholden to Mr. Benjamin for this entertainment.—I believe it is late.

Ben. Why, if you think so, you had best go to bed. For my part, I mean to toss a can, and remember my sweetheart, before I turn in; mayhap I may dream of her!

Mrs. For. Mr. Scandal, you had best go to bed, and dream too.

Scand. Why, faith, I have a good lively imagination; and can dream as much to the purpose as another. But dreaming is the poor retreat of a lazy, hopeless, and imperfect lover; tis the last glimpse of love to warn out sinners, and the faint dawning of a bliss to wishing girls and growing boys.

There's nought but willing, waking love that can
Make bless'd the ripen'd maid and finish'd man. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—VALENTINE'S *Lodgings.*

Enter SCANDAL *and* JEREMY.

Scand. Well, is your master ready? does he look madly, and talk madly?

Jer. Yes, Sir; you need make no great doubt of that: he that was so near turning poet yesterday morning, can't be much to seek in playing the madman to-day.

Scand. Would he have Angelica acquainted with the design?

Jer. No, Sir, not yet.—He has a mind to try whether his playing the madman wont make her play the fool, and fall in love with him; or at least own that she has loved him all this while, and concealed it.

Scand. I saw her take coach just now with her maid; and I think I heard her bid the coachman drive hither.

Jer. Like enough, Sir; for I told her maid this morning, my master was run stark mad, only for love of her mistress. I hear a coach stop: if it should be she, Sir, I believe he would not see her, till he hears how she takes it.

Scand. Well, I'll try her—'tis she; here she comes.

Enter ANGELICA.

Ang. Mr. Scandal, I suppose you don't think it a novelty, to see a woman visit a man at his own lodgings in a morning?

Scand. Not upon a kind occasion, Madam. But, when a lady comes tyrannically, to insult a ruined lover, and make manifest the cruel triumphs of her beauty, the barbarity of it something surprises me.

Ang. I don't like raillery from a serious face.—Pray tell me what is the matter?

Jer. No strange matter, Madam; my master's mad, that's all. I suppose your ladyship has thought him so a great while.

Ang. How d'ye mean, mad?

Jer. Why, faith, Madam, he's mad for want of his wits, just as he was poor for want of money. His head is e'en as light as his pockets; and any body that has a mind to a bad bargain, can't do better than to beg him for his estate.

Ang. If you speak truth, your endeavouring at wit is very unseasonable.——

Scand. She's concern'd, and loves him? [*Aside.*

Ang. Mr. Scandal, you can't think me guilty of so much inhumanity, as not to be concerned for a man I must own myself obliged to.—Pray tell me the truth.

Scand. Faith, Madam, I wish telling a lie would mend the matter. But this is no new effect of an unsuccessful passion.

Ang. [*Aside.*] I know not what to think! Yet I should be vexed to have a trick put upon me!—May I not see him?

Scand. I'm afraid the physician is not willing you should see him yet.—Jeremy, go in and inquire. [*Exit* JEREMY.

Ang. Ha! I saw him wink and smile! I fancy a trick.—I'll try. [*Aside.*]—I would disguise to all the world, Sir, a failing which I must own to you—I fear my happiness depends upon the recovery of Valentine. Therefore, I conjure you, as you are his friend, and as you have compassion on one fearful of affliction, to tell me what I am to hope for—I cannot speak—But you may tell me, for you know what I would ask.

Scand. So, this is pretty plain!—Be not too much concerned, Madam; I hope his condition is not desperate. An acknowledgment of love from you, perhaps, may work a cure, as the fear of your aversion occasioned his distemper.

Ang. Say you so? nay, then I'm convinced: and if I don't play trick for trick, may I never taste the pleasure of revenge! [*Aside.*]—Ac

knowledgment of love! I find you have mistaken my compassion, and think me guilty of a weakness I am a stranger to. But I have too much sincerity to deceive you, and too much charity to suffer him to be deluded with vain hopes. Good nature and humanity oblige me to be concerned for him; but to love, is neither in my power nor inclination; and if he can't be cured without I suck the poison from his wounds, I'm afraid he wont recover his senses till I lose mine.

Scand. Hey, brave woman, faith!—Wont you see him then, if he desires it?

Ang. What signifies a madman's desires? besides, 'twould make me uneasy—If I don't see him, perhaps my concern for him may lessen—If I forget him, 'tis no more than he has done by himself; and now the surprise is over, methinks I'm not so sorry as I was.

Scand. So, faith, good-nature works apace; you were confessing just now an obligation to his love.

Ang. But I have considered that passions are unreasonable and involuntary. If he loves, he can't help it; and if I don't love, I cannot help it; no more than he can help his being a man, or I my being a woman; or no more than I can help my want of inclination to stay longer here. [*Exit.*

Scand. Humph!—An admirable composition.

Enter JEREMY.

Jer. What, is she gone, Sir?

Scand. Gone? why she was never here. I don't know her if I see her, nor you either.

Jer. Gook lack! what's the matter now? are any more of us to be mad? Why, Sir, my master longs to see her; and is almost mad in good earnest with the joyful news of her being here.

Scand. We are all under a mistake.—Ask no questions, for I can't resolve you; but I'll inform your master. In the mean time, if our project succeed no better with his father than it does with his mistress, he may descend from his exaltation of madness into the road of common sense, and be content only to be made a fool with other reasonable people. I hear Sir Sampson. You know your cue? I'll to your master. [*Exit.*

Enter SIR SAMPSON *and* BUCKRAM.

Sir S. D'ye see, Mr. Buckram, here's the paper signed with his own hand.

Buck. Good, Sir. And the conveyance is ready drawn in this box, if he be ready to sign and seal.

Sir S. Ready! he must be ready: his sham sickness sha'n't excuse him.—O, here's his scoundrel.—Sirrah, where's your master?

Jer. Ah, Sir, he's quite gone.

Sir S. Gone! what, he's not dead?

Jer. No, Sir, not dead.

Sir S. What, is he gone out of town? run away? ha! has he tricked me? Speak, varlet.

Jer. No, no, Sir; he's safe enough, Sir, an he were but as sound, poor gentleman! He is indeed here, Sir, and not here, Sir.

Sir S. Hey-day, rascal, do you banter me?—Speak, sirrah; where is he? for I will find him.

Jer. Would you could, Sir; for he has lost himself.—Indeed, Sir, I have almost broken my heart about him—I can't refrain tears when I think on him, Sir; I'm as melancholy for him as a passing-bell, Sir; or a horse in a pond.

Sir S. Confound your similitudes, Sir:—Speak to be understood: and tell me in plain terms what the matter is with him, or I'll crack your fool's skull.

Jer. Ah, you've hit it, Sir; that's the matter; his skull's cracked, poor gentleman! he's stark mad, Sir.

Sir S. Mad!

Buck. What, is he *non compos*?

Jer. Quite *non compos*, Sir.

Buck. Why, then, all's obliterated, Sir Sampson. If he be *non compos mentis*, his act and deed will be of no effect; it is not good in law.

Sir S. I wont believe it; let me see him, Sir.—Mad! I'll make him find his senses.

Jer. Mr. Scandal is with him, Sir; I'll knock at the door.

[*Goes to the scene, which opens and discovers* VALENTINE *and* SCANDAL. VALENTINE *upon a couch disorderly dressed.*

Sir S. How now? what's here to do?

Val. Ha! who's that? [*Starting.*

Scand. For Heaven's sake, softly, Sir, and gently: don't provoke him.

Val. Answer me, who's that? and that?

Sir S. Gad, does he not know? is he mischievous? I'll speak gently.—Val, Val, dost thou not know me, boy? not know thy own father, Val? I am thy own father; and this, honest Brief Buckram the lawyer.

Val. It may be so—I did not know you—the world is full.—There are people that we do know, and people that we do not know; and yet the sun shines upon all alike.—There are fathers that have many children; and there are children that have many fathers—'tis strange! But I am Honesty, and come to give the world the lie.

Sir S. I know not what to say to him.

Val. Why does that lawyer wear black?—does he carry his conscience without side? Lawyer, what art thou? dost thou know me?

Buck. O Lord, what must I say?——Yes, Sir.

Val. Thou liest; for I am Honesty. 'Tis hard I cannot get a livelihood amongst you. I have been sworn out of Westminster Hall the first day of every term—Let me see—no matter how long—But I'll tell you one thing; it is a question that would puzzle an arithmetician, if I should ask him, whether the Bible saves more souls in Westminster Abbey, or damns more in Westminster Hall?—For my part, I am Honesty, and can't tell; I have very few acquaintance.

Sir S. He talks sensibly in his madness—Has he no intervals?

Jer. Very short, Sir.

Buck. Sir, I can do no service while he's in this condition. Here's your paper, Sir.——He may do me a mischief if I stay.——The conveyance is ready, Sir, if he recover his senses. [*Exit.*

Sir S. Hold, hold, don't you go yet.

Scand. You'd better let him go, Sir; and send for him if there be occasion: for I fancy his presence provokes him more.

Val. Is the lawyer gone? 'Tis well; then we may drink about without going together

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by the ears.—Heigh ho! what o'clock is it? My father here! your blessing, Sir.

Sir S. He recovers!—Bless thee, Val!—How dost thou do, boy?

Val. Thank you, Sir, pretty well.—I have been a little out of order. Wont you please to sit, Sir?

Sir S. Ay, boy.—Come, thou shalt sit by me.

Val. Sir, 'tis my duty to wait.

Sir S. No, no: come, come, sit thee down, honest Val. How dost thou do? let me feel thy pulse—Oh, pretty well now, Val. I was sorry to see thee indisposed: but I am glad thou art better, honest Val.

Val. I thank you, Sir.

Scand. Miracle! the monster grows loving. [*Aside.*

Sir S. Let me feel thy hand again, Val. It does not shake—I believe thou canst write, Val. Ha, boy? thou canst write thy name, Val?——Jeremy, step and overtake Mr. Buckram? bid him make haste back with the conveyance, quick. [*Exit* JEREMY.

Scand. That ever I should suspect such a heathen of any remorse. [*Aside.*

Sir S. Dost thou know this paper, Val? I know thou'rt honest, and will perform articles.

[*Shows him the paper, but holds it out of his reach.*

Val. Pray let me see it, Sir; you hold it so far off, that I can't tell whether I know it or no.

Sir S. See it, boy? Ay, ay, why thou dost see it—'tis thy own hand, Vally. Why, let me see, I can read it as plain as can be: look you here——[Reads.] *The condition of this obligation*—Look you, as plain as can be, so it begins—And then at bottom—*As witness my hand*, VALENTINE LEGEND, in great letters. Why, 'tis as plain as the nose on one's face. What, are my eyes better than thine? I believe I can read it farther off yet—let me see. [*Stretches his arm as far as he can.*

Val. Will you please to let me hold it, Sir?

Sir S. Let thee hold it, say'st thou?—Ay, with all my heart—What matter is it who holds it? What need any body hold it. I'll put it in my pocket, Val? and then nobody need hold it. [*Puts the paper in his pocket.*] There, Val: it's safe enough, boy.—But thou shalt have it as soon as thou hast set thy hand to another paper, little Val.

Enter JEREMY *and* BUCKRAM.

Val. What, is my bad genius here again? Oh, no, 'tis the lawyer with an itching palm; and he's come to be scratched.—My nails are not long enough.—Let me have a pair of red-hot tongs quickly, quickly; and you shall see me act St. Dunstan, and lead the devil by the nose.

Buck. O Lord, let me be gone! I'll not venture myself with a madman. [*Runs out.*

Val. Ha, ha, ha! you need not run so fast. Honesty will not overtake you.—Ha, ha, ha! the rogue found me out to be *in forma pauperis* presently.

Sir S. What a vexation is here! I know not what to do, or say, or which way to go.

Val. Who's that, that's out of his way? I am Honesty, and can set him right.—Hark'ee, friend, the straight road is the worst way you can go.—He that follows his nose always, will very often be led into a stink. *Probatum est.*—But what are you for? religion or politics? There's a couple of topics for you, no more like one another than oil and vinegar: and yet these two beaten together by a state cook, make sauce for the whole nation.

Sir S. What the devil had I to do, ever to beget sons? why did I ever marry?

Val. Because thou wert a monster, old boy. The two greatest monsters in the world are a man and a woman. What's thy opinion?

Sir S. Why my opinion is that these two monsters joined together make yet a greater; that's a man and his wife.

Val. Aha, old Truepenny! say'st thou so? Thou has nicked it.—But it is wonderful strange, Jeremy.

Jer. What is it, Sir?

Val. That gray hairs should cover a green head—and I make a fool of my father. What's here? *Erra Pater*, or a bearded Sibyl? If Prophecy comes, Honesty must give place. [*Exeunt* VALENTINE *and* JEREMY.

Enter FORESIGHT, MRS. FORESIGHT, *and* MRS. FRAIL.

For. What says he? What did he prophesy? Ha, Sir Sampson! Bless us! how are we?

Sir S. Are we? Plague on your prognostications! Why, we are fools as we used to be.—Zounds, that you could not foresee that the moon would predominate, and my son be mad!—Where's your oppositions, your trines, and your quadrates?—What did your Cardan and your Ptolemy tell you? Your Messahalah and your Longomontanus, your harmony of chiromancy with astrology! Ah! plague on't, that I who know the world, and men and manners, who don't believe a syllable in the sky and stars, and sun and almanacs, and trash, should be directed by a dreamer, an omen hunter, and defer business in expectation of a lucky hour! when, there never was a lucky hour after the first opportunity. [*Exit.*

For. Ah, Sir Sampson, Heaven help your head!——This is none of your lucky hour——*Nemo omnibus horis sapit!*—What, is he gone, and in contempt of science? Ill stars and unconvertible ignorance attend him!

Scand. You must excuse his passion, Mr. Foresight; for he has been heartily vexed—His son is *non compos mentis*, and thereby incapable of making any conveyance in law; so that all his measures are disappointed.

For. Ha! say you so?

Mrs. F. What, has my sea-lover lost his anchor of hope, then? [*Aside to* MRS. FORESIGHT.

Mrs. For. O sister, what will you do with him?

Mrs. F. Do with him? Send him to sea again in the next foul weather.—He's used to an inconstant element, and wont be surprised to see the tide turned.

For. Wherein was I mistaken, not to foresee this? [*Considers.*

Scand. Madam, you and I can tell him something else that he did not foresee, and more particularly relating to his own fortune! [*Aside to* MRS. FORESIGHT.

Mrs. For. What do you mean? I don't understand you.

Scand. Hush, softly——the pleasures of last night, my dear; too considerable to be forgot so soon.

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Mrs. For. Last night! and what would your impudence infer from last night? Last night was like the night before, I think.

Scand. 'Sdeath! do you make no difference between me and your husband?

Mrs. For. Not much—he's superstitious; and you are mad, in my opinion.

Scand. You make me mad—You are not serious?—pray recollect yourself.

Mrs. For. O yes, now I remember, you were very impertinent and impudent—and would have come to bed to me.

Scand. And did not?

Mrs. For. Did not! With what face can you ask the question?

Scand. This I have heard of before, but never believed. I have been told, she had that admirable quality of forgetting to a man's face in the morning, that she had lain with him all night; and denying that she had done favours, with more impudence than she could grant them. [*Aside.*]—Madam, I am your humble servant, and honour you.—You look pretty well, Mr. Foresight. How did you rest last night?

For. Truly, Mr. Scandal, I was taken up with broken dreams, and distracted visions, that I remember little of.

Scand. 'Twas a very forgetting night. But would you not talk with Valentine? Perhaps you may understand him; I am apt to believe there is something mysterious in his discourse, and sometimes rather think him inspired than mad.

For. You speak with singular good judgment, Mr. Scandal, truly.—I am inclining to your Turkish opinion in this matter, and do reverence a man whom the vulgar think mad. Let us go to him.

Mrs. F. Sister, do you go with them; I'll find out my lover, and give him his discharge, and come to you.—[*Exeunt* SCANDAL, MR. *and* MRS. FORESIGHT.] On my conscience, here he comes!

Enter BEN.

Ben. All mad, I think.—I believe all the *Calentures* of the sea are come ashore, for my part.

Mrs. F. Mr. Benjamin in choler!

Ben. No, I'm pleased well enough, now I have found you.—Mess, I have had such a hurricane on your account yonder.

Mrs. F. My account? Pray what's the matter?

Ben. Why, father came, and found me squabbling with you chitty-faced thing, as he would have me marry—so he asked what was the matter.—He asked in a surly sort of a way.—It seems brother Val is gone mad, and so that put'n into a passion; but what, did I know that? what's that to me?—So he asked in a surly sort of a manner—and I answered 'en as surlily. What though he be my father, I an't bound prentice to 'en: so, faith I told'n in plain terms, if I were minded to marry, I'd marry to please myself, not him; and for the young woman that he provided for me, I thought it more fitting for her to learn her sampler, and make pies, than to look after a husband; for my part, I was none of her man—I had another voyage to make, let him take it as he will.

Mrs. F. So, then, you intend to go to sea again?

Ben. Nay, nay, my mind ran upon you—but I would not tell him so much.—So he said, he'd make my heart ache; and if so be that he could get a woman to his mind, he'd marry himself. Gad, says I, if you play the fool and marry at these years, there's more danger of your head's aching than my heart!—He was woundily angry when I giv'en that wipe—he had'nt a word to say; and so I left'n, and the green girl together; mayhap the bee may bite, and he'll marry her himself—with all my heart!

Mrs. F. And were you this undutiful and graceless wretch to your father?

Ben. Then why was he graceless first?—If I am undutiful and graceless, why did he beget me so? I did not beget myself.

Mrs. F. O impiety! how have I been mistaken! What an inhuman, merciless creature have I set my heart upon? Oh, I am happy to have discovered the shelves and quicksands that lurk beneath that faithless, smiling face?

Ben. Hey-toss! what's the matter now? why you ben't angry, be you?

Mrs. F. O, see me no more—for thou wert born among rocks, suckled by whales, cradled in a tempest, and whistled to by winds; and thou art come forth with fins and scales, and three rows of teeth, a most outrageous fish of prey.

Ben. O Lord, O Lord, she's mad, poor young woman! Love has turned her senses; her brain is quite overset.—Well-a-day! how shall I do to set her to rights?

Mrs. F. No, no, I am not mad, monster; I am wise enough to find you out.—Hadst thou the impudence to aspire at being a husband, with that stubborn and disobedient temper?—You, that know not how to submit to a father, presume to have a sufficient stock of duty to undergo a wife? I should have been finely fobbed indeed, very finely fobbed!

Ben. Hark'ee, forsooth! if so be that you are in your right senses, d'ye see, for aught as I perceive, I'm likely to be finely fobbed—if I have got anger here upon your account, and you are tacked about already!—What d'ye mean, after all your fair speeches, and stroking my cheeks, and kissing and hugging, what would you shear off so, would you, and leave me a-ground?

Mrs. F. No, I'll leave you adrift, and go which way you will.

Ben. What, are you false-hearted then?

Mrs. F. Only the wind's changed.

Ben. More shame for you!—The wind's changed! It is an ill wind blows nobody good.—Mayhap I have a good riddance on you, if these be your tricks.—What, did you mean all this while to make a fool of me?

Mrs. F. Any fool but a husband.

Ben. Husband! Gad, I would not be your husband, if you would have me, now I know your mind; thof you had your weight in gold and jewels, and thof I loved you never so well.

Mrs. F. Why, canst thou love, Porpus?

Ben. No matter what I can do; don't call names.—I don't love you so well as to bear that, whatever I did.—I'm glad you show yourself, mistress: let them marry you as don't know you—Gad, I know you too well, by sad experience; I believe he that marries you will go to sea in a hen-pecked frigate.—I believe that, young woman; and mayhap may come to an anchor at *Cuckold's Point;* so there's a dash for you, take it as you will; mayhap you may hollo after me when I wont come to. [*Exit.*

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Mrs. F. Ha, ha, ha! no doubt on't. [*Sings.*]
"My true love is gone to sea!"

Enter MRS. FORESIGHT.

O sister, had you come a minute sooner, you would have seen the resolution of a lover.—Honest Tar and I are parted;—and with the same indifference that we met.—On my life, I am half vexed at the insensibility of a brute I despised.

Mrs. For. What, then, he bore it most heroically?

Mrs. F. Most tyrannically—for you see he has got the start of me; and I, the poor forsaken maid, am left complaining on the shore. But I'll tell you a hint that he has given me. Sir Sampson is enraged, and talks desperately of committing matrimony himself. If he has a mind to throw himself away, he can't do it more effectually than upon me, if we could bring it about.

Mrs. For. O hang him, old fox! he's too cunning; besides, he hates both you and me. But I have a project in my head for you, and I have gone a good way towards it. I have almost made a bargain with Jeremy, Valentine's man, to sell his master to us.

Mrs. F. Sell him! how?

Mrs. For. Valentine raves upon Angelica, and took me for her; and, Jeremy says, will take any body for her that he imposes on him. Now I have promised him mountains, if in one of his mad fits he will bring you to him in her stead, and get you married together, and put to-bed together—and after consummation, girl, there's no revoking. And if he should recover his senses, he'll be glad at least to make you a good settlement.—Here they come; stand aside a little, and tell me how you like the design.

Enter VALENTINE, SCANDAL, FORESIGHT, *and* JEREMY.

Scand. And have you given your master a hint of their plot upon him? [*To* JEREMY.

Jer. Yes, Sir; he says he'll favour it, and mistake her for Angelica.

Scand. It may make us sport.

For. Mercy on us!

Val. Husht—interrupt me not—I'll whisper prediction to thee, and thou shalt prophesy.—I am Honesty, and can teach thy tongue a new trick. I have told thee what's past—Now I'll tell what's to come!—Dost thou know what will happen to-morrow?—Answer me not—for I will tell thee. To-morrow knaves will thrive through craft, and fools through fortune; and Honesty will go as it did, frost-nipped in a summer suit. Ask me questions concerning to-morrow.

Scand. Ask him, Mr. Foresight.

For. Pray what will be done at court?

Val. Scandal will tell you—I am Honesty; I never come there.

For. In the city?

Val. Oh, prayers will be said in empty churches, at the usual hours. Yet you will see such zealous faces behind counters, as if religion were to be sold in every shop. Oh! things will go methodically in the city. The clocks will strike twelve at noon, and the horned herd buzz in the Exchange at two. Husbands and wives will drive distinct trades; and care and pleasure separately occupy the family. Coffee-houses will be full of smoke and stratagem. And the cropped apprentice, that sweeps his master's shop in the morning, may tea to one dirty his sheets before night. But there are two things that you will see very strange; which are, wanton wives with their legs at liberty, and tame cuckolds with chains about their necks.—But hold, I must examine you before I go further; you look suspiciously. Are you a husband?

For. I am married.

Val. Poor creature! is your wife of Covent Garden parish?

For. No; St. Martin in the Fields.

Val. Alas, poor man! his eyes are sunk, and his hands shrivelled; his legs dwindled, and his back bowed. Pray, pray for a metamorphosis.—Change thy shape, and shake off age; get thee Medea's kettle, and be boiled anew; come forth, with labouring, callous hands, a chine of steel, and Atlas' shoulders. Let Taliacotius trim the calves of twenty chairmen, and make thee pedestals to stand erect upon; and look matrimony in the face. Ha, ha, ha! that a man should have a stomach to a wedding supper, when the pigeons ought rather to be laid to his feet! ha, ha, ha!

For. His frenzy is very high now, Mr. Scandal.

Scand. I believe it is a spring tide.

For. Very likely truly; you understand these matters.—Mr. Scandal, I shall be very glad to confer with you about these things which he has uttered.—His sayings are very mysterious and hieroglyphical.

Val. Why would Angelica be absent from my eyes so long?

Jer. She's here, Sir.

Mrs. For. Now, sister.

Mrs. F. O Lord, what must I say?

Scand. Humour him, Madam, by all means.

Val. Where is she? Oh, I see her!—She comes, like riches, health, and liberty, at once, to a despairing, starving, and abandoned wretch.—O welcome, welcome!

Mrs. F. How d'ye, Sir? can I serve you?

Val. Hark'ee—I have a secret to tell you—Endymion and the moon shall meet us upon Mount Latmos, and we'll be married in the dead of night.—But say not a word.—Hymen shall put his torch into a dark lantern, that it may be secret; and Juno shall give her peacock poppy-water, that he may fold his ogling tail, and Argus's hundred eyes be shut, ha? Nobody shall know but Jeremy.

Mrs. F. No, no, we'll keep it secret; it shall be done presently.

Val. The sooner the better—Jeremy, come hither—closer—that none may overhear us. Jeremy, I can tell you news. Angelica is turned nun; and I am turned friar: and yet we'll marry one another in spite of the pope. Get me a cowl and beads, that I may play my part—for she'll meet me two hours hence in black and white, and a long veil to cover the project; and we won't see one another's faces, till we have done something to be ashamed of—and then we'll blush once for all.

Enter TATTLE *and* ANGELICA.

Jer. I'll take care, and——

Val. Whisper.

Ang. Nay, Mr. Tattle, if you make love to me, you spoil my design; for I intend to make you my confidant.

Scand. How's this! Tattle making love to Angelica!

Tat. But, Madam, to throw away your person, such a person! and such a fortune, on a madman!

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Ang. I never loved him till he was mad; but don't tell any body so.

Tat. Tell, Madam? alas, you don't know me.—I have much ado to tell your ladyship how long I have been in love with you—but, encouraged by the impossibility of Valentine's making any more addresses to you, I have ventured to declare the very inmost passion of my heart. Oh, Madam, look upon us both. There you see the ruins of a poor decayed creature!—Here, a complete lively figure, with youth and health, and all his five senses, in perfection, Madam; and to all this, the most passionate lover—

Ang. O, fy for shame, hold your tongue. A passionate lover, and five senses in perfection! When you are as mad as Valentine, I'll believe you love me; and the maddest shall take me.

Val. It is enough. Ha! who's there?

Mrs. F. O Lord, her coming will spoil all. [*To* JEREMY.

Jer. No, no, Madam; he wont know her; if he should, I can persuade him.

Val. Scandal, who are these? Foreigners? if they are, I'll tell you what I think.—Get away all the company but Angelica, that I may discover my design to her, [*Whispers.*

Scand. I will.—I have discovered something of Tattle, that is of a piece with Mrs. Frail. He courts Angelica;—if we could contrive to couple them together—Hark'ee—[*Whispers.*

Mrs. For. He wont know you, cousin; he knows nobody.

For. But he knows more than any body.—Oh, niece, he knows things past and to come, and all the profound secrets of time.

Tat. Look you, Mr. Foresight; it is not my way to make many words of matters, and so I sha'n't say much. But in short, d'ye see, I will hold you a hundred pounds now, that I know more secrets than he.

For. How? I cannot read that knowledge in your face, Mr. Tattle. Pray, what do you know?

Tat. Why, d'ye think I'll tell you, Sir?—Read it in my face! No, Sir, it is written in my heart; and safer there, Sir, than letters written in juice of lemon, for no fire can fetch it out. I'm no blab, Sir.

Val. Acquaint Jeremy with it: he may easily bring it about.—They are welcome, and I'll tell them so myself. [*To* SCANDAL.] What, do you look strange upon me?—Then I must be plain. [*Coming up to them.*] I am Honesty, and hate an old acquaintance with a new face. [SCANDAL *goes aside with* JEREMY.

Tat. Do you know me, Valentine?

Val. You? Who are you? I hope not.

Tat. I am Jack Tattle, your friend.

Val. My friend! what to do? I'm no married man, and thou canst not lie with my wife. I am very poor, and thou canst not borrow money of me. Then what employment have I for a friend?

Tat. Ha! a good open speaker, and not to be trusted with a secret.

Ang. Do you know me, Valentine?

Val. Oh, very well.

Ang. Who am I?

Val. You're a woman—one to whom Heaven gave beauty, when it grafted roses on a brier. You are the reflection of heaven in a pond; and he that leaps at you is sunk. You are all white; a sheet of lovely spotless paper, when you were first born; but you are to be scrawled and blotted by every goose's quill. I know you; for I loved a woman, and loved her so long, that I found out a strange thing; I found out what a woman was good for.

Tat. Ay, pr'ythee, what's that?

Val. Why, to keep a secret.

Tat. O Lord!

Val. O, exceeding good to keep a secret: for though she should tell, yet she is not believed.

Tat. Hah! good again, faith.

Val. I would have music.—Sing me the song that I like.——

SONG.

I tell thee, *Charmion*, could I time retrieve,
And could again begin to love and live,
To you I should my earliest offering give;
I know my eyes would lend my heart to you,
And I should all my vows and oaths renew;
But, to be plain, I never would be true.

For, by our weak and weary truth, I find,
Love hates to centre in a point assign'd;
But runs with joy the circle of the mind:
Then never let us chain what should be free,
But for relief of either sex, agree:
Since women love to change, and so do we.

No more; for I'm melancholy. [*Walks musing.*

Jer. [JEREMY *and* SCANDAL *whisper.*] I'll do't, Sir.

Scand. Mr. Foresight, we had best leave him. He may grow outrageous, and do mischief.

For. I will be directed by you.

Jer. [*To* MRS. FRAIL.] You'll meet, Madam.—I'll take care every thing shall be ready.

Mrs. F. Thou shalt do what thou wilt; in short, I will deny thee nothing.

Tat. Madam, shall I wait upon you? [*To* ANGELICA.

Ang. No, I'll stay with him.—Mr. Scandal will protect me. Aunt, Mr. Tattle desires you would give him leave to wait upon you.

Tat. Plague on't, there's no coming off, now she has said that—Madam, will you do me the honour?

Mrs. For. Mr. Tattle might have used less ceremony.

[*Exeunt* MRS. FRAIL, MR. *and* MRS. FORESIGHT, *and* TATTLE.

Scand. Jeremy, follow Tattle. [*Exit* JEREMY.

Ang. Mr. Scandal, I only stay till my maid comes, and because I have a mind to be rid of Mr. Tattle.

Scand. Madam, I am very glad that I overheard a better reason which you gave to Mr. Tattle; for his impertinence forced you to acknowledge a kindness for Valentine, which you denied to all his sufferings and my solicitations. So I'll leave him to make use of the discovery; and your ladyship to the free confession of your inclinations.

Ang. O Heavens! you wont leave me alone with a madman.

Scand. No, Madam; I only leave a madman to his remedy. [*Exit.*

Val. Madam, you need not be very much afraid, for I fancy I begin to come to myself.

Ang. Ay, but if I don't fit you, I'll be hanged. [*Aside.*

Val. You see what disguises love makes us

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put on. Gods have been in counterfeited shapes for the same reason; and the divine part of me, my mind, has worn this mask of madness, and this motley livery, only as the slave of love, and menial creature of your beauty.

Ang. Mercy on me, how he talks!—Poor Valentine!

Val. Nay, faith, now let us understand one another, hypocrisy apart. The comedy draws towards an end; and let us think of leaving acting, and be ourselves; and since you have loved me, you must own, I have at length deserved you should confess it.

Ang. [*Sighs.*] I would I had loved you!—for Heaven knows, I pity you; and, could I have foreseen the bad effects, I would have striven; but that's too late!

Val. What bad effects? what's too late?—My seeming madness has deceived my father, and procured me time to think of means to reconcile me to him, and preserve the right of my inheritance to his estate; which otherwise, by articles, I must this morning have resigned. And this I had informed you of to-day, but you were gone before I knew you had been here.

Ang. How? I thought your love of me had caused this transport in your soul; which, it seems, you only counterfeited for mercenary ends and sordid interest.

Val. Nay, now you do me wrong; for, if any interest was considered, it was yours; since I thought I wanted more than love to make me worthy of you.

Ang. Then you thought me mercenary—But how am I deluded by this interval of sense, to reason with a madman?

Val. Oh, 'tis barbarous to misunderstand me longer.

Enter JEREMY.

Ang. Oh, here's a reasonable creature—sure he will not have the impudence to persevere!—Come, Jeremy, acknowledge your trick, and confess your master's madness counterfeit.

Jer. Counterfeit, Madam! I'll maintain him to be as absolutely and substantially mad, as any freeholder in Bedlam. Nay, he's as mad as any projector, fanatic, chymist, lover, or poet in Europe.

Val. Sirrah, you lie; I'm not mad.

Ang. Ha, ha, ha! you see he denies it.

Jer. O Lord, Madam, did you ever know any madman mad enough to own it?

Val. Sot, can't you apprehend?

Ang. Why, he talked very sensibly just now.

Jer. Yes, Madam; he has intervals: but you see he begins to look wild again now.

Val. Why, you thick-skulled rascal, I tell you the farce is done, and I'll be mad no longer. [*Beats him.*

Ang. Ha, ha, ha! is he mad or no, Jeremy?

Jer. Partly, I think—For he does not know his own mind two hours. I'm sure I left him just now in the humour to be mad: and I think I have not found him very quiet at the present. [*One knocks.*] Who's there!

Val. Go see, you sot. I'm very glad that I can move your mirth, though not your compassion.

Ang. I did not think you had apprehension enough to be exceptious: but madmen show themselves most by over-pretending to a sound understanding, as drunken men do by over-acting sobriety. I was half inclining to believe you, till I accidentally touched upon your tender part. But now you have restored me to my former opinion and compassion.

Jer. Sir, your father has sent to know if you are any better yet.—Will you please to be mad, Sir, or how?

Val. Stupidity! you know the penalty of all I'm worth must pay for the confession of my senses. I'm mad, and will be mad, to every body but this lady.

Jer. So;—just the very back-side of truth. But lying is a figure in speech, that interlards the greatest part of my conversation.—Madam, your ladyship's woman.

Enter JENNY.

Ang. Well, have you been there?—Come hither.

Jenny. Yes, Madam; Sir Sampson will wait upon you presently. [*Aside to* ANG.

Val. You are not leaving me in this uncertainty?

Ang. Would any thing but a madman complain of uncertainty? Uncertainty and expectation are the joys of life. Security is an insipid thing; and the overtaking and possessing of a wish discovers the folly of the chase. Never let us know one another better; for the pleasure of a masquerade is done, when we come to show our faces. But I'll tell you two things before I leave you; I am not the fool you take me for; and you are mad, and don't know it. [*Exeunt* ANGELICA *and* JENNY.

Val. From a riddle you can expect nothing but a riddle. There's my instruction and the moral of my lesson.

Jer. What, is the lady gone again, Sir? I hope you understood one another before she went?

Val. Understood! she is harder to be understood than a piece of Egyptian antiquity, or an Irish manuscript; you may pore till you spoil your eyes, and not improve your knowledge.

Jer. I have heard them say, Sir, they read hard Hebrew books backwards. May be you begin to read at the wrong end!

Val. They say so of a witch's prayer; and dreams and Dutch almanacs are to be understood by contraries. But there is regularity and method in that; she is a medal without a reverse or inscription, for indifference has both sides alike. Yet while she does not seem to hate me, I will pursue her, and know her if it be possible, in spite of the opinion of my satirical friend, who says,

That women are like tricks by slight of hand,
Which, to admire, we should not understand.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Room in FORESIGHT'S *House.*

Enter ANGELICA *and* JENNY.

Ang. Where is Sir Sampson? did you not tell me he would be here before me?

Jenny. He's at the great glass in the dining-room, Madam, setting his cravat and wig.

Ang. How! I'm glad on't.—If he has a mind I should like him, it's a sign he likes me; and that's more than half my design.

Jenny. I hear him, Madam.

Ang. Leave me; and, d'ye hear, if Valentine should come or send, I'm not to be spoken with. [*Exit* JENNY.

Enter SIR SAMPSON.

Sir S. I have not been honoured with the commands of a fair lady a great while.—Odd, Madam, you have revived me—not since I was five and thirty.

Ang. Why, you have no great reason to complain, Sir Sampson; that's not long ago.

Sir S. But it is, Madam, a very great while; to a man that admires a fine woman as much as I do.

Ang. You're an absolute courtier, Sir Sampson.

Sir S. Not at all, Madam. You wrong me: I am not so old neither, to be a bare courtier, only a man of words. I have warm blood about me yet, and can serve a lady any way.—Come, come, let me tell you, you women think a man old too soon, faith you do. Come, don't despise fifty; odd, fifty, in a hale constitution, is no such contemptible age!

Ang. Fifty a contemptible age! not at all: a very fashionable age, I think,—I assure you, I know very considerable beaus, that set a good face upon fifty.—Fifty! I have seen fifty in a side box, by candle light, out-blossom five and twenty.

Sir S. Outsides, outsides; a plague take them, mere outsides. Hang your side-box beaus; no, I'm none of those, none of your forced trees, that pretend to blossom in the fall; and bud when they should bring forth fruit. I am of a long-lived race, and inherit vigour. None of my ancestors married till fifty; yet they begot sons and daughters till fourscore. I am of your patriarchs; I, a branch of one of your Antediluvian families, fellows that the flood could not wash away. Well Madam, what are your commands? Has any young rogue affronted you, and shall I cut his throat, or——

Ang. No, Sir Sampson, I have no quarrel upon my hands—I have more occasion for your conduct than your courage at this time. To tell you the truth, I'm weary of living single, and want a husband.

Sir S. And it is pity you should!—Would she would like me! then I should hamper my young rogues: faith, she's devilish handsome! [*Aside.*] Madam, you deserve a good husband! and 'twere pity you should be thrown away upon any of these young idle rogues about the town. There's ne'er a young fellow worth having—that is a *very* young fellow—Plague on them, they never think beforehand—and if they commit matrimony, 'tis as they commit murder; out of a frolic; and are ready to hang themselves, or to be hanged by the law, the next morning. Have a care, Madam.

Ang. Therefore I ask your advice, Sir Sampson; I have fortune enough to make any man easy that I can like; if there was such a thing as a young agreeable man, with a reasonable stock of good-nature and sense—for I would neither have an absolute wit, nor a fool.

Sir S. You are hard to please, Madam: to find a young fellow that is neither a wit in his own eye, nor a fool in the eye of the world, is a very hard task. But, faith, you speak very discreetly; for I hate both a wit and a fool.

Ang. She that marries a fool, Sir Sampson, forfeits the reputation of her honesty or understanding; and she that marries a very witty man, is a slave to the severity and insolent conduct of her husband. I should like a man of wit for a lover, because I would have such a one in my power: but I would no more be his wife than his enemy; for his malice is not a more terrible consequence of his aversion, than his jealousy is of his love.

Sir S. None of old Foresight's Sibyls ever uttered such a truth. You have won my heart. I hate a wit; I had a son that was spoiled among them; a good hopeful lad, till he learned to be a wit——and might have risen in the state.—But, a plague on't, his wit ran him out of his money, and now his poverty has run him out of his wits.

Ang. Sir Sampson, as your friend, I must tell you, you are very much abused in that matter—he's no more mad than you are.

Sir S. How, Madam! would I could prove it!

Ang I can tell you how that may be done—but it is a thing that would make me appear to be too much concerned in your affairs.

Sir S. I believe she likes me! [*Aside.*]——Ah, Madam, all my affairs are scarce worthy to be laid at your feet; and I wish, Madam, they were in a better state, that I might make a more becoming offer to a lady of your incomparable beauty and merit.—If I had Peru in one hand, and Mexico in t'other, and the eastern empire under my feet; it would make me only a more glorious victim, to be offered at the shrine of your beauty.

Ang. Bless me, Sir Sampson, what's the matter?

Sir S. Madam, I love you—and if you would take my advice in a husband——

Ang. Hold, hold, Sir Sampson, I asked your advice for a husband, and you are giving me your consent. I was thinking to propose something like it in jest, to satisfy you about Valentine: for if a match were seemingly carried on between you and me, it would oblige him to throw off his disguise of madness in apprehension of losing me; for, you know, he has long pretended a passion for me.

Sir S. Gad, a most ingenious contrivance—if we were to go through with it! But why must the match only be seemingly carried on? Let it be a real contract.

Ang. O fy, Sir Sampson, what would the world say?

Sir S. Say? They would say you were a wise woman, and I a happy man. Madam, I'll love you as long as I live; and leave you a good jointure when I die.

Ang. Ay; but that is not in your power, Sir Sampson; for when Valentine confesses himself in his senses, he must make over his inheritance to his younger brother.

Sir S. You're cunning; a wary baggage. Faith, I like you the better. But, I warrant you, I have a proviso in the obligation in favour of myself. I have a trick to turn the settlement upon the issue male of our bodies. Let us find children, and I'll find an estate.

Ang. Will you? Well, do you find the estate, and leave the other to me.

Sir S. O rogue! but I'll trust you. And will you consent? Is it a match then?

Ang. Let me consult my lawyer concerning this obligation; and if I find what you propose practicable, I'll give you my answer.

Sir S. With all my heart. Come in with me, and I'll lend you the bond. You shall consult your lawyer, and I'll consult a parson. I'm a young man; and I'll make it appear—You're devilish handsome. Faith, you're very handsome; and I'm very young, and very lusty. Ods, hussy, you know how to choose; and so do I. I think we are very well met.

Give me your hand; let me kiss it; 'tis as warm and as soft—as what? odd as t'other hand!—Give me t'other hand; and I'll mumble them, till they melt in my mouth.

Ang. Hold, Sir Sampson—You're profuse of your vigour before your time. You'll spend your estate before you come to it.

Sir S. No, no, only give you a rent roll of my possessions—Ah! baggage!—I warrant you for a little Sampson. Odd, Sampson is a very good name for an able fellow. Your Sampsons were strong dogs from the beginning.

Ang. Have a care, and don't over-act your part. If you remember, Sampson, the strongest of the name, pulled an old house over his head at last.

Sir S. Say you so?—Come, let's go then: I long to be pulling too.—Come away——Here's somebody coming. [*Exeunt.*

Enter TATTLE *and* JEREMY.

Tat. Is that not she, gone out just now?

Jer. Ay, Sir, she's just going to the place of appointment. Ah, Sir, if you are not very faithful and close in this business, you'll certainly be the death of a person that has a most extraordinary passion for your honour's service.

Tat. Ay, who's that?

Jer. Even my unworthy self, Sir. Sir, I have had an appetite to be fed with your commands a great while—And now, Sir, my former master having much troubled the fountain of his understanding, it is a very plausible occasion for me to quench my thirst at the spring of your bounty. I thought I could not recommend myself better to you, Sir, than by the delivery of a great beauty and fortune into your arms, whom I have heard you sigh for.

Tat. I'll make thy fortune; say no more. Thou art a pretty fellow, and canst carry a message to a lady, in a soft kind of phrase, and with a good persuading accent.

Jer. Sir, I have the seeds of rhetoric, and oratory in my head—I have been at Cambridge.

Tat. Ay; 'tis well enough for a servant to be bred at a university; but the education is a little too pedantic for a gentleman. I hope you are secret in your nature, private, close, ha?

Jer. O, Sir, for that, Sir, 'tis my chief talent; I'm as secret as the head of Nilus.

Tat. Ay? who's he, though; a privy-counsellor!

Jer. O ignorance! [*Aside.*]—A cunning Egyptian, Sir, that with his arms could overrun the country, yet nobody could ever find out his head-quarters.

Tat. Close dog! a good debauchee, I warrant him!—The time draws nigh, Jeremy: Angelica will be veiled like a nun; and I must be hooded like a friar: ha, Jeremy?

Jer. Ay, Sir, hooded like a hawk, to seize at first sight upon the quarry. It is the whim of my master's madness to be so dressed; and she is so in love with him, she'll comply with any thing to please him. Poor lady! I'm sure she'll have reason to pray for me, when she finds what a happy change she has made, between a madman and so accomplished a gentleman.

Tat. Ay, faith, so she will, Jeremy! You're a good friend to her, poor creature!—I swear I do it hardly so much in consideration of myself, as compassion to her.

Jer. 'Tis an act of charity, Sir, to save a fine woman with thirty thousand pounds from throwing herself away.

Tat. So 'tis faith; I might have saved several others in my time; but I could never find in my heart to marry any body before.

Jer. Well, Sir, I'll go and tell her my master's coming; and meet you in half a quarter of an hour, with your disguise, at your lodgings. You must talk a little madly; she wont distinguish the tone of your voice.

Tat. No, no, let me alone for a counterfeit. I'll be ready for you. [*Exit* JEREMY.

Enter MISS PRUE.

Miss P. O, Mr. Tattle, are you here! I'm glad I have found you. I have been looking for you, till I'm tired.

Tat. O pox! how shall I get rid of this foolish girl!

Miss P. O, I have great news, I can tell you great news—I must not marry the seaman now—My father says so. Why wont you be my husband? You say you love me! and you wont be my husband? And I know you may be my husband now, if you please.

Tat. O fy, Miss! who told you so?

Miss P. Why, my father——I told him that you loved me.

Tat. O fy, Miss! why did you do so? and who told you so?

Miss P. Who? Why you did; did not you?

Tat. O, that was yesterday; that was a great while ago. I have been asleep since; slept a whole night, and did not so much as dream of the matter.

Miss P. Pshaw! O, but I dreamt that it was so, though.

Tat. Ay, but your father will tell you that dreams come by contraries. O fy! what, we must not love one another now. Pshaw, that would be a foolish thing indeed! Fy, fy! you're a woman now, and must think of a new man every morning, and forget him every night. No, no, to marry is to be a child again, and play with the same rattle always: O fy, marrying is a bad thing!

Miss P. Well, but don't you love me as well as you did last night, then?

Tat. No, no, you would not have me.

Miss P. No? Yes, but I would, though.

Tat. Pshaw, but I tell you, you would not. You forget you are a woman, and don't know your own mind.

Miss P. But here's my father, and he knows my mind.

Enter FORESIGHT.

For. O, Mr. Tattle, your servant, you are a close man; but methinks your love to my daughter was a secret I might have been trusted with!—or had you a mind to try if I could discover it by my art?—Hum, ha! I think there is something in your physiognomy that has a resemblance of her: and the girl is like me.

Tat. And so you would infer that you and I are alike—What does the old prig mean? I'll banter him and laugh at him, and leave him. [*Aside.*]—I fancy you have a wrong notion of faces.

For. How? what? a wrong notion! how so?

Tat. In the way of art, I have some taking features, not obvious to vulgar eyes, that are

indication of a sudden turn of good fortune, in the lottery of wives; and promise a great beauty and great fortune reserved alone for me, by a private intrigue of destiny kept secret from the piercing eye of perspicuity, from all astrologers, and the stars themselves.

For. How? I will make it appear, that what you say is impossible.

Tat. Sir, I beg your pardon, I am in haste—

For. For what?

Tat. To be married, Sir——married.

For. Ay, but pray take me along with you, Sir.

Tat. No, Sir, it is to be done privately—I never make confidents.

For. Well; but my consent, I mean—You wont marry my daughter without my consent?

Tat. Who, I Sir? I am an absolute stranger to you and your daughter, Sir.

For. Hey-day! What time of the moon is this?

Tat. Very true, Sir! and desire to continue so. I have no more love for your daughter, than I have likeness of you: and I have a secret in my heart, which you would be glad to know, and sha'n't know: and yet you shall know it too, and be sorry for it afterwards.—I'd have you know, Sir, that I am as knowing as the stars, and as secret as the night. And I'm going to be married just now, yet did not know of it half an hour ago; and the lady stays for me, and does not know of it yet. There's a mystery for you. I know you love to untie difficulties. Or if you can't solve this, stay here a quarter of an hour, and I'll come and explain it to you. [*Exit*.

Miss P. O father, why will you let him go? Wont you make him to be my husband?

For. Mercy on us, what do these lunacies portend? Alas! he's mad, stark wild.

Miss P. What, and must not I have e'er a husband then? What, must I go to bed to nurse again, and be a child as long as she's an old woman? Indeed but I wont. For, now my mind is set upon a man, I will have a man some way or other. Oh, methinks I'm sick when I think of a man; and if I can't have one, I would go to sleep all my life; for when I'm awake, it makes me wish and long, and I don't know for what—and I'd rather be always asleep, than sick with thinking.

For. O fearful! I think the girl's influenced too.—Hussy, you shall have a rod.

Miss P. A fiddle of a rod! I'll have a husband; and if you wont get me one, I'll get one for myself. I'll marry our Robin the butler; he says he loves me: and he's a handsome man, and shall be my husband: I warrant he'll be my husband, and thank me too; for he told me so.

Enter SCANDAL, MRS. FORESIGHT, *and* NURSE.

For. Did he so? I'll despatch him for it presently! Rogue!—Oh, Nurse come hither.

Nurse. What is your worship's pleasure?

For. Here, take your young mistress, and lock her up presently, till farther orders from me. Not a word, hussy—Do what I bid you. No reply: away. And bid Robin make ready to give an account of his plate and linen, d'ye hear? Be gone, when I bid you.

[*Exeunt* NURSE *and* MISS PRUE.

Mrs. For. What's the matter, husband?

For. 'Tis not convenient to tell you now——Mr. Scandal, Heaven keep us all in our senses! I fear there is a contagious frenzy abroad. How does Valentine?

Scand. O, I hope he will do well again. I have a message from him to your niece Angelica.

For. I think she has not returned since she went abroad with Sir Sampson. Nurse, why are you not gone?

Enter BEN.

Here's Mr. Benjamin; he can tell us if his father be come home.

Ben. Who? Father? Ay, he's come home with a vengeance.

Mrs. For. Why, what's the matter?

Ben. Matter! Why, he's mad.

For. Mercy on us! I was afraid of this.

Ben. And there's a handsome young woman, she, as they say, brother Val went mad for, she's mad too, I think.

For. O my poor niece! my poor niece! is she gone too? Well, I shall run mad next.

Mrs. For. Well, but how mad? how d'ye mean?

Ben. Nay, I'll give you leave to guess—I'll undertake to make a voyage to Antigua.——No, I mayn't say so, neither—but I'll sail as far as Leghorn, and back again, before you shall guess at the matter, and do nothing else. Mess, you may take in all the points of the compass, and not hit the right.

Mrs. For. Your experiment will take up a little too much time.

Ben. Why, then, I'll tell you: there's a new wedding upon the stocks, and they two are going to be married to rights.

Scand. Who?

Ben. Why, father, and—the young woman; I can't hit her name.

Scand. Angelica?

Ben. Ay, the same.

Mrs. For. Sir Sampson and Angelica? Impossible!

Ben. That may be—but I'm sure it is as I tell you.

Scand. 'Sdeath, it is a jest. I can't believe it.

Ben. Look you, friend; it is nothing to me, whether you believe it or no. What I say is true, d'ye see; they are married, or just going to be married, I know not which.

For. Well, but they are not mad, that is, not lunatic?

Ben. I don't know what you may call madness—but she's mad for a husband, and he's horn-mad, I think, or they'd never make a match together.—Here they come.

Enter SIR SAMPSON, ANGELICA, *and* BUCKRAM.

Sir S. Where is this old soothsayer? this uncle of mine elect?—Aha! old Foresight! uncle Foresight! wish me joy, uncle Foresight; double joy, both as uncle and astrologer: here's a conjunction that was not foretold in all your Ephemeres! The brightest star in the blue firmament—is shot from above, in a jelly of love, and so forth; and I'm lord of the ascendant. You're an old fellow, Foresight, uncle, I mean; a very old fellow, uncle Foresight; and yet you shall live to dance at my wedding, faith you shall. We'll have the music of the spheres for thee, old Lilly, that we will; and thou shalt lead up a dance in *via lactea*.

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For. I'm thunderstruck! You are not married to my niece?

Sir S. Not absolutely married, uncle; but very near it; within a kiss of the matter, as you see. [*Kisses* ANGELICA.

Ang. 'Tis very true indeed, uncle; I hope you'll be my father, and give me.

Sir S. That he shall, or I'll burn his globes.—He shall be thy father: I'll make him thy father, and thou shalt make me a father, and I'll make thee a mother; and we'll beget sons and daughters enough to put the weekly bills out of countenance.

Scand. Death and hell! Where's Valentine? [*Exit.*

Mrs. For. This is so surprising——

Sir S. How! what does my aunt say? Surprising, aunt? not at all, for a young couple to make a match in winter!—It's a plot to undermine cold weather, and destroy that usurper of a bed called a warming-pan.

Mrs. For. I'm glad to hear you have so much fire in you, Sir Sampson.

Ben. Mess, I fear his fire's little better than tinder; mayhap it will only serve to light a match for somebody else. The young woman's a handsome young woman, I can't deny it; but father, if I might be your pilot in this case, you should not marry her. It is just the same thing as if so be you should sail as far as the Streights without provision.

Sir S. Who gave you authority to speak, sirrah? To your element, fish; be mute, fish, and to sea. Rule your helm, sirrah; don't direct me.

Ben. Well, well, take you care of your own helm; or you mayn't keep your new vessel steady.

Sir S. Why, you impudent tarpawling! sirrah, do you bring your forecastle jests upon your father? But I shall be even with you; I wont give you a groat. Mr. Buckram, is the conveyance so worded, that nothing can possibly descend to this scoundrel? I would not so much as have him have the prospect of an estate, though there were no way to come to it, but by the north-east passage.

Buck. Sir, it is drawn according to your directions; there is not the least part of the law unstopped.

Ben. Lawyer, I believe there's many a part and leak unstopped in your conscience! If so be that one had a pump to your bosom, I believe we should discover a foul hold. They say a witch will sail in a sieve—but I believe the devil would not venture aboard your conscience.—And that's for you.

Sir S. Hold your tongue, sirrah.—How now? who's here?

Enter TATTLE *and* MRS. FRAIL.

Mrs. F. O, sister, the most unlucky accident!

Mrs. For. What's the matter?

Tat. O, the two most unfortunate poor creatures in the world we are.

For. Bless us! how so?

Mrs. F. Ah, Mr. Tattle and I, poor Mr. Tattle and I are—I can't speak it out.

Tat. Nor I——But poor Mrs. Frail and I are——

Mrs. F. Married.

For. Married! How?

Tat. Suddenly——before we knew where we were—that villain Jeremy, by the help of disguises, tricked us into one another.

For. Why, you told me just now, you went hence in haste to be married!

Ang. But, I believe Mr. Tattle meant the favour to me, I thank him.

Tat. I did, as I hope to be saved, Madam; my intentions were good.——But this is the most cruel thing, to marry one does not know how, nor why, nor wherefore. The devil take me, if ever I was so much concerned at any thing in my life.

Ang. 'Tis very unhappy, if you don't care for one another.

Tat. The least in the world——that is, for my part, I speak for myself. Gad, I never had the least thought of serious kindness—I never liked any body less in my life. Poor woman! I'm sorry for her too; for I have no reason to hate her neither; but I believe I shall lead her a damned sort of a life.

Mrs. For. He's better than no husband at all——though he's a coxcomb. [*To* FRAIL.

Mrs. F. [*To her.*] Ay, ay, it's well it's no worse. Nay, for my part, I always despised Mr. Tattle of all things; nothing but his being my husband could have made me like him less.

Tat. Look you there, I thought as much!—Plague on't, I wish we could keep it secret; why, I don't believe any of this company would speak of it.

Ben. If you suspect me, friend, I'll go out of the room.

Mrs. F. But, my dear, that's impossible; the parson and that rogue Jeremy will publish it.

Tat. Ay, my dear, so they will, as you say.

Ang. O, you'll agree very well in a little time, custom will make it easy for you.

Tat. Easy! Plague on't, I don't believe I shall sleep to-night.

Sir S. Sleep! No, why you would not sleep on your wedding-night? I'm an older fellow than you, and don't mean to sleep.

Ben. Why, there's another match now, as if a couple of privateers were looking for a prize, and should fall foul of one another. I'm sorry for the young man with all my heart. Look you, friend, if I may advise you, when she's going—for that you must expect, I have experience of her—when she's going, let her go. For no matrimony is tough enough to hold her; and if she can't drag her anchor along with her, she'll break her cable, I can tell you that.——Who's here? the madman?

Enter VALENTINE, SCANDAL, *and* JEREMY.

Val. No; here's the fool; and, if occasion be, I'll give it under my hand.

Sir S. How now?

Val. Sir, I'm come to acknowledge my errors, and ask your pardon.

Sir S. What, have you found your senses at last then? In good time, Sir.

Val. You were abused, Sir; I never was distracted.

For. How! not mad, Mr. Scandal?

Scand. No, really, Sir; I'm his witness, it was all counterfeit.

Val. I thought I had reasons——but it was a poor contrivance: the effect has shown it such.

Sir S. Contrivance! what, to cheat me? to cheat your father! Sirrah, could you hope to prosper?

Val. Indeed I thought, Sir, when the father endeavoured to undo the son, it was a reasonable return of nature.

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Sir S. Very good, Sir. Mr. Buckram, are you ready? Come, Sir, will you sign and seal?

Val. If you please, Sir; but first I would ask this lady one question.

Sir S. Sir, you must ask me leave first—— That lady! No, Sir, you shall ask that lady no questions, till you have asked her blessing, Sir; that lady is to be my wife.

Val. I have heard as much, Sir; but I would have it from her own mouth.

Sir S. That's as much as to say, I lie, Sir; and you don't believe what I say.

Val. Pardon me, Sir. But I reflect that I very lately counterfeited madness: I don't know but the frolic may go round.

Sir S. Come, satisfy him, answer him.—— Come, Mr. Buckram, the pen and ink.

Buck. Here it is, Sir; with the deed; all is ready. [VAL. *goes to* ANG.

Ang. 'Tis true, you have a great while pretended love to me; nay, what if you were sincere. Still, you must pardon me, if I think my own inclinations have a better right to dispose of my person, than yours.

Sir S. Are you answered now, Sir?

Val. Yes, Sir.

Sir S. Where's your plot, Sir? and your contrivance now, Sir? Will you sign, Sir? Come, will you sign and seal?

Val. With all my heart.

Scand. 'Sdeath, you are not mad indeed? to ruin yourself.

Val. I have been disappointed of my only hope; and he that loses hope may part with any thing. I never valued fortune, but as it was subservient to my pleasure; and my only pleasure was to please this lady: I have made many vain attempts; and find at last that nothing but my ruin can effect it, which, for that reason I will sign to.——Give me the paper.

Ang. Generous Valentine! [*Aside.*

Buck. Here is the deed, Sir.

Val. But where is the bond, by which I am obliged to sign this?

Buck. Sir Sampson, you have it.

Ang. No, I have it; and I'll use it, as I would every thing that is an enemy to Valentine. [*Tears the paper.*

Sir S. How now?

Val. Ha!

Ang. Had I the world to give you, it could not make me worthy of so generous and faithful a passion. Here's my hand; my heart was always yours, and struggled hard to make this utmost trial of your virtue. [*To* VAL.

Val. Between pleasure and amazement I am lost—but on my knees I take the blessing.

Sir S. Zounds, what is the meaning of this?

Ben. Mess, here's the wind changed again. Father, you and I may make a voyage together now!

Ang. Well, Sir Sampson, since I have played you a trick, I'll advise you how you may avoid such another. Learn to be a good father, or you'll never get a second wife. I always loved your son, and hated your unforgiving nature. I was resolved to try him to the utmost; I have tried you too, and know you both. You have not more faults than he has virtues; and it is hardly more pleasure to me that I can make him and myself happy, than that I can punish you.

Val. If my happiness could receive addition; this kind surprise would make it double.

Sir S. You're a crocodile.

For. Really, Sir Sampson, this is a sudden eclipse.

Sir S. You're an illiterate old fool, and I'm another.

Tat. If the gentleman is in disorder for want of a wife, I can spare him mine. Oh, are you there, Sir? I am indebted to you for my happiness. [*To* JEREMY.

Jer. Sir, I ask you ten thousand pardons: it was an arrant mistake. You see, Sir, my master was never mad, nor any thing like it.—Then how can it be otherwise?

Val. Tattle, I thank you; you would have interposed between me and heaven: but Providence laid Purgatory in your way. You have but justice.

Scand. I hear the fiddles that Sir Sampson provided for his own wedding; methinks it is pity they should not be employed when the match is so much mended. Valentine, though it be morning we may have a dance.

Val. Any thing, my friend; every thing that looks like joy and transport.

Scand. Call them, Jeremy.

Ang. I have done dissembling now, Valentine; and if that coldness which I have always worn before you should turn to an extreme fondness, you must not suspect it.

Val. I'll prevent that suspicion—for I intend to doat to that immoderate degree, that your fondness shall never distinguish itself enough to be taken notice of. If ever you seem to love too much, it must be only when I can't love enough.

Ang. Have a care of promises: you know you are apt to run more in debt than you are able to pay.

Val. Therefore I yield myself as your prisoner, and make your best on't.

Scand. The music stays for you. [*A dance.* [*To* ANG.] Well, Madam, you have done exemplary justice in punishing an inhuman father, and rewarding a faithful lover: but there is a third good work, which I in particular must thank you for; I was an infidel to your sex, and you have converted me——for now I am convinced that all women are not, like fortune, blind in bestowing favours, either on those who do not merit, or who do not want them.

Ang. It is an unreasonable accusation, that you lay upon our sex. You tax us with injustice, only to cover your own want of merit. You would all have the reward of love; but few have the constancy to stay till it becomes your due. Men are generally hypocrites and infidels; they pretend to worship, but have neither zeal nor faith, How few, like Valentine, would persevere even to martyrdom, and sacrifice their interest to their constancy! In admiring me, you misplace the novelty.

The miracle to-day is that we find
A lover true; and that a woman's kind.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

EPILOGUE.

Sure Providence at first design'd this place
To be the player's refuge in distress;
For still, in every storm, they all run hither,
As to a shed, that shields them from the weather.
But thinking of this change which last befel us,
It's like what I have heard our poets tell us,

For when behind our scenes their suits are pleading,
To help their love, sometimes they show their [reading;
And, wanting ready cash to pay for hearts,
They top their learning on us, and their parts.
Once of philosophers they told us stories,
Whom, as I think, they call'd—Py—Pythagories,
I'm sure 'tis some such Latin name they give them,
And we, who know no better, must believe them.
Now to these men (say they) such souls were given,
That, after death, ne'er went to hell nor heaven.
But lived, I know not how, in beasts; and then,
When many years were pass'd, in men again.
Methinks, we players resemble such a soul;
That does from bodies, we from houses stroll.
Thus Aristotle's soul, of old that was,
May now be damn'd to animate an ass;
Or in this very house, for ought we know,
Is doing painful penance in some beau;
And thus our audience, which did once resort
To shining theatres, to see our sport,
Now find us toss'd into a tennis court!
These walls but t'other day were fill'd with noise
Of roaring gamesters, and your *damme boys;*
Then bounding balls and rackets they encompass'd;
And now they are fill'd with jests, and flights, and bombast!
I vow, I don't much like this transmigration,
Strolling from place to place, by circulation;
Grant Heaven, we don't return to our first station!
I know not what these think; but, for my part,
I can't reflect without an aching heart,
How we should end in, our original, a cart.
But we can't fear, since you're so good to save us,
That you have only set us up to leave us.
Thus, from the past, we hope for future grace,
I beg it——
And some here know I have a begging face.
Then pray continue this your kind behaviour;
For a clear stage wont do, without your favour.

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THE CHANCES:

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

ALTERED FROM BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER,

BY

HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM.

REMARKS.

AMONG the few dramas of our early writers which have maintained their station on the stage, this amusing comedy holds a distinguished place; and though it cannot be ranked with the *Volpone* and *Alchemist* of Jonson, or with a few others of the old masters, the propriety of the verdict which has established its reputation cannot fairly be disputed. Its plot is complicated, though not confused; its characters are well discriminated; its manners, being founded rather on nature than on any particular fashion or period, are calculated to be understood and to please in all countries and at all times. Such is the general character of the performance, which cannot fail to create an interest, and to raise a laugh, whenever it is represented on the stage. It is not, however, without its defects; and much as we may feel disposed to speak in its favour, candid criticism must admit, that neither its plot, its characters, nor its manners, are faultless.

Of the diction of this comedy it may be remarked, that it is surprisingly inconsistent with itself, and evidently betokening the drama to have been the work of two masters. The two first acts, and above half of the third, are written in the easy and familiar blank verse, which was so generally used by the dramatic writers of Elizabeth's and James's time, and which very probably may be preferred, at least for dramatic purposes, to prose. The remainder is of a totally different cast, being mere prose, monotonous, heavy, and inelegant enough.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DUKE OF FERRARA.
PETRUCHIO, Governor of Bologna.
DON JOHN, } two Spanish Gentlemen
DON FREDERICK, } and comrades.
ANTONIO, an old stout Gentleman, kinsman to Petruchio.
THREE GENTLEMEN, friends to the Duke.
THREE GENTLEMEN, friends to Petruchio.
FRANCISCO.
MUSICIAN.
ANTONIO'S BOY.
PETER, } servants to Don John and
ANTHONY, } Frederick.
SURGEON.
1ST CONSTANTIA, sister to Petruchio, and Mistress to the Duke.
KINSWOMAN.
LANDLADY to Don John and Frederick.
2d CONSTANTIA, whore to Antonio.
BAWD.
MOTHER-IN-LAW.

PROLOGUE.

OF all men, those have reason least to care
For being laugh'd at, who can laugh their share:
And that's a thing our author's apt to use,
Upon occasion, when no man can choose.
Suppose now at this instant one of you
Were tickled by a fool, what would you do?
'Tis ten to one you'd laugh: here's just the case.
For there are fools that tickle with their face.

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Your gay fool tickles with his dress and motions,
But your grave fool of fools with silly notions.
Is it not then unjust that fops should still
Force one to laugh, and then take laughing ill?
Yet since perhaps to some it gives offence,
That men are tickled at the want of sense;
Our author thinks he takes the readiest way
To show all he has laugh'd at here—fair play.
For if ill-writing be a folly thought,
Correcting ill is sure a greater fault.
Then, gallants, laugh; but choose the right place first,
For judging ill is of all faults the worst.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Enter PETER *and* ANTHONY.

Pet. Would we were removed from this town, Anthony,
That we might taste some quiet; for mine own part,
I'm almost melted with continual trotting
After inquiries, dreams, and revelations,
Of who knows whom or where. Serve wenching soldiers!
I'll serve a priest in Lent first, and eat bell-ropes.
Ant. Thou art the forwardest fool—
Pet. Why, good tame Anthony,
Tell me but this; to what end came we hither?
Ant. To wait upon our masters.
Pet. But how, Anthony?
Answer me that; resolve me there, good Anthony.
Ant. To serve their uses.
Pet. Show your uses, Anthony.
Ant. To be employ'd in any thing.
Pet. No, Anthony,
Not any thing, I take it, nor that thing
We travel to discover, like new islands;
A salt itch serve such uses! in things of moment,
Concerning things I grant ye, not things errant,
Sweet ladies' things, and things to thank the surgeon:
In no such things, sweet Anthony. Put case—
Ant. Come, come, all will be mended: this invisible woman,
Of infinite shape and beauty,
That bred all this trouble to no purpose,
They are determined now no more to think on.
Pet. Were there ever
Men known to run mad with report before?
Or wander after what they know not where
To find; or if found, how to enjoy? Are men's brains
Made now-a-days with malt, that their affections
Are never sober; but like drunken people
Founder at every new fame? I do believe
That men in love are ever drunk, as drunken men
Are ever loving.
Ant. Pr'ythee be thou sober,
And know that they are none of those, not guilty
Of the least vanity of love: only a doubt
Fame might too far report, or rather flatter
The graces of this woman, made them curious
To find the truth; which since they find so
Lock'd up from their searches, they are now resolved
To give the wonder over.
Pet. Would they were resolved
To give me some new shoes too; for I'll be sworn
These are e'en worn out to the reasonable soles
In their good worships' business: and some sleep
Would not do much amiss, unless they mean
To make a bell-man of me. Here they come.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter DON JOHN *and* DON FREDERICK.

John. I would we could have seen her though: for sure
She must be some rare creature, or report lies:
All men's reports too.
Fred. I could well wish I had seen Constantia:
But since she is so conceal'd, placed where
No knowledge can come near her, so guarded
As 'twere impossible, though known, to reach her,
I have made up my belief.
John. Hang me from this hour,
If I more think upon her:
But as she came a strange report unto me,
So the next fame shall lose her.
Fred. 'Tis the next way—
But whither are you walking?
John. My old round
After my meat, and then to bed.
Fred. 'Tis healthful.
John. Will you not stir?
Fred. I have a little business.
John. I'd lay my life, this lady still——
Fred. Then you would lose it.
John. Pray let's walk together.
Fred. Now I cannot.
John. I have something to impart.
Fred. An hour hence
I will not miss to meet ye.
John. Where?
Fred. I' th' high street:
For, not to lie, I have a few devotions
To do first, then I'm yours.
John. Remember. [*Exeunt.*

Enter PETRUCHIO, ANTONIO, *and two* GENTLEMEN.

Ant. Cut his wind-pipe, I say.
1st Gent. Fy, Antonio.
Ant. Or knock his brains out first, and then forgive him.
If you do thrust, be sure it be to the hilts,
A surgeon may see through him.
2d Gent. You are too violent.
1st Gent. Too open, indiscreet.
Petr. Am I not ruin'd?
The honour of my house crack'd? my blood poison'd?
My credit and my name?
2d Gent. Be sure it be so,
Before you use this violence. Let not doubt
And a suspecting anger so much sway ye,
Your wisdom may be question'd.
Ant. I say, kill him,

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And then dispute the cause; cut off what may
And what is, shall be safe. [be,
2d Gent. Hang up a true man,
Because 'tis possible he may be thievish:
Alas! is this good justice?
Petr. I know as certain
As day must come again, as clear as truth,
And open as belief can lay it to me,
That I am basely wrong'd, wrong'd above recompence,
Maliciously abused, blasted for ever
In name and honour, lost to all remembrance,
But what is smear'd and shameful: I must kill
Necessity compels me. [him;
2d Gent. But think better.
Petr. There's no other cure left; yet witness with me
All that is fair in man, all that is noble:
I am not greedy for this life I seek for,
Nor thirst to shed man's blood; and would 'twere possible,
I wish it with my soul, so much I tremble
T' offend the sacred image of my Maker,
My sword should only kill his crimes: no, 'tis
Honour, honour, my noble friends, that idol honour [truchio,
That all the world now worships, not Pe-
Must do this justice.
Ant. Let it once be done,
And 'tis no matter, whether you or honour,
Or both be accessary.
2d Gent. Do you weigh, Petruchio,
The value of the person, power and greatness,
And what this spark may kindle?
Petr. To perform it,
So much I am tied to reputation,
And credit of my house, let it raise wild-fires,
And storms that toss me into everlasting ruin,
Yet I must through; if ye dare side me.
Ant. Dare!
Petr. Y' are friends indeed: if not!
2d Gent. Here's none flies from you;
Do it in what design you please, we'll back ye.
1st Gent. Is the cause so mortal? nothing but his life?
Petr. Believe me,
A less offence had been the desolation
Of a whole name.
1st Gent. No other way to purge it?
Petr. There is, but never to be hoped for.
2d Gent. Think an hour more,
And if then you find no safer road to guide ye,
We'll set our rests too.
Ant. Mine's up already,
And hang him, for my part, goes less than life.
2d Gent. If we see noble cause, 'tis like our swords
May be as free and forward as your words.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter Don John.

John. The civil order of this city Naples
Makes it beloved and honour'd of all travellers,
As a most safe retirement in all troubles;
Beside the wholesome seat and noble temper
Of those minds that inhabit it, safely wise,
And to all strangers courteous. But I see
My admiration has drawn night upon me,
And longer to expect my friends may pull me
Into suspicion of too late a stirrer,
Which all good governments are jealous of.
I'll home, and think at liberty: yet certain,
'Tis not so far night as I thought; for see,
A fair house yet stands open, yet all about it
Are close, and no lights stirring; there may be foul play;
I'll venture to look in. If there be knaves
I may do a good office.
Within. Signior!
John. What! How is this?
Within. Signior Fabritio!
John. I'll go nearer.
Within. Fabritio!
John. This is a woman's tongue; here may be good done.
Within. Who's there? Fabritio?
John. Ay.
Within. Where are you?
John. Here.
Within. O, come for Heaven's sake!
John. I must see what this means.

Enter a Woman *with a Child.*

Wom. I have stayed this long hour for you; make no noise;
For things are in strange trouble. Here, be secret.
'Tis worth your care: begone now; more eyes watch us
Than may be for our safeties.
John. Hark ye.
Wom. Peace; good night.
John. She's gone, and I am loaden. Fortune for me!
It weighs well and it feels well; it may chance
To be some pack of worth; by the mass 'tis heavy!
If it be coin or jewels, it is worth welcome.
I'll ne'er refuse a fortune: I am confident
'Tis of no common price. Now to my lodging:
If it be right I'll bless this night. [*Exit.*

Enter Don Frederick.

Fred. 'Tis strange.
I cannot meet him; sure he has encounter'd
Some light of love or other, and there means
To play at in and in for this night. Well, Don John,
If you do spring a leak, or get an itch,
Till you claw off your curled pate, thank your night-walks;
You must be still a boot-haling. One round more,
Though it be late, I'll venture to discover ye.
I do not like your out-leaps. [*Exit.*

Enter Duke *and three* Gentlemen.

Duke. Welcome to town. Are ye all fit?
1st Gent. To point, Sir.
Duke. Where are the horses?
2d Gent. Where they were appointed.
Duke. Be private: and whatsoever fortune
Offers itself, let us stand sure.
3d Gent. Fear us not.
Ere you shall be endanger'd or deluded,
We'll make a black night on't.
Duke. No more, I know it;
You know your quarters.
1st Gent. Will you go alone, Sir?
Duke. Ye shall not be far from me, the least noise
Shall bring ye to my rescue.
2d Gent. We are counsell'd. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Don John.

John. Was ever man so paid for being curious?

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Ever so bobb'd for searching out adventures,
As I am? Did the devil lead me! Must I needs be peeping
Into men's houses where I had no business,
And make myself a mischief? 'Tis well carried!
I must take other men's occasions on me,
And be I know not whom: most finely handled! [purchase?
What have I got by this now? What's the
A piece of evening arras-work, a child,
Indeed an infidel! This comes of peeping!
A lump got out of laziness! Good white bread,
Let's have no bawling with ye. 'Sdeath, have I
Known wenches thus long, all the ways of wenches,
Their snares and subtleties! Have I read over
All their school-learning, dived into their quiddits,
And am I now bumfiddled with a bastard?
Fetch'd over with a card of five, and in my old
After the dire massacre of a million [days,
Of maidenheads, caught the common way, i' the night too,
Under another's name, to make the matter
Carry more weight about it? Well, Don John,
You will be wiser one day, when ye've purchased
A bevy of those butter prints together,
With searching out concealed iniquities,
Without commission. Why it would never grieve me,
If I had got this gingerbread; never stirred me. [justice
So I had had a stroke for it; 't had been
Then to have kept it: but to raise a dairy,
For other men's adultery, consume myself in candles, [bies,
And scouring work, in nurses, bells, and ba-
Only for charity, for mere I thank you,
A little troubles me: the least touch for it,
Had but my breeches got it, it had contented me,
Whose e'er it is, sure it had a wealthy mother,
For 'tis well clothed, and if I be not cozen'd,
Well lined within. To leave it here were barbarous,
And ten to one would kill it; a worse sin
Than his that got it. Well, I will dispose on't,
And keep it, as they keep death's heads in rings,
To cry *memento* to me—no more peeping.
Now all the danger is to qualify [live;
The good old gentlewoman at whose house we
For she will fall upon me with a catechism
Of four hours long: I must endure all;
For I will know this mother. Come, good wonder,
Let you and I be jogging; your starved treble
Will waken the rude watch else. All that be
Curious night-walkers, may they find my fee.
[*Exit.*

Enter DON FREDERICK.

Fred. Sure he's gone home:
I have beaten all the purlieus,
But cannot bolt him. If he be a-bobbing,
'Tis not my care can cure him: to-morrow morning
I shall have further knowledge from a surgeon,
Where he lies moor'd to mend his leaks.

Enter 1st CONSTANTIA.

Con. I am ready:
And through a world of dangers am flown to ye.
Be full of haste and care, we are undone else.
Where are your people? Which way must we travel?
For Heaven's sake stay not here, Sir.
Fred. What may this prove?
Con. Alas! I am mistaken, lost, undone,
For ever perished! Sir, for Heaven's sake, tell me,
Are ye a gentleman?
Fred. I am.
Con. Of this place?
Fred. No, born in Spain.
Con. As ever you loved honour,
As ever your desires may gain their end,
Do a poor wretched woman but this benefit,
For I'm forced to trust ye.
Fred. Y' have charmed me.
Humanity and honour bids me help ye;
And if I fail your trust——
Con. The time's too dangerous
To stay your protestations: I believe ye.
Alas! I must believe ye. From this place,
Good, noble Sir, remove me instantly.
And for a time, where nothing but yourself,
And honest conversation may come near me,
In some secure place settle me. What I am,
And why thus boldly I commit my credit
Into a stranger's hand, the fears and dangers
That force me to this wild course, at more leisure
I shall reveal unto you.
Fred. Come, be hearty,
He must strike through my life that takes you from me. [*Exeunt.*

Enter PETRUCHIO, ANTONIO, *and two* GENTLEMEN.

Petr. He will sure come: are ye all well armed?
Ant. Never fear us: [fiddle.
Here's that will make 'em dance without a
Petr. We are to look for no weak foes, my friends,
Nor unadvised ones.
Ant. Best gamesters make the best play;
We shall fight close and home them.
1st *Gent.* Antonio,
You are thought too bloody.
Ant. Why? All physicians
And penny almanacs allow the opening
Of veins this month. Why do you talk of bloody?
What come we for? to fall to cuffs for apples?
What, would you make the cause a cudgel-quarrel?
Petr. Speak softly, gentle cousin.
Ant. I will speak truly.
What should men do, allied to these disgraces,
Lick o'er his enemy, sit down and dance him?
2d *Gent.* You are as far o' th' bow-hand now.
Ant. And cry, [child?
That's my fine boy; thou wilt do so no more,
Petr. Here are no such cold pities.
Ant. By St. Jaques, [Andrew,
They shall not find me one! Here's old tough
A special friend of mine, and he but hold,
I'll strike them such a hornpipe! Knocks I come for,
And the best blood I light on: I profess it,
Not to scare costermongers. If I lose my own,
My audit's lost, and farewell five-and-fifty.
Petr. Let's talk no longer. Place yourselves with silence
As I directed ye; and when time calls us,
As ye are friends, to show yourselves.
Ant. So be it. [*Exeunt.*

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Enter DON JOHN *and his* LANDLADY.

Land. Nay, son, if this be your regard—.
John. Good mother—
Land. Good me no goods—Your cousin and yourself [selves
Are welcome to me, whilst you bear your-
Like honest and true gentlemen. Bring hither
To my house, that have ever been reputed
A gentlewoman of a decent and a fair carriage,
And so behaved myself——
John. I know you have.
Land. Bring hither, as I say, to make my name
Stink in my neighbour's nostrils, your devices,
Your brats got out of alligant and broken oaths,
Your linsey-woolsey work, your hasty pud- [dings!
I foster up your filch'd iniquities!
You're deceived in me, Sir, I am none
Of those receivers.
John. Have I not sworn unto you, [it?
'Tis none of mine, and show'd you how I found
Land. Ye found an easy fool that let you get it.
John. Will you hear me?
Land. Oaths! what care you for oaths to gain your ends;
When ye are high and pamper'd? What saint know ye?
Or what religion, but your purposed lewdness,
Is to be look'd for of ye? Nay, I will tell ye—
You will then swear like accused cut-purses,
As far off truth too; and lie beyond all falcon- [ers:
I'm sick to see this dealing.
John. Heaven forbid, mother.
Land. Nay, I am very sick.
John. Who waits there?
Pet. [*Within.*] Sir!
John. Bring down the bottle of Canary wine.
Land. Exceeding sick, Heaven help me!
John. Haste ye, sirrah.
I must e'en make her drunk. [*Aside.*] Nay, gentle mother—
Land. Now fy upon ye! was it for this purpose [votions?
You fetch'd your evening walks for your de-
For this pretended holiness? No weather,
Not before day, could hold you from the matins. [well,
Were these your bo-peep prayers? Y'ave pray'd
And with a learned zeal have watch'd well too; your saint,
It seems, was pleased as well. Still sicker, sicker!

Enter PETER *with a bottle of wine.*

John. There is no talking to her till I have drench'd her. [draught.
Give me. Here, mother, take a good round
It will purge spleen from your spirits: deeper, mother.
Land. Ay, ay, son; you imagine this will mend all.
John. All, i' faith, mother.
Land. I confess the wine
Will do his part.
John. I'll pledge ye.
Land. But, son John—
John. I know your meaning, mother; touch it once more.
Alas! you look not well, take a round draught,
It warms the blood well, and restores the col- [our,
And then we'll talk at large.
Land. A civil gentleman! [of!
A stranger! one the town holds a good regard
John. Nay, I will silence thee there.
Land. One that should weigh his fair name! —Oh, a stitch!
John. There's nothing better for a stitch, good mother,
Make no spare of it, as you love your health;
Mince not the matter.
Land. As I said, a gentleman
Lodger'd in my house! Now Heaven's my comfort, signior!
John. I looked for this.
Land. I did not think you would have used me thus;
A woman of my credit, one, Heaven knows,
That loves you but too tenderly.
John. Dear mother, [it.
I ever found your kindness, and acknowledge
Land. No, no, I am a fool to counsel ye. Where's the infant?
Come, let's see your workmanship.
John. None of mine, mother:
But there 'tis, and a lusty one.
Land. Heaven bless thee,
Thou hadst a hasty making: but the best is,
'Tis many a good man's fortune. As I live,
Your own eyes, signior; and the nether lip
As like ye, as ye had spit it.
John. I am glad on't.
Land. Bless me! what things are these?
John. I thought my labour
Was not all lost: 'tis gold, and these are
Both rich and right, I hope. [jewels,
Land. Well, well, son John,
I see y'ere a woodman, and can choose
Your deer, though it be i' th' dark; all your discretion
Is not yet lost; this was well clapp'd aboard;
Here I am with ye now, when, as they say,
Your pleasure comes with profit; when you must needs do,
Do where you may be done to; 'tis a wisdom
Becomes a young man well: be sure of one thing,
Lose not your labour and your time together;
It seasons of a fool, son; time is precious,
Work wary whilst you have it. Since you must traffic [signior;
Sometimes this slippery way, take sure hold,
Trade with no broken merchants; make your lading
As you would make your rest, adventurously,
But with advantage ever.
John. All this time, mother, [nurses.
The child wants looking to, wants meat and
Land. Now blessing o' thy heart, it shall have all;
And instantly I'll seek a nurse myself, son.
'Tis a sweet child—Ah, my young Spaniard!
Take you no farther care, Sir.
John. Yes, of these jewels, [yours,
I must by your good leave, mother; these are
To make your care the stronger; for the rest,
I'll find a master; the gold for bringing up
I freely render to your charge. [on't,
Land. No more words,
Nor no more children, good son, as you love
This may do well. [me:
John. I shall observe your morals.
But where's Don Frederick, mother?
Land. Ten to one,
About the like adventure; he told me,
He was to find you out.
John. Why should he stay us?
There may be some ill chance in it: sleep I will not, [pleased,
Before I have found him. Now this woman's
I'll seek my friend out, and my care is eased.
[*Exeunt.*

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Enter DUKE *and three* GENTLEMEN.

1st Gent. Believe, Sir, 'tis as possible to do it,
As to move the city: the main faction
Swarm through the streets like hornets, and with augurs
Able to ruin states, no safety left us,
Nor means to die like men, if instantly
You draw not back again.
Duke. May he be drawn,
And quarter'd too, that turns now; were I surer [death
Of death than thou art o' thy fears, and with
More than those fears are too——
1st Gent. Sir, I fear not.
Duke. I would not break my vow, start from my honour,
Because I may find danger; wound my soul
To keep my body safe.
1st Gent. I speak not, Sir,
Out of a baseness to ye.
Duke. No, nor do not
Out of a baseness leave me. What is danger
More than the weakness of our apprehensions?
A poor cold part o' th' blood. Who takes it hold of?
Cowards and wicked livers; valiant minds
Were made masters of it: and as hearty seamen
In desperate storms stem with a little rudder
The tumbling ruins of the ocean;
So with their cause and swords do they do dangers.
Say we were sure to die all in this venture,
As I am confident against it; is there any
Amongst us of so fat a sense, so pamper'd,
Would choose luxuriously to lie a-bed,
And purge away his spirits; send his soul out
In sugar-sops and sirups? Give me dying
As dying ought to be, upon mine enemy;
Parting with mankind, by a man that's manly?
Let them be all the world, and bring along
Cain's envy with them, I will on.
2d Gent. You may, Sir,
But with what safety?
1st Gent. Since 'tis come to dying,
You shall perceive, Sir, that here be those amongst us,
Can die as decently as other men,
And with as little ceremony. On, brave Sir.
Duke. That's spoken heartily.
1st Gent. And he that flinches,
May he die lousy in a ditch.
Duke. No more dying
There's no such danger in't. What's o'clock?
3d Gent. Somewhat above your hour.
Duke. Away then quickly,
Make no noise, and no trouble will attend us. [*Exeunt.*

Enter FREDERICK *and* ANTHONY *with a Candle.*

Fred. Give me the candle; so, go you out that way.
Ant. What have we now to do?
Fred. And on your life, sirrah,
Let none come near the door without my knowledge:
No, not my landlady, nor my friend.
Ant. 'Tis done, Sir.
Fred. Nor any serious business that concerns me.
Ant. Is the wind there again?
Fred. Be gone.
Ant. I am, Sir. [*Exit.*
Fred. Now enter without fear——

Enter 1st CONSTANTIA *with a jewel.*

And, noble lady,
That safety and civility ye wish for
Shall truly here attend you; no rude tongue
Nor rough behaviour knows this place; no wishes,
Beyond the moderation of a man,
Dare enter here. Your own desires and innocence, [ye.
Join'd to my vow'd obedience, shall protect
Con. Ye are truly noble,
And worth a woman's trust: let it become me:
(I do beseech you, Sir) for all your kindness,
To render with my thanks this worthless trifle—
I may be longer troublesome.
Fred. Fair offices
Are still their own rewards: Heavens bless me, lady, [ye,
From selling civil courtesies. May it please
If ye will force a favour to oblige me,
Draw but that cloud aside, to satisfy me
For what good angel I am engaged.
Con. It shall be;
For I am truly confident ye are honest.
The piece is scarce worth looking on.
Fred. Trust me,
The abstract of all beauty, soul of sweetness!
Defend me, honest thoughts, I shall grow wild else.
What eyes are there! rather what little heavens,
To stir men's contemplation! What a Paradise
Runs through each part she has! Good blood, be temperate!
I must look off: too excellent an object
Confounds the sense that sees it. Noble lady,
If there be any further service to cast on me,
Let it be worth my life, so much I honour ye,
Or the engagements of whole families.
Con. Your service is too liberal, worthy Sir.
Thus far I shall entreat—
Fred. Command me, lady:
You may make your power too poor.
Con. That presently,
With all convenient haste, you will retire
Unto the street you found me in.
Fred. 'Tis done.
Con. There if you find a gentleman oppress'd
With force and violence, do a man's office,
And draw your sword to rescue him.
Fred. He's safe,
Be what he will, and let his foes be devils,
Arm'd with your beauty I shall conjure them,
Retire, this key will guide ye: all things necessary
Are there before ye.
Con. All my prayers go with ye. [*Exit.*
Fred. Ye clap on proof upon me. Men say, gold [gers:
Does all, engages all, works through all dan-
Now I say, beauty can do more. The king's exchequer,
Nor all his wealthy Indies, could not draw me [ure
Through half those miseries this piece of pleas-
Might make me leap into: we are all like sea-charts,
All our endeavours and our motions
(As they do to the north) still point at beauty,

Still at the fairest; for a handsome woman,
(Setting my soul aside) it should go hard
But I will strain my body; yet to her,
Unless it be her own free gratitude.
Hopes, ye shall die, and thou, tongue, rot within me,
Ere I infringe my faith. Now to my rescue. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Enter* DUKE, *pursued by* PETRUCHIO, ANTONIO, *and that Faction.*

Duke. You will not all oppress me?
Ant. Kill him i' the wanton eye:
Let me come to him.
Duke. Then you shall buy me dearly.
Petr. Say you so, Sir?
Ant. I say, cut his wezand, spoil his peeping;
Have at your love-sick heart, Sir.

Enter DON JOHN.

John. Sure 'tis fighting!
My friend may be engaged. Fy, gentlemen,
This is unmanly odds.
[DUKE *falls;* DON JOHN *bestrides him.*
Ant. I'll stop your mouth, Sir.
John. Nay, then have at thee freely.
There's a plumb, Sir, to satisfy your longing.
Petr. Away; I hope I have sped him: here comes rescue.
We shall be endanger'd. Where's Antonio?
Ant. I must have one thrust more, Sir.
John. Come up to me.
Ant. A mischief confound your fingers.
Petr. How is it?
Ant. Well:
He has given me my *quietus est;* I felt him
In my small guts; I'm sure he's feez'd me;
This comes of siding with you.
2d Gent. Can you go, Sir?
Ant. I shall go, man, and my head were off;
Never talk of going.
Petr. Come, all shall be well then.
I hear more rescue coming. [*Trampling within.*

Enter the DUKE'S *faction.*

Ant. Let's turn back then;
My skull's uncloven yet, let me kill.
Petr. Away, for Heaven's sake, with him.
[*Exit cum suis.*
John. How is it?
Duke. Well, Sir,
Only a little stagger'd.
Duke's fact. Let's pursue them.
Duke. No, not a man, I charge ye. Thanks, good coat,
Thou hast saved me a shrewd welcome: 'twas put home,
With a good mind too, I'm sure on't.
John. Are you safe then?
Duke. My thanks to you, brave Sir, whose timely valour
And manly courtesy came to my rescue.
John. Ye had foul play offer'd ye, and shame befal him
That can pass by oppression.
Duke. May I crave, Sir,
By this much honour more, to know your name,
And him I am so bound to?
John. For the bond, Sir,
'Tis every good man's tie: to know me further,
Will little profit you; I am a stranger,
My country Spain, my name Don John, a gentleman
That came abroad to travel
Duke. I have heard, Sir,
Much worthy mention of ye, yet I find
Fame short of what ye are.
John. You are pleased, Sir,
To express your courtesy: may I demand
As freely what you are, and what mischance
Cast you into this danger?
Duke. For this present
I must desire your pardon: you shall know me,
Ere it be long, Sir, and nobler thanks,
Than now my will can render.
John. Your will's your own, Sir.
Duke. What is't you look for, Sir? Have you lost any thing!
John. Only my hat i' th' scuffle; sure these fellows
Were night-snaps.
Duke. No, believe me, Sir: pray use mine,
For 'twill be hard to find your own now.
John. No, Sir.
Duke. Indeed you shall; I can command another:
I do beseech you honour me.
John. Well, Sir, then I will,
And so I'll take my leave.
Duke. Within these few days
I hope I shall be happy in your knowledge,
Till when I love your memory. [*Exit cum suis.*

Enter FREDERICK.

John. I'm yours.
This is some noble fellow!
Fred. 'Tis his tongue sure.
Don John!
John. Don Frederick!
Fred. Y' are fairly met, Sir!
I thought ye had been a bat-fowling. Pr'ythee tell me.
What revelation hast thou had to-night,
That home was never thought on?
John. Revelations!
I'll tell thee, Frederick; but before I tell thee,
Settle thy understanding.
Fred. 'Tis prepared, Sir.
John. Why then mark what shall follow
This night, Frederick, this bawdy night—
Fred. I thought no less.
John. This blind night,
What dost thou think I have got?
Fred. The pox, it may be.
John. Would 'twere no worse: ye talk of revelations,
I have got a revelation will reveal me
An arrant coxcomb whilst I live.
Fred. What is't?
Thou hast lost nothing?
John. No, I have got, I tell thee.
Fred. What hast thou got?
John. One of the infantry, a child.
Fred. How!
John. A chopping child, man.
Fred. Give you joy, Sir.
John. A lump of lewdness, Frederick; that's the truth on't.
This town's abominable.
Fred. I still told ye, John,
Your whoring must come home; I counsell'd ye:
But where no grace is——
John. 'Tis none of mine, man.
Fred. Answer the parish so.
John. Cheated in troth
(Peeping into a house) by whom I know not,
Nor where to find the place again; so, Frederick,
'Tis no poor one,
That's my best comfort, for 't has brought about it
Enough to make it man.
Fred. Where is't?
John. At home.

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Fred. A saving voyage; but what will you say, Signior,
To him that searching out your serious worship,
Has met a strange fortune?
John. How, good Frederick?
A militant girl to this boy would hit it.
Fred. No, mine's a nobler venture: what do you think, Sir,
Of a distressed lady, one whose beauty
Would oversell all Italy?
John. Where is she?
Fred. A woman of that rare behaviour,
So qualified, as admiration
Dwells round about her; of that perfect spirit—
John. Ay, marry, Sir.
Fred. That admirable carriage, [morning,
That sweetness in discourse; young as the
Her blushes staining his.
John. But where's this creature?
Show me but that.
Fred. That's all one; she's forthcoming.
I have her sure, boy.
John. Hark ye, Frederick;
What truck betwixt my infant?
Fred. 'Tis too light, Sir; [well.
Stick to your charge, good Don John; I am
John. But is there such a wench?
Fred. First tell me this;
Did you not lately, as you walk'd along,
Discover people that were armed, and likely
To do offence?
John. Yes, marry, and they urged it
As far as they had spirit.
Fred. Pray go forward.
John. A gentleman I found engaged amongst 'em.
It seems of noble breeding, I'm sure brave metal;
As I returned to look you, I set into him,
And without hurt, I thank Heaven, rescued him.
Fred. My work's done then;
And now to satisfy you, there is a woman——
Oh, John, there is a woman——
John. Oh, where is she?
Fred. And one of no less worth than I told;
And which is more, fallen under my protection.
John. I am glad of that; forward, sweet Frederick.
Fred. And which is more than that, by this night's wandering;
And which is most of all, she is at home, too, Sir.
John. Come, let's begone then.
Fred. Yes, but 'tis most certain
You cannot see her, John.
John. Why?
Fred. She has sworn me, [mother,
That none else shall come near her; not my
'Till some doubts are cleared.
John. Not look upon her? What chamber is she in?
Fred. In ours.
John. Let us go, I say? [making.
A woman's oaths are wafers, and break with
They must for modesty a little: We all know it.
Fred. No, I'll assure ye, Sir.
John. Not see her! [derick,
I smell an old dog-trick of yours. Well, Fre-
Ye talk'd to me of whoring; let's have fair
Square-dealing, I would wish ye. [play,
Fred. When 'tis come
(Which I know never will be) to that issue,
Your spoon shall be as deep as mine, Sir.
John. Tell me,
And tell me true, is the cause honourable,
Or for your ease?
Fred. By all our friendship, John,
'Tis honest and of great end.
John. I'm answer'd; [open
But let me see her, though; leave the door
As you go in.
Fred. I dare not.
John. Not wide open,
But just so as a jealous husband
Would level at his wanton wife through.
Fred. That courtesy,
If you desire no more, and keep it strictly,
I dare afford ye: come, 'tis now near morning.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter PETER *and* ANTHONY.

Pet. Nay, the old woman's gone too.
Ant. She's a caterwauling
Amongst the gutters. But conceive me, Peter,
Where our good masters should be.
Pet. Where they should be, [thony—
I do conceive; but where they are, good An-
Ant. Ay, there it goes: my master's bo-peep with me,
With his sly popping in and out again,
Argued a cause—Hark! [*Lute sounds.*
Pet. What?
Ant. Dost not hear a lute?
Again!
Pet. Where is't?
Ant. Above, in my master's chamber.
Pet. There's no creature: he hath the key
Man. [himself,
Ant. This is his lute, let him have it.
[*Sings within a little.*
Pet. I grant ye; but who strikes it?
Ant. An admirable voice too, hark ye.
Pet. Anthony,
Art sure we are at home?
Ant. Without all doubt, Peter.
Pet. Then this must be the devil.
Ant. Let it be.
Good devil, sing again: O dainty devil,
Peter, believe it, a most delicate devil,
The sweetest devil——

Enter FREDERICK *and* DON JOHN.

Fred. If you would leave peeping.
John. I cannot by no means.
Fred. Then come in softly;
And as you love your faith, presume no further
Than ye have promised.
John. *Basco.*
Fred. What makes you up so early, Sir?
John. You, Sir, in your contemplations?
Pet. O pray ye peace, Sir!
Fred. Why peace, Sir?
Pet. Do you hear?
John. 'Tis your lute: she's playing on't.
Ant. The house is haunted, Sir:
For this we have heard this half hour.
Fred. Ye saw nothing.
Ant. Not I.
Pet. Nor I, Sir.
Fred. Get your breakfast then,
And make no words on't: we'll undertake this spirit,
If it be one.
Ant. This is no devil, Peter!
Mum! there be bats abroad. [*Exeunt ambo.*
Fred. Stay, now she sings.
John. An angel's voice, I'll swear.

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Fred. Why dost thou shrug so?
Either allay this heat, or, as I live,
I will not trust ye.
John. Pass, I warrant ye. [*Exeunt.*

Enter 1*st* CONSTANTIA.

Con. To curse those stars that men say govern us,
To rail at fortune, to fall out with my fate,
And tax the general world, will help me nothing:
Alas! I am the same still: neither are they
Subject to helps or hurts; our own desires
Are our own fates, and our own stars all our fortune;
Which, as we sway 'em, so abuse or bless us.

Enter FREDERICK, *and* DON JOHN *peeping.*

Fred. Pence to your meditations.
John. Pox upon ye,
Stand out of the light.
Con. I crave your mercy, Sir!
My mind, o'ercharged with care, made me unmannerly.
Fred. Pray ye set that mind at rest, all shall be perfect.
John. I like the body rare; a handsome body, [turn;
A wondrous handsome body: would she would
See, and that spiteful puppy be not get
Between me and my light again.
Fred. 'Tis done,
As all that you command shall be:
The gentleman is safely off all danger.
John. Rare creature!
Con. How shall I thank ye, Sir? how satisfy?
Fred. Speak softly, gentle lady; all's rewarded.
Now does he melt like marmalade.
John. Nay, 'tis certain,
Thou art the sweetest woman that eyes e'er look'd on.
Fred. Has none disturbed ye?
Con. Not any, Sir, nor any sound came near me;
I thank your care. [
Fred. 'Tis well.
John. I would fain pray now,
But the devil, and that flesh there o' the world——
What are we made to suffer?
Fred. He'll enter——
Pull in your head, and be hang'd.
John. Hark ye, Frederick,
I have brought you home your pack saddle.
Fred. Pox upon ye.
Con. Nay, let him enter—Fy, my lord the duke,
Stand peeping at your friends. [
Fred. Ye are cozen'd, lady,
Here is no duke.
Con. I know him full well, Signior.
John. Hold thee there, wench.
Fred. This mad-brain'd fool will spoil all.
Con. I do beseech your grace come in.
John. My grace!
There was a word of comfort.
Fred. Shall he enter,
Whoe'er he be?
John. Well follow'd, Frederick.
Con. With all my heart.

Enter DON JOHN.

Fred. Come in then.
John. Bless ye, lady.
Fred. Nay, start not; though he be a stranger to ye,
He's of a noble strain, my kinsman, lady,
My countryman, and fellow traveller;
One bed contains us ever, one purse feeds us,
And one faith free between us: do not fear him,
He's truly honest.
John. That's a lie.
Fred. And trusty,
Beyond your wishes: valiant to defend,
And modest to converse with as your blushes.
John. Now may I hang myself: this commendation
Has broke the neck of all my hopes: for now
Must I cry, no forsooth, and ay forsooth, and surely,
And truly as I live, and as I am honest.
He's done these things for nonce too; for he knows,
Like a most envious rascal as he is,
I am not honest
This way: he 'as watch'd his time
But I shall quit him.
Con. Sir, I credit ye.
Fred. Go, salute her, John.
John. Plague o' your commendations.
Con. Sir, I shall now desire to be a trouble.
John. Never to me, sweet lady; thus I seal
My faith, and all my services.
Con. One word, Signior.
John. Now 'tis impossible I should be honest.
What points she at? my leg, I warrant; or
My well knit body: sit fast, Don Frederick.
Fred. 'Twas given him by that gentleman
You took such care of; his own being lost i' th' scuffle.
Con. With much joy may he wear it; 'tis a right one,
I can assure ye, gentlemen, and right happy
May he be in all fights for that noble service.
Fred. Why do you blush?
Con. It had almost cozen'd me;
For, not to lie when I saw that, I looked for
Another owner of it; but 'tis well.
Fred. Who's there? [*Knocks within.*
Stand ye a little close. Come in, Sir.
[*Exit* CON.

Enter ANTHONY.

Now what's the news with you?
Ant. There is a gentleman without
Would speak with Don John.
John. Who, Sir?
Ant. I do not know, Sir; but he shows a man
Of no mean reckoning. [
Fred. Let him show his name,
And then return a little wiser.
[*Exit* ANTHONY.
How do you like her, John?
John. As well as you, Frederick.
For all I am honest; you shall find it too.
Fred. Art thou not honest?
John. Art thou an ass?
And modest as her blushes! What blockhead
Would e'er have popp'd out such a dry apology
For his dear friend? and to a gentlewoman,
A woman of her youth and delicacy?
They are arguments to draw them to abhor us.
An honest moral man! 'tis for a constable;
A handsome man, a wholesome man, a tough man,
A liberal man, a likely man, a man
Made up like Hercules, unslack'd with service; [night,
The same to-night, to-morrow night, the next
And so to perpetuity of pleasures:
These had been things to hearken to, things catching;

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But you have such a spiced consideration,
Such qualms upon your worship's conscience,
Such chilblains in your blood, that all things prick ye,
Which nature and the liberal world make custom;
And nothing but fair honour, O sweet honour,
Hang up your eunuch honour. That I was trusty, modest!
And valiant, were things well put in; but
A modest gentleman! O, wit, where wast thou?

Fred. I am sorry, John.

John. My lady's gentlewoman
Would laugh me to a school-boy, make me blush
With playing with my cod-piece point: fy on thee,
A man of thy discretion!

Fred. It shall be mended;
And henceforth ye shall have your due.

Enter ANTHONY.

John. I look for't. How now, who is't?

Ant. A gentleman of this city,
And calls himself Petruchio.

John. I'll attend him.

Enter 1st CONSTANTIA.

Con. How did he call himself?

Fred. Petruchio.
Does it concern ye ought?

Con. O, gentlemen,
The hour of my destruction is come on me,
I am discovered, lost, left to my ruin—
As ever ye have pity——

John. Do not fear.
Let the great devil come, he shall come through me first:
Lost here, and we about ye!

Fred. Fall before us!

Con. O my unfortunate estate, all angers
Compared to his, to his——

Fred. Let his and all men's,
Whilst we have power and life, stand up for Heaven's sake,

Con. I have offended Heaven too; yet Heaven knows—

John. We are all evil:
Yet Heaven forbid we should have our deserts.
What is he?

Con. Too, too near my offence, Sir:
O, he will cut me piece-meal.

Fred. 'Tis no treason?

John. Let it be what it will? if he cut here,
I'll find him cut work.

Fred. He must buy you dear,
With more than common lives.

John. Fear not, nor weep not:
By Heaven, I'll fire the town before ye perish,
And then the more the merrier, we'll jog with ye.

Fred. Come in, and dry your eyes.

John. Pray, no more weeping:
Spoil a sweet face for nothing! My return
Shall end all this, I warrant ye.

Con. Heaven grant it may. [*Exeunt.*

Enter PETRUCHIO *with a letter.*

Petr. This man should be of quality and worth
By Don Alvaro's letter, for he gives
No slight recommendations of him:
I'll e'en make use of him.

Enter DON JOHN.

John. Save ye, Sir. I am sorry
My business was so unmannerly, to make ye
Wait thus long here.

Petr. Occasions must be served, Sir;
But is your name Don John?

John. It is, Sir.

Petr. Then, ye;
First for your own brave sake I must embrace
Next for the credit of your noble friend,
Hernanda de Alvaro, make ye mine:
Who lays his charge upon me in his letter
To look ye out, and
Whilst your occasions make you resident
In this place, to supply ye, love and honour ye.

John. Had I known sooner——
Which noble Sir,
You'll make my thanks too poor; I wear a sword, Sir,
And have a service to be still disposed of,
As you shall please command it.

Petr. That manly courtesy is half my business, Sir: ye,
And to be short, to make ye know I honour
And in all points believe your worth like oracle,
This day, Petruchio,
A man that may command the strength of this place,
Hazard the boldest spirits, hath made choice
Only of you, and in a noble office.

John. Forward, I am free to entertain it.

Petr. Thus then,
I do beseech ye mark me.

John. I shall, Sir.

Petr. Ferrara's Duke, would I might call him worthy,
But that he has razed out from his family,
As he has mine with infamy; this man,
Rather this powerful monster, we being left
But two of all our house to stock our memories,
My sister Constantia and myself, with arts and witchcrafts, for,
Vows and such oaths Heaven has no mercy
Drew to dishonour this weak maid by stealth,
And secret passages I knew not of.
Oft he obtain'd his wishes, oft abused her,
I am ashamed to say the rest: this purchased,
And his hot blood allayed, he left her,
And all our name to ruin.

John. This was foul play,
And ought to be rewarded so.

Petr. I hope so.
He scaped me yester-night:
Which if he dare again adventure for——

John. Pray, Sir, what commands have you to lay on me?

Petr. Only thus; by word of mouth to carry him
A challenge from me, that so (if he have honour in him)
We may decide all difference between us.

John. Fair and noble,
And I will do it home. When shall I visit ye?

Petr. Please you this afternoon, I will ride with you,
For at the castle, six miles hence, we are sure
To find him.

John. I'll be ready.

Petr. My man shall wait here,
To conduct you to my house.

John. I shall not fail ye. [*Exit* PETR.

Enter FREDERICK.

Fred. How now?

John. All's well, and better than thou couldst expect, for this wench here is certainly no maid: and I have hope she is the same

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that our two curious coxcombs have been so long a hunting after.

Fred. Why do ye hope so?

John. Why, because first she is no maid, and next because she is handsome; there are two reasons for you: now do you find out a third, a better, if you can. For take this, Frederick, for a certain rule, since she loves the sport, she'll never give it over; and therefore (if we have good luck) in time may fall to our share.

Fred. Very pretty reasons indeed? But I thought you had known some particulars, that made you conclude this to be the woman.

John. Yes, I know her name is Constantia.

Fred. That now is something; but I cannot believe her dishonest for all this: she has not one loose thought about her.

John. It's no matter, she's loose i' th' hilts, by Heaven. There has been stirring, fumbling with men, Frederick.

Fred. There may be such a slip.

John. And will be, Frederick, while the old game's a-foot. I fear the boy too will prove hers I took up.

Fred. Good circumstances may cure all this yet.

John. There thou hit'st it, Frederick. Come, let's walk in, and comfort her—that she is here, is nothing yet suspected. Anon, I shall tell thee why her brother came, (who, by this light, is a noble fellow) and what honour he has done to me, a stranger, in calling me to serve him. There be irons heating for some, on my word, Frederick. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Enter LANDLADY *and* ANTHONY.

Land. Come, Sir, who is it keeps your master company?
Ant. I say to you, Don John.
Land. I say what woman?
Ant. I say so too.
Land. I say again, I will know.
Ant. I say 'tis fit you should.
Land. And I tell thee he has a woman here.
Ant. I tell thee 'tis then the better for him.
Land. Was ever gentlewoman
So frumpt up with a fool? Well, saucy sirrah,
I will know who it is, and to what purpose
I pay the rent, and I will know how my house
Comes by these inflammations. If this geer hold,
Best hang a sign-post up, to the signiors,
Here you may have lewdness at livery.

Enter FREDERICK.

Ant. 'Twould be a great ease to your age.
Fred. How now?
What's the matter, landlady?
Land. What's the matter!
Ye use me decently among ye, gentlemen.
Fred. Who has abused her? You, Sir?
Land. Odd's my witness,
I will not be thus treated, that I will not.
Ant. I gave her no ill language.
Land. Thou liest lewdly;
Thou took'st me up at every word I spoke,
As I had been a maukin, a flirt gillian:
And thou think'st, because thou canst write and read,
Our noses must be under thee.
Fred. Dare you so, sirrah?
Ant. Let but the truth be known, Sir, I beseech ye—
She raves of wenches, and I know not what, Sir.
Land. Go to, thou know'st too well, thou wicked varlet,
Thou instrument of evil.
Ant. As I live, Sir, she's ever thus 'till dinner.
Fred. Get ye in, I'll answer ye anon, Sir. [*Exit* ANT.
Now your grief, what is't? for I can guess——
Land. Ye may, with shame enough,
If there was shame amongst you—nothing thought on,
But how ye may abuse my house: not satisfied
With bringing home your bastards to undo me,
But you must drill your whores here too; my patience,
Because I bear, and bear, and carry all,
And as they say, am willing to groan under,
Must be your make-sport now.
Fred. No more of these words,
Nor no more murmurings, lady: for you know
That I know something. I did suspect your anger,
But turn it presently and handsomely,
And bear yourself discreetly to this woman,
For such a one there is indeed.
Land. 'Tis well, Sir.
Fred. Leave off your devil's matins and your melancholies,
Or we shall leave our lodgings.
Land. You have much need
To use the vagrant ways, and too much profit:
Ye had that might content,
(At home within yourselves too) right good gentlemen, [gallants,
Wholesome, and ye said handsome. But you,
Beast that I was to believe ye——
Fred. Leave your suspicion;
For as I live there's no such thing.
Land. Mine honour;
And 'twere not for mine honour——
Fred. Come, your honour——
Your house, and you too, if you dare believe me, [crying,
Are well enough: sleek up yourself, leave
For I must have ye entertain this lady
With all civility, she well deserves it,
Together with all service: I dare trust ye,
For I have found ye faithful. When you know her,
You will find your own fault; no more words, but do it.
Land. You know you may command me.

Enter DON JOHN.

John. Worshipful lady,
How does thy velvet scabbard? by this hand
Thou look'st most amiably. Now could I willingly
(And 'twere not for abusing thy Geneva print there)
Venture my body with thee——
Land. You'll leave this roguery
When ye come to my years.
John. By this light,
Thou art not above fifteen yet; a mere girl,
Thou hast not half thy teeth——
Fred. Pr'ythee, John,

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Let her alone, she has been vex'd already:
She'll grow stark mad, man.
John. I would fain see her mad.
An old mad woman—
Fred. Pr'ythee, be patient.
John. Is like a miller's mare, troubled with tooth-ache;
She makes the rarest faces—
Fred. Go, and do it,
And do not mind this fellow.
[*Exit* LANDLADY, *and comes back again presently.*
John. What, again?
Nay, then it is decreed; though hills were set on hills, [through.
And seas met seas, to guard thee, I would
Land. Odd's my witness, if you ruffle me, I'll spoil your sweet face for you, that I will. Go, go to the door, there's a gentleman there would speak with ye.
John. Upon my life, Petruchio. Good, dear landlady, carry him into the dining-room, and I'll wait upon him presently.
Land. Well, Don John, the time will come that I shall be even with you. [*Exit.*
John. I must be gone; yet if my project hold,
You shall not stay behind: I'll rather trust
A cat with sweet milk, Frederick. By her face,

Enter 1st CONSTANTIA.

I feel her fears are working.
Con. Is there no way,
I do beseech ye, think yet, to divert
This certain danger?
Fred. 'Tis impossible:
Their honours are engaged.
Con. Then there must be murder,
Which, gentlemen, I shall no sooner hear of,
Than make one in't. You may, if you please,
Make all go less. [Sir,
John. Lady, wer't my own cause,
I could dispense; but loaden with my friend's trust,
I must go on, though general massacres,
As much I fear—
Con. Do you hear, Sir? for Heaven's sake,
Let me request one favour of you.
Fred. Yes, any thing.
Con. The gentleman, I find, is too resolute,
Too hot and fiery for the cause: as ever
You did a virtuous deed, for honour's sake,
Go with him, and allay him: your fair temper,
A noble disposition, like wish'd showers,
May quench those eating fires, that would spoil all else.
I see in him destruction.
Fred. I will do it:
And 'tis a wise consideration,
To me a bounteous favour. Hark ye, John,
I will go with ye.
John. No.
Fred. Indeed I will—
Ye go upon a hazard—no denial—
For as I live I'll go.
John. Then make ye ready,
For I am straight on horseback.
Fred. My sword on, and
I am as ready as you. What my best labour,
With all the art I have, can work upon 'em,
Be sure of, and expect a fair end; the old gentlewoman
Shall wait upon ye; she is discreet and secret;
Ye may trust her in all points.
Con. Ye are noble;
And so I take my leave.
John. I hope, lady, a happy issue for all this.
Con. All Heaven's care upon ye, and my prayers.
John. So,
Now my mind's at rest,
Fred. Away, 'tis late, John. [*Exeunt.*

Enter ANTONIO, SURGEON, *and a* GENTLEMAN.

Gent. What symptoms do ye find in him?
Sur. None, Sir, dangerous, if he'd be ruled.
Gent. Why, what does he do?
Sur. Nothing that he should. First, he will let no liquor down but wine, and then he has a fancy that he must be dressed always to the tune of John Dory.
Gent. How, to the tune of John Dory?
Sur. Why, he will have fiddlers, and make them play and sing it to him all the while.
Gent. An odd fancy, indeed.
Ant. Give me some wine.
Sur. I told ye so—'Tis death, Sir.
Ant. 'Tis a horse, Sir. Dost thou think I shall recover with the help of barley-water only?
Gent. Fy, Antonio, you must be governed.
Ant. Why, Sir, he feeds me with nothing but rotten roots and drowned chickens, stewed *pericraniums* and *pia-maters*; and when I go to bed (by Heaven 'tis true, Sir) he rolls me up in lints, with labels at 'em, that I am just the man i' th' almanac, my head and face is in Aries' place.
Sur. Will it please you to let your friends see you opened.
Ant. Will it please you, Sir, to give me a brimmer? I feel my body open enough for that. Give it me, or I'll die upon thy hand, and spoil thy custom.
Sur. How, a brimmer?
Ant. Why, look ye, Sir, thus I am used still; I can get nothing that I want. In how long time canst thou cure me?
Sur. In forty days.
Ant. I'll have a dog shall lick me whole in twenty. In how long canst thou kill me?
Sur. Presently.
Ant. Do it: that's the shorter, and there's more delight in it.
Gent. You must have patience.
Ant. Man, I must have business—this foolish fellow hinders himself—I have a dozen rascals to hurt within these five days. Good man-mender, stop me up with parsely, like stuffed beef, and let me walk abroad.
Sur. You shall walk shortly.
Ant. I will walk presently, Sir, and leave your sallads there, your green salves, and your oils; I'll to my old diet again, strong food, and rich wine, and try what that will do.
Sur. Well, go thy ways, thou art the maddest old fellow I ever met with. [*Exeunt*

Enter 1st CONSTANTIA *and* LANDLADY.

Con. I have told ye all I can, and more than yet
Those gentlemen know of me. But are they
Such strange creatures, say you?
Land. There's the younger,
Don Juan, the errant'st Jack in all this city:
The other time has blasted, yet he will stoop,

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If not o'erflown, and freely, on the quarry——
Has been a dragon in his days. But, Tarmont,
Don Jenken, is the devil himself—the dog days—
The most incomprehensible whore-master——
Twenty a night is nothing: the truth is,
Whose chastity he chops upon he cares not,
He flies at all—bastards upon my conscience,
He has now in making multitudes—The last night
He brought home one; I pity her that bore it,
But we are all weak vessels. Some rich woman
(For wise I dare not call her) was the mother,
For it was hung with jewels; the bearing [cloth
No less than crimson velvet.

Con. How!

Land. 'Tis true, lady.

Con. Was it a boy too?

Land. A brave boy; deliberation,
And judgment show'd it's getting, as I'll say for him.
He's as well placed for that sport——

Con. May I see it?

For there is a neighbour of mine, a gentlewoman,
Has had a late mischance, which willingly
I would know further of; now if you please
To be so courteous to me.

Land. Ye shall see it,
But what do you think of these men, now ye know 'em?
Be wise,
Ye may repent too late else; I but tell ye
For your own good, and as you will find it, lady.

Con. I am advised.

Land. No more words then; do that,
And instantly, I told ye of: be ready.
Don John, I'll fit ye for your frumps.

Con. It shall be.

But shall I see this child?

Land. Within this half hour.
Let's in, and think better. [*Exeunt.*

Enter PETRUCHIO, DON JOHN, *and* FREDERICK.

John. Sir, he is worth your knowledge, and a gentleman
(If I that so much love him may commend him)
That's full of honour; and one, if foul play
Should fall upon us (for which fear I brought him,)
Will not fly back for filips.

Petr. Ye much honour me,
And once more I pronounce ye both mine.

Fred. Stay, what troop
Is that below i' th' valley there?

John. Hawking, I take it.

Petr. They are so; 'tis the duke, 'tis even he, gentlemen.
Sirrah, draw back the horses till we call ye.
I know him by his company.

Fred. I think too,
He bends up this way.

Petr. So he does.

John. Stand you still,
Within that covert, till I call. He comes forward;
Here will I wait him. To your places.

Petr. I need no more instruct ye.

John. Fear me not.
[*Exeunt* PETR. *and* FRED.

Enter DUKE *and his faction.*

Duke. Feed the hawks up.
We'll fly no more to day. O, my bless'd fortune,
Have I so fairly met the man?

John. Ye have, Sir,
And him ye know by this.

Duke. Sir, all the honour,
And love——

John. I do beseech your grace stay there.
Dismiss your train a little.

Duke. Walk aside,
And out of hearing, I command ye.
Now, Sir, be plain.

John. I will, and short.
Ye have wrong'd a gentleman beyond all justice,
Beyond the mediation of all friends.

Duke. The man, and manner of wrong?

John. Petruchio;
The wrong, ye have dishonoured his sister.

Duke. Now stay you, Sir,
And hear me a little. This gentleman's
Sister that you named, 'tis true, I have long loved;
As true, I have enjoy'd her: no less truth,
I have a child by her. But that she, or he,
Or any of that family are tainted,
Suffer disgrace, or ruin, by my pleasures;
I wear a sword to satisfy the world no,
And him in this cause when he pleases; for know, Sir,
She is my wife, contracted before Heaven,
(A witness I owe more tie to than her brother;)
Nor will I fly from that name, which long since
Had had the church's approbation,
But for his jealous nature.

John. Your pardon, Sir; I am fully satisfied.

Duke. Dear Sir, I knew I should convert ye.
Had we but that rough man here now to——

John. And ye shall, Sir.
What, hoa, hoa!

Duke. I hope you have laid no ambush?

Enter PETRUCHIO.

John. Only friends.

Duke. My noble brother, welcome.
Come put your anger off, we'll have no fighting,
Unless you will maintain I am unworthy
To bear that name.

Petr. Do you speak this heartily?

Duke. Upon my soul, and truly; the first priest
Shall put ye out of these doubts.

Petr. Now I love ye,
And I beseech ye, pardon my suspicions;
You are now more than a brother, a brave friend too.

John. The good man's over-joy'd.

Enter FREDERICK.

Fred. How now goes it?

John. Why, the man has his mare again, and all's well.
The duke professes freely he's her husband.

Fred. 'Tis a good hearing.

John. Yes, for modest gentlemen.—I must present ye.
May it please your grace,
To number this brave gentleman, my friend,
And noble kinsman, among the rest of your servants.

Duke. O my brave friend you shower your bounties on me.
Amongst my best thoughts, Signior, in which number

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You being worthily disposed already,
May freely place your friend.
Fred. Your grace does me a great deal of honour.
Petr. Why this is wondrous happy. But now, brother, [stantia—
Now comes the bitter to our sweet——Con-
Duke. Why, what of her?
Petr. Nor what, nor where, do I know.
Wing'd with her fears, last night, beyond my knowledge,
She quit my house, but whether——
Fred. Let not that——
Duke. No more, good Sir, I have heard too much.
Petr. Nay, sink not,
She cannot be so lost.
John. Nor shall not, gentlemen:
Be free again, the lady's found. That smile,
Shows you distrust your servant. [Sir,
Duke. I beseech ye——
John. Ye shall believe me; by my soul she's safe.
Duke. Heaven knows I would believe, Sir.
Fred. Ye may safely.
John. And under noble usage. This gentleman [guard
Met her in all her doubts last night, and to his
(Her fears being strong upon her) she gave her person, [respect,
Who waited on her to our lodging: where all
Civil and honest service, now attend her.
Petr. Ye may believe now.
Duke. Yes I do, and strongly.
Well, my good friends, or rather my good angels, [virtues
For ye have both preserved me; when these
Die in your friend's remembrance——
John. Good your grace, [precious;
Lose no more time in compliments, 'tis too
I know it by myself, there can be no hell
To his that hangs upon his hopes.
Petr. He has hit it.
Fred. To horse again then, for this night I'll
With all the joys ye wish for. [crown
Petr. Happy gentlemen. [*Exeunt.*

Enter FRANCISCO *and a* MAN.

Fran. This is the maddest mischief—never fool was so fobb'd off as I am—made ridiculous and to myself, to my own ass——trust a woman! I'll trust the devil first, for he dares be better than his word sometimes. Pray tell me, in what observance have I ever failed her?
Man. Nay, you can tell that best yourself.
Fran. Let me consider—

Enter DON FREDERICK *and* JOHN.

Fred. Let them talk, we'll go on before.
Fran. Where didst thou meet Constantia and this woman?
Fred. Constantia! What are these fellows? Stay by all means.
Man. Why, Sir, I met her in the great street that comes from the market-place, just at the turning, by a goldsmith's shop.
Fred. Stand still, John.
Fran. Well, Constantia has spun herself a fair thread now; what will her best friends think of this?
Fred. John, I smell some juggling, John.
John. Yes, Frederick, I fear it will be proved so.
Fran. But what should the reason be, dost think, of this so sudden change in her?
Fred. 'Tis she.
Man. Why, truly I suspect she has been enticed to it by a stranger.
John. Did you mark that, Frederick?
Fran. Stranger! who?
Man. A young gentleman that's newly come to town.
Fred. Mark that too.
John. Yes, Sir.
Fran. Why do ye think so?
Man. I heard her grave conductress twattle something, as they went along, that makes me guess it.
John. 'Tis she, Frederick.
Fred. But who that he is, John?
Fran. I do not doubt to bolt them out, for they must certainly be about the town. Ha! no more words. Come let's be gone.
[*Exeunt* FRANCISCO *and* MAN.
Fred. Well.
John. Very well.
Fred. Discreetly.
John. Finely carried.
Fred. Ye have no more of these tricks?
John. Ten to one, Sir, I shall meet with them if ye have.
Fred. Is this fair?
John. Was it in you a friend's part to deal double? I am no ass, Don Frederick.
Fred. And, Don John, it shall appear I am no fool: disgrace me to make yourself thus every woman's courtesy: 'tis boyish, 'tis base.
John. 'Tis false; I privy to this dog-trick! Clear yourself, for I know well enough where the wind sits: or as I have a life—
[*Trampling within.*
Fred. No more: they are coming; show no discontent, let's quietly away. If she be at home, our jealousies are over; if not, you and I must have a farther parley, John.
John. Yes, Don Frederick, ye may be sure we shall. But where are these fellows? Pox on't, we have lost them too in our spleens, like fools.

Enter DUKE *and* PETRUCHIO.

Duke. Come, gentlemen, let's go a little faster;
Suppose you have all mistresses, and mend
Your pace accordingly.
John. Sir, I should be as glad of a mistress as another man.
Fred. Yes o' my conscience wouldst thou, and of any other man's mistress too, that I'll answer for. [*Exeunt.*

Enter ANTONIO *and his* MAN.

Ant. With all my gold?
Man. The trunk broke open, and all gone.
Ant. And the mother in the plot?
Man. And the mother and all.
Ant. And the devil and all; the mighty pox go with them. Belike they thought I was no more of this world, and those trifles would not disturb my conscience.
Man. Sure they thought, Sir, you would not live to disturb them.
Ant. Well, my sweet mistress, I'll try how handsomely your ladyship can hang upon a pair of gallows; there's your masterpiece. No imagination where they should be?
Man. None, Sir; yet we have searched all places we suspected; I believe they have taken towards the port.
Ant. Get me then a water-conjuror, one that can raise water-devils. I'll port them:

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play at duck and drake with my money! Get me a conjuror I say; inquire out a man that lets out devils.

Man. I don't know where.

Ant. In every street, Tom Fool; any blear-eyed people with red heads and flat noses can perform it. Thou shall know them by their half gowns, and no breeches. Find me out a conjuror, I say, and learn his price, how he will let his devils out by the day. I'll have them again if they be above ground.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter DUKE, PETRUCHIO, FREDERICK, *and* JOHN.

Petr. Your grace is welcome now to Naples, so ye are all, gentlemen.

John. Don Frederick, will you step in, and give the lady notice who comes to visit her?

Petr. Bid her make haste; we come to see no curious wench, a night gown will serve our turn. Here's one that knows her nearer.

Fred. I'll tell her what you say, Sir. [*Exit.*

Petr. Now will the sport be to observe her alterations, how betwixt fear and joy she will behave herself.

Duke. Dear brother, I must entreat you—

Petr. I conceive your mind, Sir—I will not chide her.

Enter FREDERICK *and* PETER.

John. How now?

Fred. You may, Sir; not to abuse your patience, longer, nor hold ye off with tedious circumstances; for ye must know——

Petr. What?

Duke. Where is she?

Fred. Gone, Sir.

Duke. How!

Petr. What did you say, Sir?

Fred. Gone; by Heaven, removed. The woman of the house too.

Petr. What, that reverend old woman that tired me with compliments?

Fred. The very same.

John. Well, Don Frederick.

Fred. Don John, it is not well. But——

Petr. Gone!

Fred. This fellow can satisfy I lie not.

Pet. A little after my master was departed, Sir, with this gentleman, my fellow and myself being sent on business, as we must think on purpose——

Petr. Hang these circumstances, they always serve to usher in ill ends.

John. Now I could eat that rogue, I am so angry. Gone!

Petr. Gone!

Fred. Directly gone, fled, shifted; what would you have me say?

Duke. Well, gentlemen, wrong not my good opinion.

Fred. For your dukedom, Sir, I would not be a knave.

John. He that is, a rot run in his blood.

Petr. But, hark ye, gentlemen, are you sure you had her here? Did you not dream this?

John. Have you your nose, Sir?

Petr. Yes, Sir,

John. Then we had her.

Petr. Since ye are so short, believe your having her shall suffer more construction.

John. Well, Sir, let it suffer.

Fred. How to convince ye, Sir, I can't imagine; but my life shall justify my innocence, or fall with it.

Duke. Thus then——for we may be all abused.

Petr. 'Tis possible.

Duke. Here let's part until to-morrow this time; we to our way to clear this doubt, and you to yours; pawning our honours then to meet again; when, if she be not found—

Fred. We stand engaged to answer any worthy way we are called to.

Duke. We ask no more.

Petr. To-morrow certain.

John. If we outlive this night, Sir.

[*Exeunt* DUKE *and* PETRUCHIO.

Fred. Come, Don John, we have somewhat now to do.

John. I am sure I would have.

Fred. If she be not found we must fight.

John. I am glad on't, I have not fought a great while.

Fred. If we die—

John. There's so much money saved in letchery. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

Enter 2d CONSTANTIA, *and* MOTHER.

Moth. Hold, Cons, hold, for goodness hold, I am in that desertion of spirit for want of breath, that I am almost reduced to the necessity of not being able to defend myself against the inconvenience of a fall.

2d Con. Dear mother, let us go a little faster to secure ourselves from Antonio: for my part, I am in that terrible fright, that I can neither think, speak, nor stand still, till we are safe a ship-board, and out of sight of the shore.

Moth. Out of sight o' the shore! why d'ye think I'll depatriate?

2d Con. Depatriate! what's that?

Moth. Why, ye fool you, leave my country: what will you never learn to speak out of the vulgar road?

2d Con. O Lord, this hard word will undo us.

Moth. As I am a Christian, if it were to save my honour (which is ten thousand times dearer to me than my life) I would not be guilty of so odious a thought.

2d Con. Pray, mother, since your honour is so dear to ye, consider that if we are taken, both it and we are lost for ever.

Moth. Ay, girl; but what will the world say, if they should hear so odious a thing of us, as that we should depatriate?

2d Con. Ay, there's it; the world! why, mother, the world does not care a pin if both you and I were hanged; and that we shall be certainly, if Antonio takes us, for running away with his gold.

Moth. Protest, I care not, I'll ne'er depart from the demarches of a person of quality; and let come what will, I shall rather choose to submit myself to my fate, than strive to prevent it by any deportment that is not congruous, in every degree, to the steps and measures of a strict practitioner of honour.

2d Con. Would not this make one stark mad? Her style is not more out of the way, than her manner of reasoning: she first sells me to

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an ugly old fellow; then she runs away with me and all his gold, and now, like a strict practitioner of honour, resolves to be taken, rather than depatriate, as she calls it. [*Aside.*

Moth. As I am a Christian, Cons, here's a tavern, and a very decent sign: I'll in, I am resolved, though by it I should run a risco of never so stupendous a nature.

2d Con. There's no stopping her. What shall I do?

Moth. I'll send for my kinswoman and some music to revive me a little: for really, Cons, I am reduced to that sad imbecility by the injury I have done my poor feet, that I'm in a great incertitude, whether they will have liveliness sufficient to support me up to the top of the stairs, or no. [*Exit.*

2d Cons. This sinning without pleasure I cannot endure: to have always remorse, and ne'er do any thing that should cause it, is intolerable. If I loved money too, which I think I don't, my mother she has all that: I have nothing to comfort myself with but Antonio's stiff beard; and that alone, for a woman of my years, is but a sorry kind of entertainment. I wonder why these old fumbling fellows should trouble themselves so much, only to trouble us more. They can do nothing, but put us in mind of our graves. Well, I'll no more on't; for to be frighted with death and damnation both at once is a little too hard. I do here vow I'll live for ever chaste, or find out some handsome young fellow I can love; I think that's the better.

[*Mother looks out at the window.*

Moth. Come up, Cons, the fiddles are here.

2d Con. I come—[*Mother goes from the window.*] I must be gone, though whither I cannot tell. These fiddles, and her discreet companions, will quickly make an end of all she has stolen; and then five hundred new pieces sell me to another old fellow. She has taken care not to leave me a farthing: yet I am so, better than under her conduct: 'twill be at worst but begging for my life.

And starving were to me an easier fate,
Than to be forced to live with one I hate.

[*Goes up to her* MOTHER.

Enter DON JOHN.

John. It will not out of my head, but that Don Frederick has sent away this wench, for all he carries it so gravely; yet methinks he should be honester than so: but these grave men are never touched upon such occasions. Mark it when you will, and you'll find a grave man, especially if he pretend to be a precise man, will do ye forty things without remorse, that would startle one of us mad fellows to think of. Because they are familiar with Heaven in their prayers, they think they may be bold with it in any thing; now we that are not so well acquainted, bear greater reverence. [*Music plays above.*] What's here, music and women! Would I had one of 'em. [*One of them looks out at the window.*] That's a whore; I know it by her smile. O my conscience, take a woman masked and hooded, nay covered all over, so that you cannot see one bit of her, and at twelvescore yards distance, if she be a whore, as ten to one she is, I shall know it certainly; I have an instinct within me ne'er fails. [*Another looks out.*] Ah, rogue! she's right too, I'm sure on't.

Moth. [*Above.*] Come, come, let's dance in t'other room, 'tis a great deal better.

John. Say you so; what now if I should go up and dance too? It's a tavern; pox o' this business: I'll in, I am resolved, and try my own fortune; 'tis hard luck if I don't get one of 'em.

[*As he goes to the door,* 2d CONSTANTIA *enters* See here's one bolted already. Fair lady whither so fast.

2d Con. I don't know, Sir.

John. May I have the honour to wait upon you?

2d Con. Yes, if you please, Sir.

John. Whither?

2d Con. I tell you I don't know.

John. She's very quick. Would I might be so happy as to know you, lady.

2d Con. I dare not let you see my face, Sir.

John. Why?

2d Con. For fear you should not like it, and then leave me: for to tell ye true, I have at this present very great need of you.

John. If thou hast half so much need of me, as I have of thee, lady, I'll be content to be hanged though.

2d Con. It's a proper handsome fellow this, if he'd but love me now, I would never seek out further. Sir, I am young, and unexperienced in the world.

John. Nay, if thou'rt young, it's no great matter what thy face is.

2d Con. Perhaps this freedom in me may seem strange; but, Sir, in short, I'm forced to fly from one I hate; if I should meet him, will you here promise he shall not take me from you.

John. Yes, that I will before I see your face, your shape has charmed me enough for that already; if any one takes ye from me, lady, I'll give him leave to take from me too—(I was going to name 'em) certain things of mine, that I would not lose, now I have you in my power, for all the gems in Christendom.

2d Con. For Heaven's sake then conduct me to some place, where I may be secured awhile from the sight of any one whatsoever.

John. By all the hopes I have to find thy face as lovely as thy shape, I will.

2 Con. Well, Sir, I believe ye; for you have an honest look.

John. 'Slid! I am afraid Don Frederick has been giving her a character of me too. Come, pray unmask.

2d Con. Then turn away your face; for I'm resolved you shall not see a bit of mine till I have set it in order; and then——

John. What?

2d Con. I'll strike you dead.

John. A mettled whore, I warrant her: come, if she be now young, and have but a nose on her face, she'll be as good as her word. I'm e'en panting for breath already.

2d Con. Now stand your ground, if you dare.

John. By this light a rare creature! ten thousand times handsomer than her we seek for! This can be sure no common one: pray Heaven she be a whore.

2d Con. Well, Sir, what say you now?

John. Nothing; I'm so amazed I am not able to speak. I'd best fall to presently, though it be in the street, for fear of losing time. Pr'ythee, my dear sweet creature, go with me into that corner, that thou and I may talk a little in private.

2d Con. No, Sir, no private dealing, I beseech you.

John. 'Sheart, what shall I do? I'm out of

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my wits for her. Hark ye, my dear soul, can'st thou love me?

2d Con. If I could, what then?

John. Why you know what then, and then should I be the happiest man alive.

2d Con. Ay, so you all say, till you have your desires, and then you leave us.

John. But, my dear heart, I am not made like other men: I never can love heartily till I have——

2d Con. Got their maidenheads; but suppose now I should be no maid.

John. Pr'ythee suppose me nothing, but let me try.

2d Con. Nay, good Sir, hold.

John. No maid! Why, so much the better, thou art then the more experienced: for my part, I hate a bungler at any thing.

2d Con. O dear, I like this fellow strangely. Hark ye, Sir, I am not worth a groat; but though you should not be so neither, if you'll but love me, I'll follow ye all the world over: I'll work for ye, beg for ye, do any thing for ye, so you'll promise to do nothing with any body else.

John. O Heavens, I'm in another world, this wench sure was made on purpose for me, she is so just of my humour. My dear 'tis impossible for me to say how much I will do for thee, or with thee, thou sweet bewitching woman; but let's make haste home, or I shall ne'er be able to hold out till I come thither.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter FREDERICK *and* FRANCISCO.

Fred. And art thou sure it was Constantia, say'st thou, that he was leading?

Fran. Am I sure I live, Sir? Why, I dwelt in the house with her; how can I choose but know her?

Fred. But didst thou see her face?

Fran. Lord, Sir, I saw her face as plainly as I see yours just now, not two streets off.

Fred. Yes, 'tis even so: I suspected it at first, but then he forswore it with that confidence —Well, Don John, if these be your practices, you shall have no more a friend of me, Sir, I assure you. Perhaps though he met her by chance, and intends to carry her to her brother and the Duke.

Enter DON JOHN *and* 2d CONSTANTIA.

A little time will show—God-so, here he is; I'll step behind this shop, and observe what he says.

John. Here now go in, and make me for ever happy.

Fred. Dear Don John.

John. A pox o' your kindness. How the devil comes he here just at this time? Now will he ask me forty foolish questions, and I have such a mind to this wench, that I cannot think of one excuse for my life.

Fred. Your servant, Sir: pray, who's that you lock'd in just now at the door?

John. Why, a friend of mine that's gone up to read a book.

Fred. A book! that's a quaint one, i'faith: pr'ythee, Don John, what library hast thou been buying this afternoon? for i' the morning, to my knowledge, thou had'st never a book there, except it were an almanac, and that was none of thy own neither.

John. No, no, it's a book of his own, he brought along with him: a scholar that's given to reading.

Fred. And do scholars, Don John, wear petticoats now-a-days?

John. Plague on him, he has seen her—Well, Don Frederick, thou knowest I am not good at lying: 'tis a woman, I confess it, make your best on't: what then?

Fred. Why then, Don John, I desire you'll be pleased to let me see her.

John. Why, faith, Frederick, I should not be against the thing, but ye know a man must keep his word, and she has a mind to be private.

Fred. But, John, you may remember when I met a lady so before, this very self same lady too, that I got leave for you to see her, John.

John. Why, do you think then that this here is Constantia?

Fred. I cannot properly say I think it, John, because I know it; this fellow here saw her as you led her i' th' streets.

John. Well, and what then? Who does he say it is?

Fred. Ask him Sir, and he'll tell ye.

John. Sweet-heart, dost thou know this lady?

Fran. I think I should, Sir; I have lived long enough in the house to know her sure.

John. And how do they call her, pr'ythee?

Fran. Constantia.

John. How! Constantia?

Fran. Yes, Sir, the woman's name is Constantia, that's flat.

John. Is it so, Sir? and so is this too.

[*Strikes him.*

Fran. Oh, oh! [*Runs out.*

John. Now, Sirrah, you may safely say you have not borne false witness for nothing.

Fred. Fy, Don John, why do you beat the poor fellow for doing his duty, and telling truth.

John. Telling truth! thou talkest as if thou hadst been hired to bear false witness too: you are a very fine gentleman.

Fred. What a strange confidence he has! But is there no shame in thee, nor any consideration of what is just or honest, to keep a woman thus against her will, that thou knowest is in love with another man too? Dost think a judgment will not follow this?

John. Good, dear Frederick, do thou keep thy sentences and thy morals for some better opportunity; this here is not a fit subject for them: I tell thee, she is not more Constantia than thou art.

Fred. Why won't you let me see her then?

John. Because I can't: besides, she's not for thy turn.

Fred. How so?

John. Why, thy genius lies another way; thou art for flames and darts, and those fine things: now I am for the old, plain, downright way; I am not so curious, Frederick, as thou art.

Fred. Very well, Sir; but is this worthy in you, to endeavour to debauch——

John. But is there no shame? but is this worthy? What a many buts are here? If I should tell thee now solemnly thou hast but one eye, and give thee reasons for it, wouldst thou believe me?

Fred. I think hardly, Sir, against my own knowledge.

John. Then why dost thou, with that grave face, go about to persuade me against mine? You should do as you would be done by, Frederick.

Fred. And so I will, Sir, in this very particular, since there's no other remedy; I shall

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do that for the Duke and Petruchio, which I should expect from them upon the like occasion: in short, to let you see I am as sensible of my honour as you can be careless of yours; I must tell ye, Sir, that I'm resolved to wait upon this lady to them.

John. Are ye so, Sir? Why, I must then, sweet Sir, tell you again, I am resolved you sha'n't. Ne'er stare nor wonder; I have promised to preserve her from the sight of any one whatsoever, and with the hazard of my life will make it good: but that you may not think I mean an injury to Petruchio, or the Duke, know, Don Frederick, that though I love a wench perhaps a little better, I hate to do a thing that's base as much as you do. Once more, upon my honour, this is not Constantia; let that satisfy you.

Fred. All that will not do——

[*Goes to the door.*

John. No! why then this shall. [*Draws.*] Come not one step nearer, for if thou dost, by Heaven, it is thy last.

Fred. This is an insolence beyond the temper of a man to suffer——Thus I throw off thy friendship; and since thy folly has provoked my patience beyond its natural bounds, know it is not in thy power now to save thyself.

John. That's to be tried, Sir, though by your favour. [*Looks up to the window.*] Mistress What-you-call-em—pr'ythee look out now a little, and see how I'll fight for thee.

Fred. Come, Sir, are you ready.

John. O lord, Sir, your servant. [*Fight.*

Enter DUKE *and* PETRUCHIO.

Petr. What's here, fighting? Let's part 'em. How! Don Frederick against Don John! How came you to fall out, gentlemen? What's the cause?

Fred. Why, Sir, it is your quarrel, and not mine, that drew this on me; I saw him lock Constantia up into that house, and I desired to wait upon her to you; that's the cause.

Duke. O, it may be he designed to lay the obligation upon us himself, Sir. We are beholden to you for this favour beyond all possibility of——

John. Pray, Sir, do not throw away your thanks before you know whether I have deserved them or no.—Oh, is that your design? Sir, you must not go in there?

[PETRUCHIO's *going to the door.*

Petr. How, Sir, not go in?

John. No, Sir, most certainly, not go in.

Petr. She's my sister, and I will speak with her.

John. If she were your mother, Sir, you should not, though it were but to ask your blessing.

Petr. Since you are so positive, I'll try.

John. You shall find me a man of my word, Sir. [*Fight.*

Duke. Nay, pray, gentlemen, hold, let me compose this matter. Why do you make a scruple of letting us see Coustantia?

John. Why, Sir, 'twould turn a man's head round to hear these fellows talk so; there is not one word true of all that he has said.

Duke. Then you do not know where Constantia is?

John. Not I, by Heavens.

Fred. O monstrous impudence? Upon my life, Sir, I saw him shut her up into that house, and know his temper so, that if I had not stopped him, I dare swear by this time he would have ravished her.

John. Now that is two lies; for first, he did not see her; and next, the lady I let in is not to be ravished, she is so willing.

Duke. But look ye, Sir, this doubt may easily be cleared; let either Petruchio or I but see her, and if she be not Constantia, we engage our honours (though we should know her) never to discover who she is.

John. Ay, but there's the point now that I can never consent to.

Duke. Why?

John. Because I gave her my word to the contrary.

Duke. And did you never break your word with a woman?

John. Never before I lay with her; and that's the case now.

Petr. Pish, I wont be kept off thus any longer: Sir, either let me enter, or I'll force my way.

Fred. No, pray, Sir, let that be my office: I will be revenged on him for having betrayed me to his friendship.

[PET. *and* FRED. *offer to fight with* JOHN.

Duke. Nay, ye shall not offer him foul play neither. Hold, brother, pray a word; and with you too, Sir.

John. Pox on't, would they would make an end of this business, that I might be with her again. Hark ye, gentlemen, I'll make ye a fair proposition: leave off this ceremony among yourselves, and those dismal threats against me; filip up, cross or pile, who shall begin first, and I'll do the best I can to entertain you all one after another.

Enter ANTONIO.

Ant. Now do my fingers itch to be about somebody's ears for the loss of my gold. Ha! what's here to do, swords drawn? I must make one, though it cost me the singing of ten John Dorio's more. Courage, brave boy, I'll stand by thee as long as this tool here lasts: and it was once a good one.

Petr. Who's this? Antonio! O, Sir, you are welcome, you shall be even judge between us.

Ant. No, no, no, not I, Sir, I thank ye; I'll make work for others to judge of, I'm resolved to fight.

Petr. But we wont fight with you.

Ant. Then put up your swords, or by this hand I'll lay about me.

John. Well said, old Bilboa, i'faith.

[*They put up their swords.*

Petr. Pray hear us, though: this gentleman saw him lock up my sister into that house, and he refuses to let us see her.

Ant. How, friend, is this true?

John. Nay, good Sir, let not our friendship be broken before it is well made. Look ye, gentlemen, to show ye that you are all mistaken, and that my formal friend there is an ass——

Fred. I thank you, Sir.

John. I'll give you my consent that this gentleman here shall see her, if his information can satisfy you.

Duke. Yes, yes; he knows her very well.

John. Then, Sir, go in here, if you please: I dare trust him with her, for he is too old to do her either any good or harm.

Fred. I wonder how my gentleman will get off from all this.

John. I shall be even with you, Sir, another time for all your grinning.

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Enter a SERVANT.

How now! Where is he?

Serv. He's run out of the back-door, Sir.

John. How so?

Serv. Why, Sir, he's run after the gentlewoman you brought in.

John. 'Sdeath, how durst you let her out?

Serv. Why, Sir, I knew nothing.

John. No, thou ignorant rascal, and therefore I'll beat something into thee. [*Beats him.*

Fred. What, you wont kill him?

John. Nay, come not near me, for if thou dost, by Heavens, I'll give thee as much; and would do so however, but that I wont lose time from looking after my dear sweet—a pox confound you all.

[*Goes in, and shuts the door after him.*

Duke. What, he has shut the door.

Fred. It's no matter; I'll lead you to a private back way, by that corner, where we shall meet him. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.

Enter ANTONIO'S SERVANT, CONSTABLE, *and* OFFICERS.

Serv. A young woman, say'st thou, and her mother?

Man. Yes, just now come to the house; not an hour ago.

Serv. It must be they: here, friend, here's money for you; be sure you take 'em, and I'll reward you better when you have done.

Const. But, neighbour, ho—hup—shall I now—hup—know these parties? for I would—hup—execute my office—hup—like—hup—a sober person.

Man. That's hard; but you may easily know the mother, for she is—hup—drunk.

Const. Nay—hup—if she be drunk, let—hup—me alone to maul her; for—hup—I abhor a drunkard—hup—let it be man, woman, or—hup—child.

Man. Ay, neighbour, one may see you hate drinking, indeed.

Const. Why, neighbour—hup—did you ever see me drunk? Answer me that question: did you ever—hup—see me drunk?

Man. No, never, never; come away, here's the house. [*Exeunt.*

Enter 1*st* CONSTANTIA.

Con. Oh, whither shall I run to hide myself: the constable has seized the landlady, and I am afraid the poor child too. How to return to Don Frederick's house I know not; and if I knew I durst not, after those things the landlady has told me of him. If I get not from this drunken rabble, I expose my honour; and if I fall into my brother's hands, I lose my life. You powers above, look down and help me: I am faulty, I confess; but greater faults have often met with lighter punishments.

Then let not heavier yet on me be laid;
Be what I will, I'm still what you have made.

Enter DON JOHN.

John. I'm almost dead with running, and will be so quite, but I will overtake her.

Con. Hold, Don John, hold.

John. Who's that? ha! is it you, my dear?

Con. For Heaven's sake, Sir, carry me from hence, or I'm utterly done.

John. Phoo, pox, this is the other: now could I almost beat her, for but making me the proposition. Madam, there are some coming, that will do it a great deal better; but I am in such haste, that I vow to gad, Madam——

Con. Nay, pray, Sir, stay, you are concerned in this as well as I; for your woman is taken.

John. Ha! my woman? [*Goes back to her.*] I vow to gad, Madam, I do so highly honour your ladyship, that I would venture my life a thousand times to do you service. But pray where is she?

Con. Why, Sir, she is taken by the constable.

John. Constable! which way went he? [*Rashly.*

Con. I cannot tell; for I ran out into the streets just as he had seized your landlady.

John. Plague o' my landlady, I meant t'other woman.

Con. Other woman, Sir! I have seen no other woman, never since I left your house.

John. S'heart, what have I been doing here then all this while? Madam, your most humble——

Con. Good Sir, be not so cruel as to leave me in this distress.

John. No, no, no, I'm only going a little way, and will be back again presently.

Con. But pray, Sir, hear me, I'm in that danger—

John. No no, no; I vow to gad, Madam, no danger i' th' world. Let me alone, I warrant you. [*Exit.*

Con. He's gone, and I a lost, wretched, miserable creature, for ever.

Enter ANTONIO.

Ant. O, there she is.

Con. Who's this? Antonio! the fiercest enemy I have. [*Exit.*

Ant. Are you so nimble-footed, gentlewoman? If I don't overtake you for all this, it shall go hard——

She'll break my wind with a pox to her:
A plague confound all whores! [*Exit.*

Enter MOTHER *to* 2*d* CONSTANTIA, *and* KINSWOMAN.

Kins. But, Madam, be not so angry; perhaps, she'll come again.

Moth. O kinswoman, never speak of her more; for she's an odious creature to leave me thus i' th' lurch. I that have given her all her breeding, and instructed her with my own principles of education.

Kins. I protest, Madam, I think she's a person that knows as much of all that as——

Moth. Knows, kinswoman! there's ne'er a woman in Italy, of thrice her years, knows so much the procedures of a true gallantry, and the infallible principles of an honourable friendship, as she does.

Kins. And therefore, Madam, you ought to love her.

Moth. No, fy upon her, nothing at all, as I am a Christian. When once a person fails in fundamentals, she's at a period with me. Be-

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sides, with all her wit, Constantia is but a fool, and calls all the *mignarderies* of a *bonne mien*, affectation.

Kins. Indeed, I must confess, she's given a little too much to the careless way.

Moth. Ay, there you have hit it, kinswoman; the careless way has quite undone her. Will ye believe me, kinswoman? as I am a Christian, I never could make her do this, nor carry her body thus, but just when my eye was upon her; as soon as ever my back was turned, whip, her elbows were quite out again; would not you stare now at this.

Kins. Bless me, sweet goodness! But, pray, Madam, how came Constantia to fall out with your ladyship? Did she take any thing ill of you?

Moth. As I am a Christian, I can't resolve you, unless it were that I led the dance first; but for that she must excuse me; I know she dances well, but there are others who perhaps understand the right swim of it as well as she:

Enter DON FREDERICK.

And though I love Constantia——

Fred. How's this? Constantia!

Moth. I know no reason why I should be debarred the privilege of showing my own parts too sometimes.

Fred. If I am not mistaken, that other woman is she Don John and I were directed to, when we came first to town, to bring us acquainted with Constantia. I'll try to get some intelligence from her. Pray, lady, have I never seen you before.

Kins. Yes, Sir, I think you have, with another stranger, a friend of yours, one day as I was coming out of the church.

Fred. I am right then. And pray who were you talking of?

Moth. Why, Sir, of an inconsiderate, inconsiderable person, that has at once both forfeited the honour of my concern, and the concern of her own honour.

Fred. Very fine indeed! and is this all intended for the beautiful Constantia?

Moth. O fy upon her, Sir! an odious creature, as I'm a Christian, no beauty at all.

Fred. Why, does not your ladyship think her handsome?

Moth. Seriously, Sir, I don't think she's ugly; but as I'm a Christian, my position is, that no true beauty can be lodged in that creature, who is not in some measure buoyed up with a just sense of what is incumbent to the *devoir* of a person of quality.

Fred. That position, Madam, is a little severe: but however she has been incumbent formerly, as your ladyship is pleased to say; now that she's married and her husband owns the child, she is sufficiently justified for all she has done.

Moth. Sir, I must blushingly beg leave to say you are there in an error. I know there has been passages of love between 'em, but with a temperament so innocent and so refined, as it did impose a negative upon the very possibility of her being with child.

Fred. Sure, she is not well acquainted with her. Pray, Madam, how long have you known Constantia?

Moth. Long enough, I think, Sir, for I had the good fortune, or rather the ill one, to help her first to the light of the world.

Fred. Now cannot I discover by the fineness of this dialect, whether she be the mother or the midwife! I had better ask t'other woman.

Moth. No, Sir, I assure ye, my daughter Constantia has never had a child: a child! ha, ha, ha! O goodness save us, a child!

Fred. O, then she is the mother, and it seems is not informed of the matter. Well, Madam, I shall not dispute this with you any further; but give me leave to wait upon your daughter; for her friend, I assure ye, is in great impatience to see her.

Moth. Friend, Sir! I know none she has. I'm sure she loaths the very sight of him.

Fred. Of whom?

Moth. Why, of Antonio, Sir, he that you were pleased to say had got my daughter with child, Sir; ha, ha, ha!

Fred. Still worse and worse. 'Slife! cannot she be content with not letting me understand her; but must also resolve obstinately not to understand me, because I speak plain? Why, Madam, I cannot express myself your way, therefore be not offended at me for it. I tell you I do not know Antonio, nor never named him to you? I told you that the duke has owned Constantia for his wife, that her brother and he are friends, and are both now in search after her.

Moth. Then as I'm a Christian, I suspect we have both been equally involved in the misfortune of a mistake. Sir, I am in the dernier confusion to avow, that though my daughter Constantia has been liable to several addresses; yet she never has had the honour to be produced to his grace.

Fred. So then you put her to bed to——

Moth. Antonio, Sir, one whom my ebb of fortune forced me to enter into a negotiation with in reference to my daughter's person; but as I'm a Christian, with that candour in the action, as I was in no kind denied to be a witness of the thing.

Fred. So now the thing is out. This is a damned bawd, and I as damned a rogue for what I did to Don John; for o' my conscience, this is that Constantia the fellow told me of. I'll make him amends, whate'er it cost me. Lady, you must give me leave not to part with you, till you meet with your daughter, for some reasons I shall tell you hereafter.

Moth. Sir, I am so highly your obligee for the manner of your inquiries, and you have grounded your determinations upon so just a basis, that I shall not be ashamed to own myself a votary to all your commands.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter 2d CONSTANTIA.

2d Con. So, I'm once more freed from Antonio: but whither to go now, that's the question: nothing troubles me, but that he was sent up by that young fellow, for I liked him with my soul: would he had liked me so too.

Enter DON JOHN *and a* SHOP-KEEPER.

John. Which way went she?

Shop. Who?

John. The woman.

Shop. What woman?

John. Why, a young woman, a handsome woman, the handsomest woman thou ever saw'st in thy life; speak quickly, sirrah, or thou shalt speak no more.

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Shop. Why, yonder's a woman: what a devil ails this fellow. [*Exit.*

John. O my dear soul, take pity on me, and give me comfort; for I'm e'en dead for want of thee.

2d Con. O you're a fine gentleman indeed; to shut me up in your house, and send another man to me.

John. Pray, hear me.

2d Con. No, I will never hear you more after such an injury: what would ye have done, if I had been kind to ye, that could use me thus before?

John. By my troth, that's shrewdly urged.

2d Con. Besides, you basely broke your word.

John. But will you hear nothing? nor did you hear nothing? I had three men upon me at once, and had I not consented to let that old fellow up, who came to my rescue, they had all broken in whether I would or no.

2d Con. Faith it may be it was so, for I remember I heard a noise; but suppose it was not so, what then? Why then I'll love him however. Hark ye, Sir, I ought now to use you very scurvily. But I can't find in my heart to do it.

John. Then God's blessing on thy heart for it.

2d Con. But a——

John. What?

2d Con. I would fain—

John. Ay, so would I: come, let's go.

2d Con. I would fain know, whether you can be kind to me?

John. That thou shalt presently. Come away.

2d Con. And will you always?

John. Always, I can't say so: but I will as often as I can.

2d Con. Phoo! I mean love me.

John. Well, I mean that too.

2d Con. Swear then.

John. That I will, upon my knees. What shall I say?

2d Con. Nay, use what words you please, so they be but hearty, and not those that are spoken by the priest, for that charm seldom proves fortunate.

John. I swear then, by thy fair self, that lookest so like a deity, and art the only thing I now can think of, that I'll adore thee to my dying day.

2d Con. And here I'll vow the minute thou dost leave me, I'll leave the world; that is, kill myself.

John. O my dear, heavenly creature!—[*Kisses her.*] That kiss now has almost put me into a swoon. For Heaven's sake, let's quickly out of the streets for fear of another scuffle. I durst encounter a whole army for thy sake, but yet, methinks, I had better try my courage another way; what think'st thou?

2d Con. Well, well; why don't you then.

As they are going out, enter 1st CONSTANTIA, *and just then* ANTONIO *seizes upon her.*

John. Who's this my old new friend has got there?

Ant. O! have I caught you, gentlewoman, at last? Come, give me my gold.

1st Con. I hope he takes me for another. I wont answer; for I had rather he should take me for any one than who I am.

John. Pray, Sir, who is that you have there by the hand?

Ant. A person of honour, Sir, that has broke open my trunks, and run away with all my gold; yet I'll hold ten pounds I'll have it whipped out of her again.

2d Con. Done, I'll hold you ten pounds of that, now.

Ant. Ha! by my troth you have reason; and, lady, I ask your pardon. But I'll have it whipped out of you, then, gossip.

John. Hold, Sir, you must not meddle with my goods.

Ant. Your goods! how came she to be yours? I'm sure I bought her of her mother for five hundred good pieces of gold, and she was a-bed with me all night too. Deny that, if you dare.

2d Con. Well, and what did you do when I was a-bed with you all night? Confess that, if you dare.

Ant. Umph! say you so?

1st Con. I'll try if this lady will help me, for I know not whither else to go.

Ant. I shall be ashamed I see utterly, except I make her hold her peace. Pray, Sir, by your leave, I hope you will allow me the speech of one word with your goods here, as you call her: 'tis but a small request.

John. Ay, Sir, with all my heart. How, Constantia! Madam, now you have seen that lady, I hope you will pardon the haste you met me in a little while ago; if I committed a fault you must thank her for it.

1st Con. Sir, if you will for her sake be persuaded to protect me from the violence of my brother, I shall have reason to thank you both.

John. Nay, Madam, now that I am in my wits again, and my heart's at ease, it shall go very hard, but I will see yours so too. I was before distracted, and 'tis not strange the love of her should hinder me from remembering what was due to you, since it made me forget myself.

1st Con. Sir, I do know too well the power of love, by my own experience, not to pardon all the effects of it in another.

Ant. Well then, I promise you, if you will but help me to my gold again (I mean that which you and your mother stole out of my trunk), that I'll never trouble you more.

2d Con. A match; and 'tis the best that you and I could ever make.

John. Pray, Madam, fear nothing; by my love I'll stand by you, and see that your brother shall do you no harm.

2d Con. Hark ye, Sir, a word; how dare you talk of love, or standing by any lady but me, Sir?

John. By my troth that was a fault; but I did not mean in your way, I meant it only civilly.

2d Con. Ay, but if you are so very civil a gentleman, we shall not be long friends. I scorn to share your love with any one whatsoever: and for my part I'm resolved either to have all or nothing.

John. Well, my dear little rogue, thou shalt have it all presently, as soon as we can but get rid of this company.

2d Con. Phoo; ye are always abusing me.

Enter FREDERICK *and* MOTHER.

Fred. Come, now, Madam, let not us speak

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one word more, but go quietly about our business, not but that I think it the greatest pleasure in the world to hear you talk, but——

Moth. Do you indeed, Sir? I swear then good wits jump, Sir; for I have thought so myself a very great while.

Fred. You've all the reason imaginable. O, Don John, I ask thy pardon, but I hope I shall make thee amends, for I have found out the mother, and she has promised me to help thee to thy mistress again.

John. Sir, you may save your labour, the business is done, and I am fully satisfied.

Fred. And dost thou know who she is?

John. No, faith, I never asked her name.

Fred. Why, then, I'll make thee yet more satisfied; this lady here is that very Constantia—

John. Ha! thou hast not a mind to be knocked o'er the pate too, hast thou?

Fred. No, Sir, nor dare you do it neither: but for certain this is that very self-same Constantia that thou and I so long looked after.

John. I thought she was something more than ordinary; but shall I tell thee now a stranger thing than all this?

Fred. What's that?

John. Why, I will never more touch any other woman for her sake.

Fred. Well, I submit; that indeed is stranger.

2d Con. Come, mother, deliver your purse; I have delivered myself up to this young fellow, and the bargain's made with that old fellow, so he may have his gold again, that all shall be well.

Moth. As I'm a Christian, Sir, I took it away only to have the honour of restoring it again; for my hard fate having not bestowed upon me a fund which might capacitate me to make you presents of my own, I had no way left for the exercise of my generosity but by putting myself into a condition of giving back what was yours.

Ant. A very generous design indeed! So now I'll e'en turn a sober person, and leave off this wenching, and this fighting, for I begin to find it does not agree with me.

Fred. Madam, I'm heartily glad to meet your ladyship here: we have been in very great disorder since we saw you. What's here, our landlady and the child again!

Enter DUKE, PETRUCHIO, *and* LANDLADY *with the Child.*

Petr. Yes, we met her going to be whipped, in a drunken constable's hands that took her for another.

John. Why then, pray let her e'en be taken and whipped for herself, for on my word she deserves it.

Land. Yes, I'm sure of your good word at any time.

1st Con. Hark ye, dear landlady.

Land. O, sweet goddess! is it you? I have been in such a peck of troubles since I saw you; they took me, and they tumbled me, and they hauled me, and they pulled me, and they called me painted Jezebel, and the poor little babe here did so take on. Come hither, my lord, come hither; there is Constantia.

1st Con. For Heaven's sake peace; yonder is my brother, and if he discovers me, I'm certainly ruined.

Duke. No, Madam, there is no danger.

1st Con. Were there a thousand dangers in those arms, I would run thus to meet them.

Duke. O, my dear, it were not safe that any should be here present: for now my heart is so o'erpressed with joy, that I should scarce be able to defend thee.

Petr. Sister, I'm so ashamed of all the faults which my mistake has made me guilty of, that I know not how to ask your pardon for them.

1st Con. No, brother, the fault was mine, in mistaking you so much, as not to impart the whole truth to you at first; but having begun my love without your consent, I never durst acquaint you with the progress of it.

Duke. Come, let the consummation of our present joys blot out the memory of all these past mistakes.

John. And when shall we consummate our joys?

2d Con. Never:
We'll find out ways shall make them last for ever.

John. Now see the odds, 'twixt married folks and friends:
Our love begins just where their passion ends.

[*Exeunt.*

EPILOGUE.

PERHAPS you, gentlemen, expect to-day,
The author of this fag end of a play,
According to the modern way of wit,
Should strive to be before-hand with the Pit;
Begin to rail at you, and subtly too,
Prevent th' affront, by giving the first blow.
He wants not precedents, which often sway,
In matters far more weighty than a play:
But he, no grave admirer of a rule,
Wont by example learn to play the fool.
The end of plays should be to entertain,
And not to keep the auditors in pain.
Giving our price, and for what trash we please,
He thinks the play being done, you should have ease.
No wit, no sense, no freedom, and a box,
Is much like paying money for the stocks.
Besides, the author dreads the strut and mien
Of new-praised poets; having often seen
Some of his fellows, who have writ before,
When Nel has danced her jig, steal to the door,
Hear the pit clap, and with conceit of that,
Swell, and believe themselves the Lord knows what.
Most writers, now-a-days, are grown so vain,
That once approved, they write, and write again.
Till they have writ away the fame they got.
Our friend this way of writing fancies not,
And hopes you will not tempt him with your praise,
To rank himself with some that write new plays:
For he knows ways enough to be undone,
Without the help of poetry for one.

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THE

INTRIGUING CHAMBERMAID:

A FARCE,

IN TWO ACTS,

FROM REGNARD,

BY HENRY FIELDING, ESQ.

REMARKS.

THIS Ballad Farce of Mr. Fielding's, was first introduced at Drury Lane in the year 1733. It is almost entirely borrowed from a French piece, called *Le Dissipateur*, and contains a lively representation of intrigue.

The piece is volatile, the songs are good, and the music pleasant; these conspire most effectually to maintain a constant share of applause, whenever it is performed.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	COVENT GARDEN.
GOODALL, ...	*Mr. Davenport.*
VALENTINE, ...	*Mr. Macready.*
LORD PRIDE, . . .	*Mr. Claremont.*
LORD PUFF, ...	*Mr. Lee.*
COLONEL BLUFF, . .	*Mr. Knight.*
OLDCASTLE, ...	*Mr. Emery.*
SLAP, ...	*Mr. Thompson.*
SECURITY, ...	*Mr. Atkins.*

	COVENT GARDEN.
SERVANT to Valentine,	*Mr. Curtois.*
RAKEIT.	
TRUSTY.	
CONSTABLE.	
MRS HIGHMAN, . . .	*Mrs. Powel.*
CHARLOTTE, ...	*Miss Cox.*
LETTICE, ...	*Mrs. Mattocks.*

SCENE.—London.

PROLOGUE.

As when some ancient hospitable seat,
Where plenty oft has given the jovial treat,
Where in full bowls each welcome guest has drown'd
All sorrowing thought, while mirth and joy went round:
Is by some wanton worthless heir destroyed,
Its once full rooms grown a deserted void;
With sighs, each neighbour views the mournful place;
With sighs, each recollects what once it was.
So does our wretched theatre appear;
For mirth and joy once kept their revels here.
Here, the *Beau-monde* in crowds repair'd each day,
And went well pleased and entertain'd away.
While Oldfield here hath charm'd the list'ning age,
And Wilk's adorn'd, and Booth hath fill'd the stage;
Soft eunuchs warbled in successless strain,
And tumblers show'd their little tricks in vain.
Those boxes still the brighter circles were,
Triumphant toasts received their homage there.
But now, alas! how alter'd is our case!
I view with tears this poor deserted place,
None to our boxes now in pity stray,
But poets free o' th' house, and beauxs who never pay.
No longer now, we see our crowded door,
Send the late comer back again at four.
At seven now into our empty pit
Drops from his counter some old prudent cit,
Contented with twelve pennyworth of wit.
——Our author of a generous soul possess'd,
Hath kindly aim'd to succour the distress'd,
To-night what he shall offer in our cause
Already hath been bless'd with your applause.

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Yet this, his muse maturer hath revised,
And added more to that, which once so much you prized.
We sue, not mean to make a partial friend,
But without prejudice at least attend.
If we are dull, e'en censure, but we trust,
Satire can ne'er displease you when 'tis just.
Nor can we fear a brave, a generous town,
Will join to crush us, when we're almost down.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—Covent Garden.

Enter Mrs. Highman *and* Lettice.

Mrs. H. Oh! Mrs. Lettice; is it you? I am extremely glad to see you; you are the very person I would meet.

Let. I am much at your service, Madam.

Mrs. H. Oh! Madam; I know very well that; and at every one's service, I dare swear, that will pay you for it: but all the service, Madam, that I have for you, is to carry a message to your master—I desire, Madam, that you would tell him from me, that he is a very great villain, and that I entreat him never more to come near my doors, for, if I find him within 'em, I will turn my niece out of them.

Let. Truly, Madam, you must send this by another messenger; but, pray, what has my master done, to deserve it should be sent at all?

Mrs. H. He has done nothing yet, I believe; I thank Heaven, and my own prudence; but I know what he would do.

Let. He would do nothing but what becomes a gentleman, I am confident.

Mrs. H. Oh! I dare swear, Madam, debauching a young lady, is acting like a very fine gentleman; but I shall keep my niece out of the hands of such fine gentlemen.

Let. You wrong my master, Madam, cruelly; I know his designs on your niece are honourable.

Mrs. H. You know!

Let. Yes, Madam, no one knows my master's heart better than I do: I am sure, were his designs otherwise, I would not be accessary to them; I love your niece too much, Madam, to carry on an amour in which she should be a loser: but as I know that my master is heartily in love with her, and that she is heartily in love with my master; and as I am certain they will be a very happy couple; I will not leave one stone unturned, to bring them together.

Mrs. H. Rare impudence! hussy, I have another match for her, she shall marry Mr. Oldcastle.

Let. O then! I find it is you that have a dishonourable design on your niece.

Mrs. H. How, sauciness!

Let. Yes, Madam, marrying a young lady, who is in love with a young fellow, to an old one whom she hates, is the surest way to bring about I know what, that can possibly be taken.

When a virgin in love with a brisk jolly lad,
You match to a spark more fit for her dad,
'Tis as pure, and as sure, and secure as a gun,
The young lover's business is happily done:
Though it seems to her arms he takes the wrong rout,
Yet my life for a farthing,
Pursuing
His wooing,
The young fellow finds, though he goes round about,
It's only to come
The nearest way home.

Mrs. H. I can bear this no longer. I would advise you, Madam, and your master both, to keep from my house, or I shall take measures you wont like. [*Exit.*

Let. I defy you! we have the strongest party; and I warrant we'll get the better of you. But here comes the young lady herself.

Enter Charlotte.

Char. So, Mrs. Lettice!

Let. 'Tis pity you had not come a little sooner, Madam; your good aunt is but just gone, and has left positive orders that you should make more frequent visits at our house.

Char. Indeed!

Let. Yes, Madam; for she has forbid my master ever visiting at yours, and I know it will be impossible for you to live without seeing him.

Char. I assure you! do you think me so fond then?

Let. Do I! I know you are; you love nothing else, think of nothing else all day; and, if you will confess the truth, I dare lay a wager that you dream of nothing else all night.

Char. Then to show you, Madam, how well you know me—the devil take me—if you are not right.

Let. Ah! Madam, to a woman practised in love, like me, there is no occasion for confession; for my part, I don't want words to assure me of what the eyes tell me. O! if the lovers would but consult the eyes of their mistresses, we should not have such sighing, languishing, and despairing, as we have.

What need he trust your words precise,
Your soft desires denying;
When, Oh! he reads within your eyes
Your tender heart complying.
Your tongue may cheat,
And with deceit
Your softer wishes cover;
But Oh! your eyes
Know no disguise,
Nor ever cheat your lover.

Enter Valentine.

Val. My dearest Charlotte! this is meeting my wishes indeed! for I was coming to wait on you.

Let. It's very lucky that you do meet her here, for her house is forbidden ground, you have seen your last of that, Mrs. Highman swears.

Val. Ha! not go where my Charlotte is? what danger could deter me? what difficulty prevent me? not cannons, nor plagues, nor all the most frightful forms of death, should keep me from her arms.

Char. Nay, by what I can find, you are not to put your valour to any proof, the danger is to be mine, I am to be turned out of doors, if ever you are seen in them again.

Val. The apprehensions of your danger would, indeed put it to the severest proof:

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but why will my dearest Charlotte continue in the house of one who threatens to turn her out of it? why will she not know another home, one, where she would find a protector from every kind of danger?!

Char. How can you pretend to love me, Valentine, and ask me that in our present desperate circumstances?

Let. Nay, nay, don't accuse him wrongfully: I wont indeed insist, that he gives you any great instance of his prudence by it; but I'll swear, it is a very strong one of his love, and such an instance, as when a man has once shown, no woman of any honesty, or honour, or gratitude, can refuse him any longer. For my part, if I had ever found a lover who had not wicked, mercenary views upon my fortune, I should have married him, whatever he had been.

Char. Thy fortune!

Let. My fortune! yes, Madam, my fortune; I was worth fifty-six pounds before I put into the lottery; what it will be now, I can't tell; but you know, somebody must get the great lot, and why not I?

Val. Oh, Charlotte! would you had the same sentiments with me! for, by Heavens! I apprehend no danger but that of losing you; and, believe me, love will sufficiently reward us for all the hazards we run on his account.

Let bold ambition lie
  Within the warrior's mind;
False honours let him buy,
  With slaughter of mankind:
To crowns a doubtful right,
  Lay thousands in their grave:
While wretched armies fight
  Which master shall enslave.

Love took my heart with storm,
  Let him there rule alone,
In Charlotte's charming form,
  Still sitting on his throne:
How will my soul rejoice,
  At his commands to fly,
If spoken in that voice,
  Or look'd from that dear eye!

To universal sway
  Love's title is the best;
Well, shall we him obey,
  Who makes his subjects bless'd?
If Heaven for human good
  Did empire first design,
Love must be understood
  To rule by right divine.

Let. Hist, hist! get you both about your business; Mr. Oldcastle is just turned the corner, and if he should see you together, you are undone. [*Exeunt* VALENTINE *and* CHARLOTTE.] Now will I banter this old coxcomb severely; for I think it is a most impertinent thing in these old fumblers, to interpose in young people's sport.

Enter OLDCASTLE.

Old. Hem, hem! I profess it is a very severe easterly wind, and if it was not to see a mistress, I believe I should scarce have stirred abroad all day.

Let. Mr. Oldcastle, your very humble servant.

Old. Your humble servant, Madam: I ask your pardon, but I profess I have not the honour of knowing you.

Let. Men of your figure, Sir, are known by more than they are themselves able to remember: I am a poor handmaid of a young lady of your acquaintance, Miss Charlotte Highman.

Old. Oh! your very humble servant, Madam. I hope your lady is well!

Let. Hum! so, so: she sent me, Sir, of a small message to you.

Old. I am the happiest man in the world.

Let. To desire a particular favour of you.

Old. She honours me with her commands.

Let. She begs, if you have the least affection for her, that she may never see you here again.

Old. What, what!

Let. She is a very well-bred, civil, good-natured lady, and does not care to send a rude message; therefore only bids me tell you, she hates you, scorns you, detests you more than any creature upon the earth; that if you are resolved to marry, she would recommend to you a certain excellent dry nurse, who might possibly be brought by your money to do any thing, but go to bed with you; and lastly, she bids me tell you, in this cold weather, never to go to bed without a good, warm posset, and never to lie without, at least, a pair of flannel shirts.

Old. Hold your impertinent, saucy tongue!

Let. Nay, Sir, don't be angry with me, I only deliver my message; and that too, in as civil and concise a manner as possible.

Old. Your mistress is a pert young hussy, and I shall tell her mother of her.

Let. That will never do; you had better trust to her good nature; 'tis I am your friend, and if we can get over three little obstacles, I don't despair of marrying you to her, yet.

Old. What are those obstacles?

Let. Why, Sir, there is the first place, your great age, you are at least some sixty-six.

Old. It's a lie; I want several—months of it.

Let. If you did not, I think we may get over this: one half of your fortune makes a very sufficient amends for your age.

Old. We sha'n't fall out about that.

Let. Well, Sir; then there is, in the second place, your terrible, ungenteel air: this is a grand obstacle with her who is dotingly fond of every thing that is fine and foppish: and yet I think we may get over this too, by the other half of your fortune—and now there remains but one, which, if you can find any thing to set aside, I believe I may promise you, you shall have her; and that is, Sir, that horrible face of yours, which it is impossible for any one to see without being frightened.

Old. Ye impudent baggage! I'll tell your mistress, I'll have you turned off.

Let. That will be well repaying me indeed, for all the services I have done you.

Old. Services!

Let. Services! yes, Sir, services, and to let you see I think you fit for a husband, I'll have you myself! who can be more proper for a husband, than a man of your age and taste? for I think you could not have the conscience to live above a year or a year and a half at most: and I think a good plentiful jointure would make amends for one's enduring you as

long as that; provided we live in separate parts of the house, and one had a good handsome groom of the chambers to attend one.

When a lover like you,
Does a woman pursue,
She must have little wit in her brain, Sir;
If for better and worse,
She takes not the purse,
Alas, with her sighing poor swain, Sir;
Though hugg'd to her wishes,
Amidst empty dishes,
Much hunger her stomach may prove, Sir;
But a pocket of gold,
As full as 'twill hold,
Will still find her food for her love, Sir.

Old. You are an impertinent impudent baggage! and I have a mind to——I am out of breath with passion; and I shall not recover it this half hour. [*Exit.*

Enter RAKEIT.

Let. A very pretty lover for a young lady indeed.

Rak. Your servant, Mrs. Lettice: what have you and the great squire Oldcastle been entertaining one another with?

Let. With his passion for your young mistress, or rather her passion for him. I have been bantering him 'till he is in such a rage that I actually doubt whether he will not beat her or no.

Rak. Will you never leave off your frolicks; since we must pay for them. You have put him out of humour; now he will go and put my lady out of humour; and then we may be all beaten for aught I know.

Let. Well, sirrah! and do you think I had not rather twenty such as you should be beaten to death, than my master should be robbed of his mistress?

Rak. Your humble servant, Madam, you need not take any great pains to convince me of your fondness for your master. I believe he has more mistresses than what are in our house; but hang it, I am too polite to be jealous, and if he has done me the favour with you, why, perhaps I may return it one day with somebody else. I am not the first gentleman of the party-coloured regiment who has been even with his master.

Let. Not with such gentlemen as Mr. Valentine. Indeed, with your little pert skipping beaux, I don't know what may happen. Such masters and their men are often both in dress and behaviour so very like one another, that a woman may be innocently false, and mistake the one for the other. Nay, I don't know whether such a change as you mention may not be sometimes for the better.

See John and his master as together they pass,
Or see them admiring themselves in the glass.
Each cocks fierce his hat, each struts and looks big,
Both have lace on their coat, and a bag to their wig.
Both swear, and both rattle, both game, and both drink,
When neither can write, or can read, or e'er [think.
Say then where the difference lies if you can,
Faith! widows you'd give it on the side of the man.

Rak. But, my dear Lettice, I do not approve this match in our families.

Let. Why so?

Rak. You know how desperate his circumstances are, and she has no fortune.

Let. She hath indeed no fortune of her own; but her aunt Highman is very rich.

Rak. She will be little the better for't.

Let. Then there's the chance of both her brothers' death; besides an uncle in Yorkshire, who hath but five children only, one of which hath never had the small-pox: nay, there are not above sixteen or seventeen between her and an Irish barony.

Rak. Ay, this lady would make a fine fortune, after two or three good plagues. In short, I find there is but little hopes on our side, and if there be no more on yours—

Let. Oh, yes, there are hopes enough on ours. There is hopes of my young master's growing better, for I am sure there is no possibility of his growing worse. Hopes of my old master's staying abroad. Hopes of his being drowned if he attempts coming home. Hopes of the stars falling.—

Rak. Dear Mrs. Lettice, do not jest with such serious things, as hunger and thirst. Do you seriously think that all your master's entertainments are at an end?

Let. So far from it, that he is this day to give a grand entertainment to your mistress, and about a dozen more gentlemen and ladies.

Rak. My chops begin to water. I find your master is a very honest fellow, and it is possible may hold out two or three weeks longer.

Let. You are mistaken, Sir, there will be no danger of his giving any more entertainments; for there is a certain gentleman, called an upholsterer, who, the moment that the company is gone, is to make his entrance into the house, and carry every thing out on't.

Rak. A very good way, faith, of furnishing a house to receive a wife in; your master has set me a very good pattern against you and I marry, Mrs. Lettice.

Let. Sauce-box! do think I'll have you?

Rak. Unless I can provide better for myself.

Let. Well, that I am fond of thee I am certain, and what I am fond of I can't imagine; unless it be thy invincible impudence.

Rak. Why, faith, I think I have the impudence of a gentleman, and there is nothing better to succeed with the ladies.

Rak. When modesty sues for a favour.
What answers the politic lass?
Let. That she mightily likes his behaviour,
And thinks in her heart he's an ass;
And thinks, &c.
Rak. But when bolder impudence rushes,
And manfully seizes her charms?
Let. Lard! you're rude, Sir, she cries, then she blushes, [arms.
And folds the brisk youth in her
And folds, &c. [*Exeunt.*

Enter VALENTINE *and* TRICK.

Val. You say I owe you five hundred pounds, principal and interest?

Trick. Yes, Sir, you will please to cast it up yourself, and I believe our accounts will correspond.

Val. I'll take your word for it, Sir; and if you please to let me have five hundred more, I shall owe you one thousand.

Trick. Sir, the money was none of my own. I had it from another; and it must be paid, Sir, he hath called it in.

Val. He may call as long as he pleases; but till I call it in, it will signify not much, Sir. I

have thought of an expedient, if the money you lent me was another's, and he be impatient for it; you may pay him off: lay me down the other five hundred, and take the whole debt upon yourself.

Trick. I am quite out of cash, Sir, or you know you might command me; and therefore I hope you will not put off the payment any longer.

Val. I am extremely busy to-day, and beg you would call another time.

Trick. I have called so often that I am quite weary of calling; and if I am not paid within these three days, I shall send a lawyer for my money——and so, your servant. [*Exit.*

Enter TRUSTY.

Val. So, honest Trusty, what success?

Trusty. I went to the jewellers with the ring which your honour told me cost a hundred pounds, but he refused to give me any more than fifty for it, so I e'en took that.

Val. Very well.

Trusty. As for the old silver bowl which your father valued at fourscore pounds, Mr. Whiting said, there was so much reckoned for the fashion; and that it was so old and ungenteel, that he offered me but twenty: but I knew your honour wanted money, and so I took it.

Val. Very well.

Trusty. The gold repeating watch I carried to the maker, and told him he had received fifty odd guineas for it, two years ago; but he said it was much the worse for wearing; and that the nobility and gentry run so much into pinchbeck that he had not disposed of two gold watches this month. However, he said he would give half; and I thought that better than nothing, so I let him have it.

Val. Very well.

Trusty. But this was nothing to that rogue in Monmouth Street, who offered me but sixteen pounds for the two suits of fine clothes, that I dare swear stood your honour in above a hundred pounds; I flew into a great passion with him, and have brought them back again.

Val. You should have taken the money.

Trusty. One piece of surprising good fortune was the saving of your medals, which as I was just going to dispose of, a gentleman whispered in my ear, that a certain knight that would be in town in a fortnight, would give six times as much for them.

Val. A fortnight! what of a fortnight? a fortnight's an age. I would not give a shilling for the reversion of an estate so long to come. Here give me what money you have brought, and go and dispose of the rest immediately.

Trusty. But, Sir, I wish your honour would consider: for my part, I dread my old master's coming home, and yet if he does not, what you will do any longer, Heaven knows.

Val. Don't trouble thyself about that; but go execute my commands. [*Exit* TRUSTY.

Let misers with sorrow to-day,
Lay up for to-morrow's array,
Like Tantalus thirsty, who craves
Drink, up to his chin in the waves.
But fortune, like women, to-day may be kind,
And yield to your mind;
To-morrow she goes,
And on others bestows
The blessing.
The lover who yields to the fair one's delays,
Oft loses the day;
Then fly to her arms,
For we are sure
Of her charms
When possessing.

Enter SERVANT, *meeting* VALENTINE.

Serv. Sir, a gentleman in mourning desires to see you.

Val. Show him in. [*Exit* SERV.] Would my dear Charlotte were here.

Enter SLAP.

Your most obedient servant, Sir; I have not the honour of knowing you, Sir

Slap. I believe you do not, Sir; I ask pardon, but I have a small writ against you.

Val. A writ against me!

Slap. Don't be uneasy, Sir; it is only for a trifle, Sir, about two hundred pounds.

Val. What must I do, Sir?

Slap. Oh, Sir! whatever you please, only pay the money, or give bail, which you please.

Val. I can do neither of them this instant, and I expect company every moment. I suppose, Sir, you will take my word till to-morrow morning?

Slap. Oh, yes, Sir; with all my heart. If you will be so good as to step to my house hard by, you shall be extremely well used, and I'll take your word.

Val. Your house! 'sdeath you rascal!

Slap. Nay, Sir, 'tis in vain to bully.

Val. Nay, then!——who's there?——my servants. [*Enter Servants.*] Here, kick this fellow down stairs.

Slap. This is a rescue, remember that——a rescue, Sir, I'll have my lord chief justice's warrant. [SLAP *is forced off by the Servants.*

Enter CHARLOTTE.

Char. Oh Valentine! what's the matter? I am frightened to death. Swords drawn! oh my heart! you are not hurt?

Val. By none but you, my love; I have no wounds but those you can cure.

Char. Heaven be praised! but what was the occasion of this bustle?

Val. Nothing, my dear, but a couple of fencing-masters—I happened to turn about, and one of them cut me on the back, that's all.

Char. You see the dangers I run on your account, should my aunt know of my being here, I shall be undone for ever. Nay, and what the rest of the company will think when they see me here before them, I dread to imagine.

Val. You know you have it in your power to silence the tongues of the world whenever you please: and, oh, Charlotte! I wish you would this day consent to make this house your reputable home.

Char. Press me not, Valentine; for whatever be the consequence, if you should, I feel I cannot deny you.

Virgins wary
Would ne'er miscarry,
If lovers would take a denial or two:
If he pursues her still,
Can she refuse him still,
What she herself hath a mind to do?

Val. Turtles, though with each other they die,
Shall be less constant and fond than I:
For April's soft showers,
Nor June's sweet flowers,
In softness and sweetness with thee can vie.

Char. Turtles, though, &c.

Char. Could I be assured of your constancy; could I find you always fond and endearing as now: believe me it would not be in the power of fortune to make me miserable.

Val. If thou can place any confidence in vows, I know not how to bind myself faster to you, than I have done already; but you have a better, which is in your own merit. Believe me, Charlotte, men are more constant than you imagine. He that marries for money, is constant to the love of his wife's money. He that marries for beauty, is commonly constant while that beauty lasts, and a love that's fixed on merit as mine, will be constant while that endures.

Char. Well, we must all run a risk, believe me; as to the point of fortune, it is the least of my thoughts. A woman, who can carry her prudence so far as that, cheats you when she pretends to love. Love reigns alone in every breast it inhabits, and in my opinion makes us amends for the absence of Madam Prudence, and all her train.

Val. Thou dearest girl, this night shall make me thine.

Come, Charlotte, let's be gay,
Let's enjoy ourselves to-day;
To-morrow's in the hands of the powers,
To-day alone is ours.
Let fools for wealth,
Spend time and health;
While we, more happy, try,
In each soft kiss,
Transporting bliss,
Which treasures ne'er can buy.

Char. Let age grave lessons preach,
'Gainst what she cannot reach;
Let prudes condemn, what they esteem,
All fools our joys impeach.

Both. Let fools, &c.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

VALENTINE *and* COMPANY, *seated as after Dinner.*

Val. Call in the dancers. I hope, ladies, good nature will make you as kind to this part of the entertainment as it hath to the other.

Marg. *Je vous félicite de votre gout ravissant, Monsieur Valentine, mais allons! dancons nous memes.*

Val. My father arrived, say you?

Let. Yes, Sir, and will be here instantly.

Val. Death and hell! what shall I do, Lettice? I must trust to the contrivance of my brain, or I am undone.

Let. Well, I will do the best I can for you; in the mean time be not chagrined, enjoy your friends, and take no notice of it. I will lie perdue for him, and meet him at the door. Be sure to keep close garrison, and after I am gone out, open the doors to none.

Val. Send thee good luck, my best wench. Come, gentlemen and ladies, what say you, are you for cards or hazard?

All. Hazard, hazard.

Marg. Hazard! *ma voix est toujours pour* hazard!

Enter GOODALL *and* LETTICE.

Good. This cursed stage-coach from Portsmouth hath fatigued me more than my voyage from the Cape of Good Hope: but Heaven be praised, I am once more arrived within sight of my own doors. I cannot help thinking how pleased my son will be to see me returned a full year sooner than my intention.

Let. He would be much more pleased to hear you were at the Cape of Good Hope yet. [*Aside.*

Good. I hope I shall find my poor boy at home, I dare swear he will die with joy to see me.

Let. I believe he is half dead already; but now for you my good master. [*Aside.*] Bless me, what do I see? an apparition?

Good. Lettice!

Let. Is it my dear master Goodall returned, or is it the devil in his shape? Is it you, Sir, is it positively you yourself?

Good. Even so. How do you do, Lettice?

Let. Much at your honour's service. I am heartily glad to see your honour in such good health. Why, the air of the Indies hath agreed vastly with you. Indeed, Sir, you ought to have stayed a little longer there for the sake of your health——and our quiet. [*Aside.*

Good. Well, but how does my son do? and how hath he behaved himself in my absence? I hope he hath taken great care of my affairs.

Let. I'll answer for him, he hath put your affairs into a condition that will surprise you, take my word for it.

Good. I warrant you, he is every day in the alley. Stocks have gone just as I imagined, and if he followed my advice he must have amassed a vast sum of money.

Let. Not a farthing, Sir.

Good. How, how, how!

Let. Sir, he hath paid it out as fast as it came in.

Good. How!

Let. Put it out I mean, Sir, to interest, to interest, Sir; why, our house hath been a perfect fair ever since you went, people coming for money every hour of the day.

Good. That's very well done, and I long to see my dear boy [*To* LETTICE.] knock at the door.

Let. He is not at home, Sir,—and if you have such a desire to see him—

Enter SECURITY.

Sec. Your servant, Mrs. Lettice.

Let. Your servant, Mr. Security—here's a rogue of a usurer, who hath found a very proper time to ask for his money in.

Sec. Do you know, Mrs. Lettice, that I am weary of following your master day after day in this manner, without finding him, and that,

if he does not pay me to-day, I shall sue out an execution directly. A thousand pounds are a sum—

Good. What, what, what's this I hear?

Let. I'll explain it to you by and by, Sir.

Good. Does my son owe you a thousand pounds?

Sec. Your son, Sir!

Good. Yes, Sir, this woman's young master, who lives at that house, Mr. Valentine Goodall is my son.

Sec. Yes, Sir, he does, and I am very glad you are returned to pay it me.

Good. There go two words though to that bargain.

Let. I believe, Sir, you will do it with a great deal of joy, when you know that his owing this money, is purely an effect of his good conduct.

Good. Good conduct! owing money good conduct?

Let. Yes, Sir, he hath bought a house of the price of two thousand pounds, which every one says is worth more than four, and this he could not have done without borrowing this thousand pound. I am sure, Sir, I and he, and Trusty ran all over the town to get the money, that he might not lose so good a bargain. I believe there will not go many words to the payment on't now. [*Aside.*

Good. I am overjoyed at my son's behaviour. —Sir, you need give yourself no pain about the money; return to morrow morning, and you shall receive it.

Sec. Sir, your word is sufficient for a much greater sum, and I am your very humble servant. [*Exit.*

Good. Well, but tell me a little, in what part of the town hath my son bought this house?

Let. In what part of the town?

Good. Yes, there are, you know, some quarters better than others—as for example, this here—

Let. Well, and it is in this that it stands.

Good. What, not the great house yonder, is it?

Let. No, no, no, do you see that house yonder—where the windows seem to have been just cleaned?

Good. Yes.

Let. It is not that—and a little beyond, you see another very large house higher than any other in the square.

Good. I do.

Let. But it is not that—take particular notice of the house opposite to it, a very handsome house, is it not?

Good. Yes, indeed is it.

Let. That is not the house—but you may see one with great gates before it, almost opposite to another that fronts a street, at the end of which stands the house which your son hath bought.

Good. There is no good house in that street, as I remember, but Mrs. Highman's.

Let. That's the very house.

Good. That is a very good bargain, indeed; but how comes a woman in her circumstances to sell her house?

Let. It is impossible, Sir, to account for people's actions; besides, she is out of her senses.

Good. Out of her senses!

Let. Yes, Sir, her family hath taken out a commission of lunacy against her, and her son, who is a most abandoned prodigal, hath sold all she had, for half its value.

Good. Son! why she was not married when I went away.

Let. No, Sir; but to the great surprise of every one, and to the great scandal of all our sex, there appeared all of a sudden a very lusty young fellow of the age of three and twenty, whom she owned to have been her son, and that his father was a grenadier in the first regiment of guards.

Good. Oh, monstrous!

Let. Ah, Sir! if every child in this city knew his own father; if children were to inherit only the estates of those who begot them, it would cause a great confusion in inheritances.

Were all women's secrets known,
Did each father know his own,
Many a son now bred to trade,
Then had shined in rich brocade;
Many cits
Had been wits,
In estate, though not in sense;
Many beaux,
Birth-day clothes,
Had not worn at cits' expense:
For did our women, wise indeed,
Contrive no way to mend the breed,
Our sparks such pretty masters grow,
So spruce, so taper, and so low;
From Britons tall,
Our heroes shall
Be Lilliputians all.

Good. Well, but I stand here talking too long; knock at the door.

Let. What shall I do? [*Aside.*

Good. You seem in a consternation? no accident hath happened to my son, I hope!

Let. No, Sir, but——

Good. But! but what? hath any one robbed me in my absence?

Let. No, Sir; not absolutely robbed you, Sir, —What shall I say?—

Good. Explain yourself, speak.

Let. Oh, Sir! I can withhold my tears no longer.—Enter not, I beseech you, Sir, your house, Sir; your dear house, that you and I, and my poor young master loved so much, within these six months.

Good. What of my house, within these six months.

Let. Hath been haunted, Sir, with the most terrible apparitions that were ever heard or beheld! you'd think the devil himself had taken possession of it: Nay, I believe he hath too; all the wild noises in the universe, the squeaking of pigs, the grinding of knives, the whetting of saws, the whistling of winds, the roaring of seas, the hooting of owls, the howling of wolves, the braying of asses, the squalling of children, and the scolding of wives, all put together, make not so hideous a consort. This I myself have heard; nay, and I have seen such sights! one with about twenty heads, and a hundred eyes, and mouths, and noses in each.

Good. Heyday! the wench is mad. Stand from before the door! I'll see whether the devil can keep me out from my own house. Haunted indeed!—

Let. Sir, I have a friendship for you, and you shall not go in.

Good. Ho! not go into my own house?

Let. No, Sir, not till the devil is driven out on't; there are two priests at work upon him now. Hark, I think the devils are dancing. Nay, Sir, you may listen yourself, and get in too, if you can. [*Laughing within.*

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Good. Ha! by all that's gracious, I hear a noise.

Let. I have nothing but his monstrous superstition to rely on. [*Shriek within.*

Good. Oh Heavens! what monstrous squalling is that?

Let. Why, Sir, I am surprised you should think I would impose upon you. I assure you your house is haunted by a whole legion of devils. Your whole family hath been driven out of it: and this was one reason why your son bought Madam Highman's house, not being able to live any longer in this.

Good. I am in a cold sweat! what, my son left this house!

Let. Oh! Sir, I am sure, had you known the terrors we underwent for a whole fortnight, especially poor I, Sir, who lay every night frightened, with the sight of the most monstrous large things, fearing every minute what they would do to me—

Good. Can all this be true, or are you imposing on me? I have indeed heard of such things as apparitions, on just causes, and believe in them; but why they should haunt my house, I can't imagine.

Let. Why, Sir, they tell me, before you bought the house, there was a murder committed in it.

Good. I must inquire into all these things. But, in the mean time, I must send this portmanteau to my son's new house.

Let. No, Sir, that's a little improper at present.

Good. What, is that house haunted? has the devil taken possession of that house too?

Let. No, Sir, but Madam Highman hath not yet quitted possession of it. I told you before, Sir, that she was out of her senses; and if any one does but mention the sale of her house to her, it throws her into the most violent convulsions.

Good. Well, well, I shall know how to humour her madness.

Let. I wish, Sir, for a day or two—

Good. You throw me out of all manner of patience. I am resolved I will go thither this instant.

Let. Here she is herself; but, pray remember the condition she is in, and don't do any thing to chagrin her.

Enter MRS. HIGHMAN.

Mrs. H. What do I see! Mr. Goodall returned?

Let. Yes, Madam, it is him; but, alas! he's not himself—he's distracted; his losses in his voyage have turned his brain, and he is become a downright lunatic.

Mrs. H. I am heartily concerned for his misfortune. Poor gentleman!

Let. If he should speak to you by chance, have no regard to what he says; we are going to shut him up in a madhouse, with all expedition.

Mrs. H. [*Aside.*] He hath a strange wandering in his countenance.

Good. [*Aside.*] How miserably she is altered! she hath a terrible look with her eyes.

Mrs. H. Mr. Goodall, your very humble servant. I am glad to see you returned, though I am sorry for your misfortune.

Good. I must have patience and trust in Heaven, and in the power of the priests, who are now endeavouring to lay these wicked spirits, with which my house is haunted.

Mrs. H. His house haunted! poor man! but I must not contradict him, that would make him worse.

Good. In the mean time, Mrs. Highman, I should be obliged to you, if you would let me order my portmanteau to your house.

Mrs. High. My house is at your service, and I desire you would use it in the same manner as your own.

Good. I would not, Madam, on any account insult your unfortunate condition—Lettice, this lady does not carry any marks of madness about her.

Let. She has some lucid intervals, Sir, but her fit will soon return.

Good. I am extremely sorry for your misfortune, Mrs. Highman, which indeed, had I not been so well assured of, I could not have believed: but I have known some in your way, who, during the intervals of their fits, have talked very reasonably; therefore give me leave to ask you the cause of your frenzy; for I much question, whether this commission of lunacy that has been taken out against you, be not without sufficient proof.

Mrs. H. A commission of lunacy against me! me!

Good. Lettice, I see she is worse than I imagined.

Mrs. H. However, if you are not more mischievous than you at present seem, I think it is wrong in them to confine you in a madhouse.

Good. Confine me! ha, ha, ha! this is turning the tables upon me, indeed! but, Mrs. Highman, I would not have you be uneasy that your house is sold; at least, it is better for you that my son hath bought it, than another; for you shall have an apartment in it still, in the same manner as if it was still your own, and you were in your senses.

Mrs. H. What's all this? as if I was still in my senses! let me tell you, Mr. Goodall, you are a poor distracted wretch, and ought to have an apartment in a dark room, and clean straw. [*Exit.*

Good. Since you have come to that, Madam, I shall show you the nearest way out of doors; and I give you warning to take away your things, for I shall fill all the rooms with goods within these few days.

Enter SLAP, CONSTABLE, *and Assistants.*

Slap. That's the door, Mr. Constable.

Let. What's to be done now, I wonder?

Const. Open the door, in the king's name, or I shall break it open.

Good. Who are you, Sir, in the devil's name, and what do you want in that house?

Slap. Sir, I have a prisoner there, and I have my lord chief justice's warrant against him.

Good. For what sum, Sir? are you a justice of the peace?

Slap. I am one of his majesty's officers, Sir; and this day I arrested Mr. Valentine Goodall, who lives in this house, for two hundred pounds, his servants have rescued him, and I have a judge's warrant for the rescue.

Good. What do I hear? but hark'ee, friend, that house that you are going to break open is haunted; and there is no one in it, but a couple of priests, who are laying the devil.

Slap. I warrant you, I lay the devil better than all the priests in Europe. Come, Mr. Constable, do your office, I have no time to

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lose: Sir, I have several other writs to execute before night.

Let. I have defended my pass as long as I can, and now I think it is no cowardice to steal off. [*Exit.*

Enter COLONEL BLUFF, *and* MONSIEUR LA MARQUIS.

Col. What, in the devil's name, is the meaning of this riot? what is the reason, scoundrels, that you dare disturb gentlemen, who are getting as drunk as lords?

Slap. Sir, we have authority for what we do.

Col. Damn your authority, Sir! if you don't go about your business, I shall show you my authority, and send you all to the devil.

Slap. It is he! I have a warrant against him too: I wish it was in my pocket.

Const. Mr. Slap, shall we knock him down?

Slap. Sir, I desire you would give us leave to enter the house and seize our prisoner.

Col. Not I, upon my honour, Sir.

Mons. *Que vout due cette bruit quelle vilain Anglois! quelle pouscon ventre blue? allons! Monsieur le Colonel! allons, frappons.*

Slap. If you oppose us any longer, I shall proceed to force.

Col. If you love force, I'll show you the way, you dogs. [COL. *drives them off.*

Good. I find I am distracted, I am stark raving mad, I am undone, ruined! cheated, imposed on! but please Heaven I'll go see what's in my house.

Col. Hold, Sir, you must not enter here.

Good. Not enter into my own house, Sir.

Col. No, Sir, if it be yours, you must not come within it.

Mons. *Il ne faut pas entrer ici.*

Good. Gentlemen, I only beg to speak with the master of the house.

Col. Sir, the master of the house desires to speak with no such fellows as you are; you are not fit company for any of the gentlemen in this house.

Good. Sir, the master of this house is my son.

Col. Sir, your most obedient humble servant; I am overjoyed to see you returned; give me leave. Sir, to introduce you to this gentleman: Monsieur le Marquis quelque chose, le pere de Monsieur Valentine.

Mons. *Ah, Monsieur que je suis ravi de vous voir.*

Good. Gentlemen, your most obedient, humble servant.

Col. Give me leave to tell you, Sir, you have the honour of being father to one of the finest gentlemen of the age: a man so accomplished, so well bred, and so generous, that I believe he never would part with a guest, while he had a shilling in his pocket, nor indeed while he could borrow one.

Good. I believe it, indeed, Sir, therefore you can't wonder if I am impatient to see him.

Col. Be not in such haste, dear Sir; I want to talk with you about your affairs; I hope you have had good success in the Indies; have cheated the company handsomely; and made an immense fortune.

Good. I have no reason to complain.

Col. I am glad on't, Sir, and so will your son, I dare swear: and let me tell you, it will be very opportune, he began to want it. You can't imagine, Sir, what a fine life he has led since you went away: it would do your heart good, if you was but to know what an equipage he has kept, what balls and entertainments he has made: he is the talk of the whole town, Sir, a man would work with pleasure for such a son: he is a fellow with a soul, damn me! your fortune wont be thrown away upon him, for get as much as you please, my life he spends every farthing.

Good. Pray, gentlemen, let me see this miracle of a son of mine.

Col. That you should, Sir, long ago, but really, Sir, the house is a little out of order at present, there is but one room furnished in it; and that is so full of company, that I am afraid there would be a small deficiency of chairs. You can't imagine, Sir, how opportune you have come; there was not any one thing left in the house to raise any money upon.

Good. What, all my pictures gone?

Col. He sold them first; Sir, he was obliged to sell them for the delicacy of his taste: he certainly is the modestest young fellow in the world, and has complained to me a hundred times of the indecent liberty painters take in exposing the breasts and limbs of women; you had indeed, Sir, a very scandalous collection, and he was never easy while they were in the house.

Enter VALENTINE.

Val. My father returned, oh, let me throw myself at his feet, and believe me, Sir, I am at once overjoyed and ashamed to see your face.

Col. I told you, Sir, he was one of the modestest young fellows in England.

Good. You may very well be ashamed; but come, let me see the inside of my house; let me see that both sides of my walls are standing.

Val. Sir, I have a great deal of company within, of the first fashion, and beg you would not expose me before them.

Good. Oh, Sir! I am their very humble servant; I am infinitely obliged to all the persons of fashion, that they will so generously condescend to eat a poor citizen out of house and home.

Col. Harkye Val, shall we toss this old fellow in a blanket?

Val. Sir, I trust in your good nature and forgiveness: and will wait on you in—.

Good. Oh, that ever I should live to see this day!

Mons. *Pardie voila homme extraordinaire.* [Exeunt.

Enter LORD PRIDE, LORD PUFF, *&c.*

Lord Pr. I told you, my lord, it would never hold long; when once the chariot disappeared, I thought the master would soon follow.

Lord Pu. I helped on with a small lift, the other day, at picquet.

Lord Pr. Did you do any thing considerable?

Lord Pu. A mere trifle, my lord: it would not have been worth mentioning, if it had been of any other; but I fancy in his present circumstances, it cut pretty deep.

Lord Pr. Damn me! there's a pleasure in ruining these little mechanical rascals, when

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they presume to rival the extravagant expenses of us men of quality.

Lord Pu. That ever such plebeian scoundrels, who are obliged to pay their debts, should presume to engage with us men of quality, who are not!

Enter GOODALL, VALENTINE, CHARLOTTE, COLONEL, *and* MONSIEUR.

Val. Gentlemen and ladies, my father being just arrived from the Indies, desires to make one of this good company.

Good. My good lords (that I may affront none, by calling him beneath his title) I am highly sensible of the great honour you do myself, and my son, by filling my poor house with your noble persons, and your noble persons with my poor wine and provisions. I dare swear you have been all highly instrumental in the extravagances of my son; for which I am very much obliged to you, and humbly hope that I shall never see him, or any of your faces again.

Lord Pr. Brother Puff, what does the fellow mean?

Lord Pu. Curse me, if I know.

Good. I am very glad that my son hath ruined himself in so good a company; that when I disinherit him, he can't fail of being provided for. I promise myself that your interest will help him to places and preferments in abundance.

Lord Pr. Sir, any thing in my power, he may always command.

Lord Pu. Or mine.

Lord Pr. But let me whisper a word in your ear.—Your son is a very extravagant fellow.

Good. That's very true, Sir: but I hope you will consider that you have assisted him in it; and therefore will help his necessities with a brace of thousands.

Lord Pr. I don't understand you, Sir.

Good. Why then, Sir, that you may understand me, I must tell you in plain words, that he owes his ruin to entertaining such fine gentlemen as yourself.

Lord Pr. Me, Sir! rat me! I would have you know, I think I do you too much honour in entering into your doors: but I am glad you have taught me at what distance to keep such mechanics for the future: come, Puff, let's to the Opera. I see, if a man hath not good blood in his veins, riches wont teach him to behave like a gentleman.

Lord Pu. *Cannille!*

[*Exeunt* LORD PRIDE *and* LORD PUFF.

Good. S'bodikins! I am in a rage; that ever a fellow should upbraid me with good blood in his veins, when, odsheart! the best blood in his veins hath run through my bottles.

1st Lady. My Lord Pride, and my Lord Puff gone! come, my dear, the assembly is broke up; let us make haste away, or we shall be too late for any other.

2d Lady. With all my heart, for I am heartily sick of this.

3d Lady. Come, come, come; away, away!

[*Exeunt* LADIES.

Mons. *Allons, quittons le bourgion.*

Col. Sir, you are a scrub; and if I had not a friendship for your son; I'd show you how you ought to treat people of fashion.

[*Exeunt* COL. *and* MONSIEUR.

Char. Poor Valentine! how tenderly I feel his misfortunes!

Good. Why don't you follow your companions, Sir?

Val. Ah! Sir, I am so sensible of what I have done, that I could fly into a desert from the apprehensions of your just wrath; nay, I will, unless you can forgive me.

Good. Who are you, Madam, that stay behind the rest of your company? there is no more mischief to be done here, so there is no more business for a fine lady.

Char. Sir, I stay to intreat you to forgive your poor unhappy son, who will otherwise sink under the weight of your displeasure.

Good. Ah, Madam, if that be all the business, you may leave this house as soon as you please; for him I am determined to turn directly out on't.

Char. Then, Sir, I am determined to go with him. Be comforted, Valentine, I have some fortune which my aunt cannot prevent me from, and it will make us happy, for a while at least; and I prefer a year, a month, a day, with the man I love, to a whole stupid age without him.

Val. O, my dear love! and I prefer an hour with thee, to all that Heaven can give me. Oh! I am so blessed, that fortune cannot make me miserable.

Thus when the tempest high,
Roars dreadful from above,
The constant turtles fly
Together to the grove:
Each spreads its tender wings,
And hovers o'er its mate;
They kiss, they coo, and sing,
And love in spite of fate.

My tender heart me long beguiled,
I now first my passions proved;
Had fortune on you ever smiled,
I'd known not how I loved.
Base passions, like base metals, cold,
With true may seem the same;
But would you know true love and gold,
Still try them in the flame.

Enter OLDCASTLE, *and* MRS. HIGHMAN.

Old. Here, Madam, now you may trust your own eyes, if you wont believe mine.

Mrs. H. What do I see? my niece in the very arms of her betrayer, and his father an abettor of the injustice!—Sir, give me leave to tell you, your madness is a poor excuse for this behaviour.

Good. Madam, I ask your pardon for what I said to you to-day. I was imposed on by a vile wretch, who, I dare swear, misrepresented each of us to the other. I assure you, I am not mad, nor do I believe you so.

Mrs. H. Thou vile wretch, thou dishonour of thy family! how dost thou dare to appear before my face?

Char. Madam, I have done nothing to be ashamed of; and I dare appear before any one's face.

Good. Is this young lady a relation of yours?

Mrs. H. She was, before your son had accomplished his base designs on her.

Char. Madam, you injure him; his designs on me have been still honourable, nor hath he said any thing which the most virtuous ears might not have heard.

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Val. To-morrow shall silence your suspicions on that head.

Mrs. H. What, Mr. Goodall, do you forgive your son's extravagance?

Good. Is this lady your heiress?

Mrs. H. I once intended her so.

Good. Why then, Madam, I like her generous passion for my son so much, that if you will give her a fortune equal to what I shall settle on him, I shall not prevent their happiness.

Mrs. H. Wont you? and I see she is so entirely his, in her heart, that since he hath not dared to think dishonourably of her, I shall do all in my power to make it a bargain.

Val. Eternal blessings on you both! now, my Charlotte, I am blessed indeed.

Old. And pray, Madam, what's to become of me?

Mrs. H. That, Sir, I cannot possibly tell; you know I was your friend; but my niece thought fit to dispose of herself another way.

Old. Your niece has behaved like a—— bodikins! I am in a passion; and for her sake, I'll never make love to any woman again, I am resolved. [*Exit in a pet.*

Mrs. H. No imprudent resolution.

Good. I hope, Valentine, you will make the only return in your power to my paternal tenderness in forgiving you; and let the misery you so narrowly escaped, from your former extravagances, be a warning to you for the future.

Val. Sir, was my gratitude to your great goodness insufficient to reclaim me, I am in no danger of engaging in any vice, whereby this lady might be a sufferer.

Single, I'd suffer fate's severest dart
Unmoved; but who can bear the double smart,
When sorrow preys upon the fair one's heart.

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ALL FOR LOVE:

OR

THE WORLD WELL LOST.

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY MR. DRYDEN.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	DRURY LANE.
MARC ANTONY,	*Mr. Smith.*
VENTIDIUS,	*Mr. Palmer.*
DOLABELLA,	*Mr. Brereton.*
ALEXAS,	*Mr. Whitfield.*
SERAPION, Priest of Isis,	*Mr. Baddeley.*
CLEOPATRA, Queen of Egypt,	*Mrs. Siddons.*
OCTAVIA, Antony's wife,	*Mrs. Bates.*

SCENE.—Alexandria.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—The Temple of Isis.

SERAPION, MYRIS, *Priests of Isis, discovered.*

Ser. Portents and prodigies are grown so frequent, [Nile
That they have lost their name. Our fruitful
Flow'd ere the wonted season, with a torrent
So unexpected, and so wond'rous fierce,
That the wild deluge overtook the haste
Ev'n of the hinds that watch'd it. Men and beasts
Were borne above the tops of trees, that grew
On th' utmost margin of the water-mark.
Then, with so swift an ebb, the flood drove backward,
It slipp'd from underneath the scaly herd:
Here monstrous Phocæ panted on the shore;
Forsaken dolphins there, with their broad tails, [them,
Lay lashing the departing waves: hard by
Sea horses flound'ring in the slimy mud,
Toss'd up their heads, and dash'd the ooze about them.

Enter ALEXAS, *behind them.*

Myr. Avert these omens, Heaven.
Ser. Last night, between the hours of twelve and one,
In a lone isle o' the temple while I walk'd,
A whirlwind rose, that with a violent blast,
Shook all the dome: the doors around me clapp'd:
The iron wicket, that defends the vault,
Where the long race of Ptolemies is laid,
Burst open, and disclosed the mighty dead.
From out each monument, in order placed,
An armed ghost starts up; the boy-king last
Rear'd his inglorious head. A peal of groans
Then follow'd, and a lamentable voice
Cried Egypt is no more. My blood ran back,
My shaking knees against each other knock'd;
On the cold pavement down I fell entranced,
And so unfinish'd left the horrid scene!
Alex. And dream'd ye this? or, did invent the story? [*Showing himself.*
To frighten our Egyptian boys withal,
And train them up betimes in fear of priesthood?
Ser. My lord, I saw you not.

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Nor meant my words should reach your ears; but what
I utter'd was most true.
Alex. A foolish dream,
Bred from the fumes of indigested feasts,
And holy luxury.
Ser. I know my duty:
This goes no farther.
Alex. 'Tis not fit it should:
Nor would the times now bear it, were it true,
All southern from yon hills, the Roman camp
Hangs o'er us, black and threatening, like a storm
Just breaking on our heads.
Ser. 'Tis strange that Antony, for some days past,
Has not beheld the face of Cleopatra,
But here in Isis' temple lives retired,
And makes his heart a prey to black despair.
Alex. 'Tis true; and we much fear he hopes by absence
To cure his mind of love.
Ser. How stands the queen affected?
Alex. Oh! she dotes,
She dotes, Serapion, on this vanquish'd man,
And winds herself about his mighty ruins;
Whom, would she yet forsake, yet yield him up,
This hunted prey to his pursuer's hands,
She might preserve us all; but 'tis in vain——
This changes my designs, this blasts my counsels, here,
And makes me use all means to keep him
Whom I could wish divided from her arms,
Far as the earth's deep centre. Well, you know
The state of things: no more of your ill omens,
And black prognostics; labour to confirm
The people's hearts.

Enter VENTIDIUS, *talking aside with a* GENTLEMAN.

Ser. These Romans will o'erhear us.
But who's that stranger? By his warlike port,
His fierce demeanour, and erected look,
He's of no vulgar note.
Alex. Oh, 'tis Ventidius,
Our emperor's great lieutenant in the east,
Who first show'd Rome that Parthia could be conquer'd.
When Antony returned from Syria last,
He left this man to guard the Roman frontiers.
Ser. You seem to know him well.
Alex. Too well. I saw him in Cicilia first,
When Cleopatra there met Antony;
A mortal foe he was to us, and Egypt,
But let me witness to the worth I hate,
A braver Roman never drew a sword.
Firm to his prince, but as a friend, not slave
He ne'er was of his pleasures; but presides
O'er all his cooler hours, and morning counsels:
In short, the plainness, fierceness, rugged virtue,
Of an old true-stamp'd Roman lives in him.
His coming bodes I know not what of ill
To our affairs. Withdraw to mark him better;
And I'll acquaint you why I sought you here,
And what's our present work.
[VENTIDIUS, *with the other, comes forward.*
Vent. Not see him, say you!
I say, I must and will.
Gent. He has commanded, no one should approach his presence.
Vent. I bring him news, will raise his drooping spirits,
Give him new life.
Gent. He sees not Cleopatra.
Vent. Would he had never seen her.
Gent. He eats not, drinks not, sleeps not, has no use
Of any thing, but thought: or if he talks,
'Tis to himself, and then 'tis perfect raving:
Then he defies the world, and bids it pass.
Sometimes he gnaws his lip, and curses loud
The boy Octavius; then he draws his mouth
Into a scornful smile, and cries, Take all,
The world's not worth my care.
Vent. Just, just his nature.
Virtue's his path; but sometimes 'tis too narrow
For his vast soul; and then he starts out wide,
And bounds into a vice that bears him far
From his first course, and plunges him in ills:
He must not thus be lost.
[ALEX. *and* PRIESTS *come forward.*
Alex. You have your full instructions; now advance;
Proclaim your orders loudly.
Ser. Romans, Egyptians, hear the queen's command.
Thus Cleopatra bids: let labour cease;
To pomp and triumphs give this happy day,
That gave the world a lord; 'tis Antony's.
Live Antony; and Cleopatra live.
Be this the general voice sent up to Heaven,
And every public place repeat this echo.
Vent. Fine pageantry! [*Aside.*
Ser. Set out before your doors
The images of all your sleeping fathers,
With laurels crown'd; with laurels wreath your posts,
And strow with flowers the pavement; let the priest
Do present sacrifice, pour out the wine,
And call the gods to join with you in gladness.
Vent. Curse on the tongue that bids this general joy.
Can they be friends of Antony, who revel
When Antony's in danger? Hide for shame,
You Romans, your great grandsires' images,
For fear their souls should animate their marbles,
To blush at their degenerate progeny.
Alex. A love which knows no bounds to Antony,
Would mark the day with honours; when all heaven
Labour'd for him, when each propitious star
Stood wakeful in his orb, to watch that hour,
And shed his better influence. Her own birth-day
Our queen neglected, like a vulgar fate,
That passed obscurely by.
Vent. Would it had slept,
Divided far from his, till some remote
And future age had call'd it out, to ruin
Some other prince, not him.
Alex. Your emperor,
Though grown unkind, would be more gentle, than
T' upbraid my queen, for loving him too well.
Vent. I tell thee eunuch, she has quite unmann'd him;
Can any Roman see, and know him now,
Thus alter'd from the lord of half mankind,
Unbent, unsinew'd, made a woman's toy,
Shrunk from the vast extent of all his honours,
And cramp'd within a corner of the world!
O Antony!
Thou bravest soldier, and thou best of friends!
Bounteous as nature; next to nature's god!
Couldst thou but make new worlds, so would'st thou give them,
As bounty were thy being. Rough in battle,
As the first Romans, when they went to war;
Yet after victory, more pitiful,
Than all their praying virgins left at home!

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Alex. Would you could add to those more shining virtues,
His truth to her who loves him.
Vent. Would I could not. [thee?
But wherefore waste I precious hours with
Thou art her darling mischief, her chief engine,
Antony's other fate. Go tell thy queen,
Ventidius is arrived, to end her charms.
Let your Egyptian timbrels play alone;
Nor mix effeminate sounds with Roman trumpets.
You dare not fight for Antony; go pray,
And keep your coward's holy day in temples.
[*Exeunt* ALEX. *and* SER.

Enter another GENTLEMAN *of M. Antony's.*

2d. Gent. The emperor approaches, and commands,
On pain of death, that none presume to stay.
1st. Gent. I dare not disobey him.
[*Going out with the other.*
Vent. Well, I dare.
But I'll observe him first unseen, and find
Which way his humour drives: the rest I'll venture.

Enter ANTONY, *walking with a disturbed motion.*

Ant. They tell me, 'tis my birth-day, and I'll keep it
With double pomp of sadness. [breath.
'Tis what the day deserves, which gave me
Why was I raised the meteor of the world,
Hung in the skies, and blazing as I travell'd,
Till all my fires were spent, and then cast downward
To be trode out by Cæsar?
Vent. [*Aside.*] On my soul
'Tis mournful, wondrous mournful!
Ant. Count thy gains.
Now, Antony, wouldst thou be born for this!
Glutton of fortune, thy devouring youth
Has starved thy wanting age.
Vent. [*Aside.*] How sorrow shakes him!
So now the tempest tears him up by th' roots,
And on the ground extends the noble ruin.
Ant. [*Having thrown himself down.*] Lie there, thou shadow of an emperor;
The place thou pressest on thy mother earth
Is all thy empire now: now it contains thee;
Some few days hence, and then 'twill be too large,
When thou'rt contracted in thy narrow urn,
Shrunk to a few cold ashes; then Octavia,
(For Cleopatra will not live to see it)
Octavia then will have thee all her own,
And bear thee in her widow'd hand to Cæsar.
Give me some music; look that it be sad.
I'll soothe my melancholy, 'till I swell,
And burst myself with sighing— [*Soft music.*
'Tis somewhat to my humour. Stay, I fancy
I'm now turn'd wild, a commoner of nature;
Of all forsaken, and forsaking all;
Live in a shady forest's sylvan scene, [oak,
Stretch'd at my length beneath some blasted
I lean my head upon the mossy bark,
And look just of a piece, as I grew from it:
My uncomb'd locks, matted like misletoe,
Hang o'er my hoary face; and murm'ring brook
Runs at my foot—
Vent. I must disturb him.—I can hold no longer. [*Stands before him.*
Ant. [*Starting up.*] Art thou Ventidius?
Vent. Are you Antony?
I'm liker what I was, than you to him
I left you last.
Ant. I would be private. Leave me.
Vent. Sir, I love you,
And therefore will not leave you.
Ant. Will not leave me! [am I?
Where have you learnt that answer? Who
Vent. My emperor; the man I love next Heaven.
If I said more, I think 'twere scarce a sin:
You're all that's good, and godlike.
Ant. All that's wretched.
You will not leave me then?
Vent. 'Twas too presuming
To say I would not: but I dare not leave you;
And 'tis unkind in you to chide me hence
So soon, when I so far have come to see you.
Ant. Now thou hast seen me, art thou satisfied?
For, if a friend, thou hast beheld enough;
And, if a foe, too much.
Vent. Look emperor, this is no common dew, [*Weeping.*
I have not wept this forty years; but now
My mother comes afresh into my eyes;
I cannot help her softness.
Ant. By Heaven he weeps, poor good old man, he weeps!
Sure there's contagion in the tears of friends;
See I have caught it too. Believe me, 'tis not
For my own griefs, but thine——nay, father—
Vent. Emperor!
Ant. Emperor! Why that's the style of victory. [wounds,
The conquering soldier, red with unfelt
Salutes his general so: but never more
Shall that sound reach my ears.
Vent. I warrant you.
Ant. Actium, Actium! Oh——
Vent. It sits too near you.
Ant. Here, here it lies; a lump of lead by day;
And in my short distracted, nightly slumbers,
The hag that rides my dreams———
Vent. Out with it! give it vent.
Ant. Urge not my shame——
I lost a battle.
Vent. So has Julius done.
Ant. Thou favour'st me and speak'st not half thou think'st;
For Julius fought it out, and lost it fairly:
But Antony——
Vent. Nay, stop not.
Ant. Antony,
(Well, thou wilt have it) like a coward, fled,
Fled while his soldiers fought? fled first, Ventidius.
Thou long'st to curse me, and I give thee leave.
I have been a man, Ventidius.
Vent. Yes, and a brave one; but———
Ant. I know thy meaning.
But I have lost my reason, have disgraced
The name of soldier, with inglorious ease.
Help me, soldier,
To curse this madman, this industrious fool,
Who labour'd to be wretched. Pr'ythee curse me.
Vent. No.
Ant. Why?
Vent. You are too sensible already [failings,
Of what you have done: too conscious of your
And like a scorpion, whipp'd by others first
To fury, sting yourself in mad revenge.
I would bring balm and pour into your wounds, [fortunes.
Cure your distemper'd mind, and heal your

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Ant. I know thou wouldst.
Vent. I will.
Ant. Sure thou dream'st, Ventidius!
Vent. No; 'tis you dream; you sleep away your hours
In desperate sloth, miscall'd philosophy.
Up, up, for honour's sake; twelve legions wait you,
And long to call you chief. By painful journeys,
I led them, patient both of heat and hunger,
Down from the Parthian marches, to the Nile.
'Twill do you good to see their sun-burnt faces,
Their scarr'd cheeks, and chopp'd hands; there's virtue in them.
They'll sell those mangled limbs at dearer rates
Than you trim bands can buy.
Ant. Where left you them?
Vent. I said in Lower Syria.
Ant. Bring them hither;
There may be life in these.
Vent. They will not come.
Ant. Why didst thou mock my hopes with promised aids,
To double my despair? they're mutinous.
Vent. Most firm and loyal.
They said they would not fight for Cleopatra.
Ant. What wast they said?
Vent. They said they would not fight for Cleopatra.
Why should they fight, indeed, to make her conquerors,
And make you more a slave? to gain you kingdoms,
Which for a kiss, at your next midnight feast,
You'll sell to her?
Ant. Ventidius, I allow your tongue free license
On all my other faults: but, on your life,
No word of Cleopatra; she deserves
More worlds than I can lose.
Vent. Behold, you powers,
To whom you have entrusted human kind?
See Europe, Afric, Asia, put in balance;
And all weigh'd down by one light, worthless woman!
Ant. You grow presumptuous.
Vent. I take the privilege of plain love to speak.
Ant. Plain love! plain arrogance, plain insolence!
Thy men are cowards; thou, an envious traitor;
Who under seeming honesty hath vented
The burden of thy rank o'erflowing gall.
O that thou wert my equal; great in arms
As the first Cæsar was, that I might kill thee
Without stain to my honour!
Vent. You may kill me.
You have done more already; call'd me traitor.
Ant. Art thou not one?
Vent. For showing you yourself,
Which none else durst have done. But had I been
That name, which I disdain to speak again,
I needed not have sought your abject fortunes,
Come to partake your fate, to die with you.
What hinder'd me to have led my conquering eagles
To fill Octavia's bands? I could have been
A traitor then, a glorious, happy traitor,
And not have been so call'd.
Ant. Forgive me, soldier;
I've been too passionate.
Vent. You thought me false;
Thought my old age betray'd you. Kill me, Sir;
Pray kill me; yet, you need not, your unkindness
Has left your sword no work.
Ant. I did not think so;
I said it in my rage: pr'ythee forgive me.
Why didst thou tempt my anger, by discovery
Of what I would not hear.
Vent. No prince but you
Could merit that sincerity I used,
Nor durst another man have ventured it.
Ant. But Cleopatra——
Go on; for I can bear it now.
Vent. No more.
Ant. Thou darest not trust my passion; but thou may'st:
Thou only lovest, the rest have flatter'd me.
Vent. Heaven's blessing on your heart, for that kind word.
May I believe you love me? speak again.
Ant. Indeed I do. Speak this, this, and this. [*Hugging him.*
Thy praises were unjust; but I'll deserve 'em,
And yet mend all. Do with me what thou wilt:
Lead me to victory, thou know'st the way.
Vent. And, will you leave this——
Ant. Pr'ythee do not curse her,
And I will leave her; though, Heaven knows, I love
Beyond life, conquest, empire, all, but honour:
But I will leave her.
Vent. That's my royal master,
And shall we fight?
Ant. I warrant thee, old soldier;
Thou shalt behold me once again in iron,
And, at the head of our old troops, that beat
The Parthians, cry aloud, Come follow me.
Vent. Oh, now I hear my emperor! in that word
Octavius fell. Gods, let me see that day,
And, if I have ten years behind, take all;
I'll thank you for the exchange.
Ant. Oh, thou hast fired me! my soul's up in arms,
And man's each part about me. Once again
That noble eagerness of sight has seized me;
That eagerness with which I darted upward
To Cassius' camp. In vain the steepy hill
Opposed my way; in vain a war of spears
Sung round my head, and planted all my shield:
I won the trenches, while my foremost men
Lagg'd on the plain below.
Vent. Ye gods, ye gods,
For such another honour!
Ant. Come on, my soldier;
Our hearts and arms are still the same. I long
Once more to meet our foes; that thou and I,
Like time and death, marching before our troops,
May taste fate to 'em; mow them out a passage,
And entering where the foremost squadrons yield,
Begin the noble harvest of the field. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A grand Saloon.

Enter CLEOPATRA, IRAS, *and* ALEXAS.

Cleo. What shall I do; or whither shall I turn?
Ventidius has o'ercome, and he will go.
Alex. He goes to fight for you.
Cleo. Then he would see me, ere he went to fight.

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Flatter me not: if once he goes, he's lost,
And all my hopes destroy'd.
Alex. Does this weak passion
Become a mighty queen?
Cleo. I am no queen.
Is this to be a queen, to be besieged
By yon insulting Roman, and to wait
Each hour the victor's chain? these ills are small;
For Antony is lost, and I can mourn [vius,
For nothing else but him. Now come Octa-
I have no more to lose: prepare thy bands;
I'm fit to be a captive: Antony
Has taught my mind the fortune of a slave.
Iras. Call reason to assist you.
Cleo. I have none,
And none would have; my love's a noble madness, [sorrow
Which shows the cause deserves it. Moderate
Fits vulgar love, and for a vulgar man:
But I have loved with such transcendent passion,
I soar'd, at first, quite out of reason's view,
And now am lost above it.

Enter CHARMION.

Now, what news, my Charmion?
Will he be kind? and will he not forsake me?
Am I to die or live?
Char. I found him, Madam——
Cleo. A long speech preparing?
If thou bring'st comfort, haste, and give it me,
For never was more need.
Iras. I know he loves you.
Cleo. Had he been kind, her eyes had told me so, [studies,
Before her tongue could speak it: now she
To soften what he said; but give me death,
Just as he sent it, Charmion, undisguised,
And in the words he spoke.
Char. I found him then
Incompassed round; I think, with iron statues,
So mute, so motionless his soldiers stood,
While awfully he cast his eyes about,
And every leader's hopes and fears survey'd:
Methought he look'd resolved, and yet not pleased.
When he beheld me struggling in the crowd,
He blush'd, and bade make way.
Alex. There's comfort yet.
Char. Ventidius fix'd his eyes upon my passage
Severely, as he meant to frown me back,
And sullenly gave place. I told my message
Just as you gave, broken and disorder'd;
I number'd in it all your sighs and tears;
And while I moved your pitiful request,
That you but only begg'd a last farewell,
He fetch'd an inward groan, and every time
I named you, sigh'd, as if his heart were breaking, [down.
But shunn'd my eyes, and guiltily look'd
He seem'd not now that awful Antony
Who shook an arm'd assembly with his nod;
But making show as he would rub his eyes,
Disguised and blotted out a falling tear.
Cleo. Did he then weep? And was I worth a tear?
If what thou hast to say be not as pleasing,
Tell me no more, but let me die contented.
Char. He bid me say, He knew himself so well,
He could deny you nothing if he saw you,
And therefore—
Cleo. Thou would'st say he would not see me.
Char. And therefore begg'd you not to use a power
Which he could ill resist; yet he should ever
Respect you as he ought.
Cleo. Is that a word
For Antony to use to Cleopatra?
Oh, that faint word, respect! how I disdain it!
Disdain myself for loving after it! [it!
Alex. You misjudge; [sight;
You see through love, and that deludes your
But I who bear my reason undisturb'd,
Can see this Antony, this dreaded man,
A fearful slave, who fain would run away,
And shuns his master's eyes; if you pursue him,
My life on't, he still drags a chain along,
That needs must clog his flight.
Cleo. Could I believe thee——
Alex. By every circumstance I know he loves. [our;
True, he's hard press'd, by interest and by hon-
Yet he but doubts, and parlies, and casts out
Many a long look for succour.
Cleo. He sends word,
He fears to see my face.
Alex. And would you more?
He shows his weakness who declines the combat; [speak
And you must urge your fortune. Could he
More plainly? To my ears, the message sounds,
Come to my rescue, Cleopatra, come;
Come, free me from Ventidius; from my tyrant;
See me, and give me a pretence to leave him.
[*A march.*
I hear the trumpets. This way he must pass.
Please you, retire a while; I'll work him first,
That he may bend more easy.
Cleo. You shall rule me;
But all, I fear, in vain.
[*Exit with* CHAR. *and* IRAS.
Alex. I fear so too; [bold:
Though I concealed my thoughts, to make her
But 'tis our utmost means, and fate befriend it.
[*Withdraws. A march till all are on.*

Enter Lictors with Fasces; one bearing the Eagle: then enter ANTONY *and* VENTIDIUS, *followed by other Commanders.*

Ant. Octavius is the minion of blind chance;
But holds from virtue nothing.
Vent. Has he courage?
Ant. But just enough to season him from coward.
Oh, 'tis the coldest youth upon a charge;
The most deliberate fighter! If he ventures,
(As in Ilyria once they say he did,
To storm a town) 'tis when he cannot choose,
When all the world have fixed their eyes upon him;
And then he lives on that for seven years after;
But at a close revenge he never fails.
Vent. I heard you challeng'd him.
Ant. I did, Ventidius.
What think'st thou was his answer? 'Twas so tame——
He said he had more ways than one to die:
I had not.
Vent. Poor.
Ant. He has more ways than one:
But he would choose them all before that one.
Vent. He first would choose an ague or a fever.
Ant. No it must be an ague, not a fever:
He has not warmth enough to die by that.

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Vent. Or old age and a bed.
Ant. Ay, there's his choice.
He would live, like a lamp, to the last wink,
And crawl upon the utmost verge of life.
O Hercules! Why should a man like this,
Who dares not trust his fate for one great action,
Be all the care of Heaven? Why should he lord it
O'er fourscore thousand men, of whom each one
Is braver than himself?
Vent. Sir, we lose time; the troops are mounted all.
Ant. Then give the word to march.
I long to leave this prison of a town,
To join thy legions; and, in open field,
Once more to show my face. Lead, my deliverer.

Enter ALEXAS.

Alex. Great emperor,
In mighty arms renown'd above mankind,
But in soft pity to th' oppress'd, a god;
This message sends the mournful Cleopatra
To her departing lord.
Vent. Smooth sycophant!
Alex. A thousand wishes, and ten thousand prayers,
Millions of blessings wait you to the wars;
Millions of sighs and tears she sends you too,
And would have sent
As many parting kisses to your lips;
But those she fears have wearied you already.
Vent. [*Aside.*] False crocodile!
Alex. And yet she begs not now, you would not leave her,
That were a wish too mighty for her hopes,
And too presuming (for her low fortune, and your ebbing love)
That were a wish for her most prosperous days,
Her blooming beauty, and your growing kindness.
Ant. [*Aside.*] Well, I must man it out—What would the queen?
Alex. First to these noble warriors, who attend
Your daring courage in the chase of fame,
(Too daring and too dangerous for her quiet)
She humbly recommends all she holds dear,
All her own cares and fears, the care of you.
Vent. Yes, witness Actium.
Ant. Let him speak, Ventidius.
Alex. You, when his matchless valour bears him forward,
With ardour too heroic, on his foes,
Fall down, as she would do, before his feet;
Lie in his way, and stop the paths of death;
Tell him, this god is not invulnerable,
That absent Cleopatra bleeds in him;
And, that you may remember her petition,
She begs you wear these trifles, as a pawn,
Which at your wish'd return, she will redeem
[*Gives jewels.*
With all the wealth of Ægypt.
This, to the great Ventidius she presents,
Whom she can never count her enemy,
Because he loves her lord.
Vent. Tell her, I'll none on't;
I'm not asham'd of honest poverty;
Not all the diamonds of the east can bribe
Ventidius from his faith. I hope to see
These and the rest of all her sparkling store,
Where they shall more deservingly be placed.
Ant. And who must wear them then?
Vent. The wrong'd Octavia.
Ant. You might have spared that word.
Vent. And she that bribe.
Ant. But I have no remembrance.
Alex. Yes a dear one;
Your slave, the queen——
Ant. My mistress.
Alex. Then your mistress.
Your mistress would, she says, have sent her soul,
But that you had long since; she humbly begs
This ruby bracelet, set with bleeding hearts,
(The emblems of her own) may bind your arm.
Vent. Now, my best lord, in honour's name I ask you,
For manhood's sake, and for your own dear safety,
Touch not those poison'd gifts,
Infected by the sender; touch them not;
Myriads of bluest plagues lie underneath 'em,
And more than aconite has dipp'd the silk.
Ant. Nay now you grow too cynical, Ventidius;
A lady's favour may be worn with honour.
What, to refuse her bracelet! On my soul,
When I lie pensive in my tent alone,
'Twill pass the wakeful hours of winter nights,
To tell these pretty beads upon my arm,
To count for every one a soft embrace,
A melting kiss at such and such a time;
And now and then the fury of her love,
When——and what harm's in this?
Alex. None, none, my lord,
But what's to her, that now 'tis past for ever.
Ant. [*Going to tie it.*] We soldiers are so awkward——Help me to tie it.
Alex. In faith, my lord, we courtiers too are awkward
In these affairs: so are all men indeed;
But shall I speak?
Ant. Yes, freely.
Alex. Then, my lord, fair hands alone
Are fit to tie it; she who sent it can.
Vent. Hell! death! this eunuch pander ruins you.
You will not see her?
[ALEXAS *whispers an Attendant.*
Ant. But to take my leave.
Vent. Then I have wash'd an Ethiop. Y'are undone!
Y'are in the toils! y'are taken! y'are destroy'd!
Her eyes do Cæsar's work.
Ant. You fear too soon.
I am constant to myself? I know my strength;
And yet she shall not think me barbarous neither,
Born in the depths of Afric; I'm a Roman,
Bred to the rules of soft humanity,
A guest, and kindly used, should bid farewell.
Vent. You do not know
How weak you are to her; how much an infant;
You are not proof against a smile or glance;
A sigh will quite disarm you.
Ant. See, she comes!
Now, you shall find your error. Gods, I thank you;
You form'd the danger greater than it was,
And now 'tis near, 'tis lessen'd.
Vent. Mark the end yet.

Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMION *and* IRAS.

Ant. Well, Madam, we are met.
Cleo. Is this a meeting?
Then we must part!
Ant. We must.
Cleo. Who says we must?
Ant. Our own hard fates.

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Cleo. We make those fates ourselves.
Ant. Yes, we have made them; we have loved each other,
Unto our mutual ruin.
Cleo. The gods have seen my joys with envious eyes;
And all the world, [us)
(As 'twere the business of mankind to part
Is arm'd against my love; even you yourself
Join with the rest: you, you are arm'd against me.
Ant. I will be justified in all I do
To late posterity, and therefore, hear me;
If I mix a lie
With any truth, reproach me freely with it;
Else, favour me with silence.
Cleo. You command me,
And I am dumb.
Vent. I like this well; he shows authority.
Ant. That I derive my ruin
From you alone——
Cleo. O Heavens! I ruin you!
Ant. You promised your silence, and you break it,
Ere I have scarce begun.
Cleo. Well, I obey you.
Ant. When I beheld you first, it was in Egypt,
Ere Cæsar saw your eyes; you gave me love,
And were too young to know it; that I settled
Your father on his throne, was for your sake;
I left th' acknowledgment for time to ripen.
Cæsar stepp'd in, and with a greedy hand
Pluck'd the green fruit, ere the first blush of red,
Yet cleaving to the bough. He was my lord,
And was, beside, too great for me to rival.
But I deserved you first, though he enjoy'd you.
When, after, I beheld you in Cilicia,
An enemy to Rome, I pardon'd you.
Cleo. I clear'd myself——
Ant. Again you break your promise.
I loved you still, and took your weak excuses,
Took you into my bosom, stain'd by Cæsar,
And not half mine: I went to Egypt with you,
And hid me from the business of the world,
Shut out inquiring nations from my sight,
To give whole years to you.
Vent. Yes, to your shame be't spoken. [*Aside.*
Ant. How I loved
Witness ye days and nights, and all ye hours,
That danced away with down upon your feet,
As all your business were to count my passion.
One day pass'd by, and nothing saw but love;
Another came, and still 'twas only love;
The suns were wearied out with looking on,
And I untired with loving.
I saw you every day, and all the day,
And every day was still but as the first;
So eager was I still to see you more.
Vent. 'Tis all too true.
Ant. Fulvia, my wife, grew jealous,
As she, indeed, had reason, raised a war
In Italy to call me back.
Vent. But yet
You went not.
Ant. While within your arms I lay,
The world fell mouldering from my hands each hour, [for't.
And left me scarce a grasp, I thank your love
Vent. Well push'd! that last was home.
Cleo. Yet may I speak?
Ant. If I have urged a falsehood, yes; else, not.
Your silence says I have not. Fulvia died;
(Pardon, you gods, with my unkindness died,)
To set the world at peace, I took Octavia,
This Cæsar's sister; in her pride of youth,
And flower of beauty did I wed that lady,
Whom, blushing, I must praise, although I left her: [mons;
You call'd; my love obey'd the fatal sum-
This raised the Roman arms; the cause was yours. [stronger;
I would have fought by land, where I was
You hinder'd it; yet, when I fought at sea,
Forsook me fighting; and, O stain to honour!
O lasting shame! I knew not that I fled,
But fled to follow you.
Vent. What haste she made to hoist her purple sails;
And to appear magnificent in flight,
Drew half our strength away.
Ant. All this you caused,
And, would you multiply more ruins on me?
This honest man, my best, my only friend,
Has gather'd up the shipwreck of my fortunes;
Twelve legions I have left, my last recruits,
And you have watch'd the news, and bring your eyes
To seize them too. If you have ought to answer,
Now speak, you have free leave.
Alex. She stands confounded:
Despair is in her eyes. [*Aside.*
Vent. Now lay a sigh i' th' way, to stop his passage:
Prepare a tear, and bid it for his legions;
'Tis like they shall be sold.
Cleo. How shall I plead my cause, when you, my judge,
Already have condemn'd me? Shall I bring
The love you bore me for my advocate?
That now is turn'd against me, that destroys me;
For love once past, is at the best forgotten.
But oftener sours to hate: 'twill please my lord
To ruin me, and, therefore, I'll be guilty.
But, could I once have thought it would have pleased you, [eyes
That you would pry, with narrow, searching
Into my faults, severe to my destruction,
And watching all advantages with care,
That serve to make me wretched? Speak, my lord,
For I end here. Though I deserve this usage,
Was it like you to give it?
Ant. O, you wrong me,
To think I sought this parting, or desired
T' accuse you more than what will clear myself,
And justify this breach.
Cleo. Thus low I thank you:
And since my innocence will not offend,
I shall not blush to own it.
Vent. After this
I think she'll blush at nothing.
Cleo. You seem grieved,
(And therein you are kind) that Cæsar first
Enjoy'd my love, though you deserved it better. [ed
For had I first been yours, it would have save-
My second choice; I never had been his,
And ne'er had been but yours. But Cæsar first
You say possess'd my love. Not so, my lord:
He first possess'd my person, you my love;
Cæsar loved me; but I loved Antony.
Vent. O, syren! syren! [true,
Yet grant that all the love she boasts were

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Has she not ruin'd you? I still urge that,
The fatal consequence.
Cleo. The consequence indeed,
For I dare challenge him, my greatest foe,
To say it was design'd; 'tis true, I loved you,
And kept you far from an uneasy wife,
Such Fulvia was.
Yes, but he'll say, you left Octavia for me:
And can you blame me to receive that love,
Which quitted such desert for worthless me?
How often have I wish'd some other Cæsar,
Great as the first, and as the second young,
Would court my love, to be refused for you!
Vent. Words, words! but Actium, Sir, remember Actium.
Cleo. Even there, I dare his malice. True, I counsell'd
To fight at sea; but I betray'd you not.
I fled, but not to the enemy. 'Twas fear:
Would I had been a man, not to have fear'd,
For none would then have envied me your friendship,
Who envy me your love.
Ant. We're both unhappy;
If nothing else, yet our ill fortune parts us.
Speak! Would you have me perish by my stay?
Cleo. If as a friend you ask my judgment, go;
If as a lover, stay. If you must perish——
'Tis a hard word; but stay.
Vent. See now the effects of her so boasted love!
She strives to drag you down to ruin with her;
But could she scape without you, O how soon
Would she let go her hold, and haste to shore,
And never look behind.
Cleo. Then judge my love by this.
[*Gives* ANT. *a letter.*
Could I have borne
A life or death, a happiness or wo,
From yours divided, this had given me means.
Ant. By Hercules! the writing of Octavius!
See, see, Ventidius! Here he offers Egypt,
And joins all Syria to it, as a present,
So, in requital, she forsakes my fortune,
And joins her arms with his.
Cleo. And yet you leave me!
You leave me, Antony; and yet I love you.
Indeed I do: I have refused a kingdom,
That's a trifle;
For I would part with life, with any thing,
But only you. O let me die but with you!
Is that a hard request?
Ant. Next living with you,
'Tis all that Heaven can give.
Cleo. No; you shall go; your interest calls you hence; [these
Yes; your dear interest pulls too strong for
Weak arms to hold you here——
[*Takes his hand.*
Go; leave me, soldier;
(For you're no more a lover:) leave me dying;
Push me all pale and panting from your bosom,
And when your march begins, let one run after,
Breathless almost for joy, and cry, she's dead!
The soldier's shout; you then perhaps may sigh,
And muster all your Roman gravity;
Ventidius chides, and straight your brow clears up,
As I had never been.
Ant. Gods, 'tis too much! too much for man to bear.
Cleo. What is't for me then,
A weak, forsaken woman, and a lover?
Here let me breathe my last; envy me not
This minute in your arms, I'll die
And end your trouble.
Ant. Die!—Rather let me perish! Loosen'd nature
Leap from its hinges, sink the props of heaven,
And fall the skies to crush the nether world.
My eyes! my soul! my all!——
[*Embraces her.*
But, could she scape without me, with what haste
Would she let slip her hold and make to shore,
And never look behind!
Down on thy knees, blasphemer as thou art,
And ask forgiveness of wrong'd innocence.
Vent. I'll rather die, than take it. Will you go?
Ant. Go! whither? Go from all that's excellent!
Give to your boy, your Cæsar,
This rattle of a globe to play withal,
This gew-gaw world, and put him cheaply off:
I'll not be pleased with less than Cleopatra.
Cleo. She's wholly yours. My heart's so full of joy,
That I shall do some wild extravagance
Of love in public; and the foolish world,
Which knows not tenderness, will think me mad.
Vent. O women, women, women! all the gods
Have not such power of doing good to man;
As you of doing harm. [*Exit.*
Ant. Our men are arm'd.
Unbar the gate that looks to Cæsar's camp;
I would revenge the treachery he meant me;
And long security makes conquest easy.
I'm eager to return before I go;
For all the pleasures I have known, beat thick
On my remembrance. How I long for night;
That both the sweets of mutual love may try,
And triumph once o'er Cæsar ere we die.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMION, IRAS, ALEXAS, *and Train;* ANTONY *and Romans.*

CLEOPATRA *crowns* ANTONY.

Ant. My brighter Venus!
Cleo. O my greater Mars!
Ant. Thou join'st us well my love.
There's no satiety of love in thee;
Enjoy'd, thou still art new; perpetual spring
Is in thy arms; the ripen'd fruit but falls,
And blossoms rise to fill its empty place,
And I grow rich by giving.

Enter VENTIDIUS, *and stands apart.*

Alex. O now the danger's past; your general comes,
He joins not in your joys, nor minds your triumphs:
But with contracted brows, looks frowning on,
As envying your success.
Ant. Now, on my soul he loves me, truly loves me;
He never flatter'd me in any vice.
But awes me with his virtue; even this minute
Methinks he has a right of chiding me.

Lead to the temple; I'll avoid his presence,
It checks too strong upon me.
[*Exeunt the rest.*
[*As* ANTONY *is going,* VENTIDIUS *pulls him by the robe.*
Vent. Emperor!
Ant. 'Tis the old argument; I pr'ythee spare me. [*Looking back.*
Vent. But this one hearing, emperor.
Ant. Let go
y robe! or, by my father Hercules——
Vent. By Hercules's father—that's yet greater,
bring you somewhat you would wish to know.
Ant. Thou see'st we are observed; attend me here,
And I'll return. [*Exit.*
Vent. I'm waneing in his favour, yet I love him;
I love this man who runs to meet his ruin!
And sure the gods, like me are fond of him:
His virtues lie so mingled with his crimes,
As would confound their choice to punish one,
And not reward the other.

Enter ANTONY.

Ant. We can conquer,
You see, without your aid.
We have dislodged their troops,
Five thousand Romans, with their faces upward,
Lie breathless on the plain.
Vent. 'Tis well: and he
Who lost them, could have spared ten thousand more.
Yet if, by this advantage, you could gain
An easier peace, while Cæsar doubts the chance
Of arms——
Ant. O think not on't, Ventidius!
The boy pursues my ruin; he'll no peace!
Vent. Have you no friend
In all his army, who has power to move him;
Meceanas, or Aggippa, might do much.
Ant. Pray think again.
Why dost thou drive me from myself, to search
For foreign aids; to hunt my memory,
And range all o'er a wild and barren place
To find a friend? the wretched have no friends——
Yet I had one, the bravest youth of Rome,
Whom Cæsar loves beyond the love of women.
Vent. Him would I see! that man of all the world!
Just such a one we want.
Ant. He loved me too.
I was his soul; he lived not but in me;
We were so closed within each other's breasts,
The rivets were not found that join'd us first.
I need not tell his name: 'twas Dolabella.
Vent. He's now in Cæsar's camp.
Ant. No matter where,
Since he's no longer mine. He took unkindly
That I forbade him Cleopatra's sight;
Because I fear'd he loved her.
Would he were here.
Vent. Would you believe he loved you?
I read your answer in your eyes you would.
Not to conceal it longer, he is sent
A messenger from Cæsar's camp, with letters.
Ant. Let him appear.
Vent. I'll bring him instantly.
[*Exit* VENTIDIUS, *and re-enters immediately with* DOLABELLA.

Ant. 'Tis he himself, himself; by holy friendship! [*Runs to embrace him.*
Art thou return'd at last, my better half!
Come give me all myself!
Dol. I must be silent, for my soul is busy
About a nobler work. She's new come home!
Like a long absent man, and wanders o'er
Each room, a stranger to her own, to look
If all be safe.
Ant. Thou hast what's left of me;
But, O my Dolabella!
Thou hast beheld me other than I am——
Hast thou seen my morning chamber fill'd
With scepter'd slaves, who waited to salute me?
With eastern monarchs, who forgot the sun
To worship my uprising? Menial kings
Stood silent in my presence, watch'd my eyes
And, at my least command, all started out,
Like racers to the goal.
Dol. Slaves to your fortune.
Ant. Fortune is Cæsar's now; and what am I?
Vent. What have you made yourself; I will not flatter.
Ant. Is this friendly done?
Dol. Yes, when his end is so, I must join with him;
Indeed I must, and yet you must not chide:
Why am I else your friend?
Ant. Take heed, young man,
How thou upbraid'st my love? the queen has eyes
And thou too hast a soul! Canst thou remember
When, swell'd with hatred, thou beheld'st her first,
As accessary to thy brother's death?
Dol. Spare my remembrance! 'twas a guilty day.
And still the blush hangs here.
Ant. To clear herself,
For sending him no aid, she came from Egypt,
Her galley down the silver Sydnos row'd,
The tackling silk, the streamers waved with gold;
The gentle winds were lodged in purple sail:
Her nymphs, like nereids, round her couch were placed;
Where she, another sea-born Venus, lay.
Dol. No more! I would not hear it!
Ant. Oh, you must!
She lay, and lean'd her cheek upon her hand,
And cast a look so languishingly sweet,
As if, secure of all beholder's hearts,
Neglecting she could take them! boys like cupids,
Stood fanning with their painted wings, the winds
That play'd about her face: but if she smiled,
A darting glory seem'd to blaze abroad:
That men's desiring eyes were never wearied,
But hung upon the object! To soft flutes
The silver oars kept time; and while they play'd,
The hearing gave new pleasure to the sight,
And both to thought. 'Twas Heaven, or somewhat more!
For she so charm'd all hearts, that gazing crowds
Stood panting on the shore, and wanted breath
To give their welcome voice:
Then, Dolabella, where was then thy soul?
Was not thy fury quite disarm'd with wonder?
And whisper in my ear, oh, tell her not
That I accused her of my brother's death!

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Dol. And should my weakness be a plea for yours?
Mine was an age when love might be excused,
Yours——
Vent. Speak boldly,
Yours, he would say, in your declining age,
In you (I would not use so harsh a word)
'Tis but plain dotage.
Ant. Ha!
Dol. 'Twas urged too home.
But yet the loss was private that I made;
'Twas but myself I lost: I lost no legions;
I had no world to lose, no people's love.
Ant. This from a friend?
Dol. Yes, Antony, a true one;
A friend so tender, that each word I speak
Stabs my own heart, before it reach your ear.
O judge me not less kind because I chide:
To Cæsar I excuse you.
Ant. O ye gods!
Have I then lived to be excused to Cæsar!
Dol. As to your equal.
Ant. Well, he's but my equal:
While I wear this, he never shall be more.
Dol. I bring conditions from him.
Ant. Are they noble?
Methinks thou shouldst not bring them else; yet he
Is full of deep dissembling; knows no honour
Divided from his interest.
He's fit, indeed, to buy, not conquer kingdoms.
Vent. Then, granting this,
What power was theirs who wrought so hard a temper
To honourable terms?
Ant. It was my Dolabella, or some god.
Dol. Not I; nor yet Meceanas, nor Agrippa;
They were your enemies; and I a friend
Too weak alone; yet 'twas a Roman deed.
Ant. 'Twas like a Roman done; show me that man
Who has preserved my life, my love, my honour;
Let me but see his face.
Vent. That task is mine.
And, Heaven, thou know'st how pleasing.
[*Exit* VENT.
Dol. You'll remember
To whom you stand obliged?
Ant. When I forget it,
Be thou unkind, and that's my greatest curse.
My queen shall thank him too.
Dol. I fear she will not.
Ant. But she shall do't. The queen, my Dolabella!
Hast thou not still some grudgings of thy fever?
Dol. I would not see her lost.
Ant. When I forsake her,
Leave me, my better stars; for she has truth
Beyond her beauty. Cæsar tempted her,
At no less price than kingdoms, to betray me;
But she resisted all; and yet thou chid'st me
For loving her too well. Could I do so?
Dol. Yes; there's my reason.

Re-enter VENTIDIUS *with* OCTAVIA, *leading* ANTONY'S *two little Daughters.*

Ant. Where?——Octavia there!
[*Starting back.*
Vent. What, is she poison to you? a disease?
Look on her; view her well, and those she brings,
Are they all strangers to your eyes? Has nature
No secret call, no whisper they are yours?
Dol. For shame, my lord, if not for love, receive them
With kinder eyes. If you confess a man,
Meet them, embrace them, bid them welcome to you.
Ant. I stood amazed to think how they came hither.
Vent. I sent for them; I brought them in, unknown
To Cleopatra's guards.
Dol. Yet are you cold?
Oct. Thus long I have attended for my welcome;
Which, as a stranger, sure I might expect.
Who am I?
Ant. Cæsar's sister.
Oct. That's unkind!
Had I been nothing more than Cæsar's sister,
Know, I had still remain'd in Cæsar's camp;
But your Octavia, your much injured wife,
The banish'd from your bed, driven from your house;
In spite of Cæsar's sister, still is yours.
'Tis true, I have a heart disdains your coldness,
And prompts me not to seek what you should offer;
But a wife's virtue still surmounts that pride;
I come to claim you as my own; to show
My duty first, to ask, nay beg, your kindness;
Your hand, my lord; 'tis mine, and I will have it.
Vent. Do take it; thou deserv'st it.
Dol. On my soul, and so she does.
Ant. I fear Octavia, you have begg'd my life.
Oct. Begg'd it, my lord?
Ant. Yes, begg'd it, my ambassadress;
Poorly and basely begg'd it of your brother.
Oct. Poorly and basely, I could never beg;
Nor could my brother grant.
Ant. Shall I, who, to my kneeling slave, could say,
Rise up and be a king; shall I fall down
And cry, forgive me, Cæsar?
No; that word,
Forgive, would choke me up,
And die upon my tongue.
Dol. You shall not need it.
Ant. I will not need it. Come, you've all betray'd me,
My wife has bought me, with her prayers and tears;
In every peevish mood she will upbraid
The life she gave. If I but look awry,
She cries I'll tell my brother.
Oct. My hard fortune
Subjects me still to your unkind mistakes.
But the conditions I have brought are such
You need not blush to take. I love your honour,
Because 'tis mine. It never shall be said
Octavia's husband was her brother's slave.
Sir, you are free; free even from her you loathe;
For, though my brother bargains for your love,
Makes me the price and cement of your peace,
I have a soul like yours, I cannot take
Your love as alms, nor beg what I deserve.
I'll tell my brother we are reconciled;
He shall draw back his troops, and you shall march
To rule the east: I may be dropp'd at Athens;
No matter where, I never will complain,
But only keep the barren name of wife,
And rid you of the trouble.

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Vent. Was ever such a strife of sullen honour!
Both scorn to be obliged.
Dol. Oh! she has touch'd him in the tenderest part.
See how he reddens with despight and shame
To be out-done in generosity!
Ant. Octavia, I have heard you, and must praise
The greatness of your soul;
But cannot yield to what you have proposed:
For I can ne'er be conquer'd but by love;
And you do all for duty. You would free me,
And would be dropp'd at Athens; was't not so?
Oct. It was, my lord.
Ant. Then I must be obliged,
To one who loves me not; who to herself,
May call me thankless and ungrateful man.
I'll not endure it; no.
Vent. I'm glad it pinches there.
Oct. Would you triumph o'er poor Octavia's virtue?
That pride was all I had to bear me up;
That you might think you owed me for your life,
And owed it to my duty, not my love.
Ant. Therefore you love me not.
Oct. Therefore, my lord,
I should not love you.
Ant. Therefore you would leave me.
Oct. And therefore I should leave you—If I could.
Dol. Her soul's too great, after such injuries,
To say she loves: and yet she lets you see it.
Her modesty and silence plead her cause.
Ant. O Dolabella! which way shall I turn?
I find a secret yielding in my soul;
But Cleopatra, who would die with me,
Must she be left? Pity pleads for Octavia,
But does it not plead more for Cleopatra!
Vent. Justice and pity both plead for Octavia;
For Cleopatra, neither.
One would be ruin'd with you; but she first
Had ruin'd you; the other you have ruin'd,
And yet she would preserve you.
In every thing their merits are unequal.
Ant. O my distracted soul!
Oct. Sweet Heaven, compose it.
Come, come, my lord, if I can pardon you,
Methinks you should accept it. Look on these;
Are they not yours? Or stand they thus neglected
As they are mine? Go to him, children, go,
Kneel to him, take him by the hand, speak to him;
You, Agrippina, hang upon his arms,
And you, Antonia, clasp about his waist:
If he will shake you off, if he will dash you
Against the pavement, you must bear it, children
For you are mine, and I was born to suffer.
[*Children go to him, &c.*
Vent. Was ever sight so moving! Emperor!
Dol. Friend!
Oct. Husband!
Both Child. Father!
Ant. I am vanquish'd: take me,
Octavia; take me, children; share me all.
[*Embracing.*
I've been a thriftless debtor to your loves,
And run out much in riot, from your stock;
But all shall be amended.
Oct. O bless'd hour!
Dol. O happy change!
Vent. My joy stops at my tongue!
Ant. [*To* Oct.] This is thy triumph: lead me where thou wilt.
Even to thy brother's camp.
Oct. All there are yours.

Enter Alexas *hastily.*

Alex. The queen, my mistress, Sir, and yours——
Ant. 'Tis past. Octavia, you shall stay this night;
To-morrow, Cæsar and we are one.
[*Exit, leading* Oct.; Dol. *and the Children follow.*
Vent. There's news for you; Run, my officious eunuch,
Be sure to be the first; haste forward:
Haste, my dear eunuch, haste. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Saloon.

Enter Antony *and* Dolabella

Dol. Why would you shift it from yourself on me?
Can you not tell her you must part?
Ant. I cannot.
I could pull out an eye, and bid it go,
And t'other should not weep. O Dolabella,
How many deaths are in this word depart!
I dare not trust my tongue to tell her so:
One look of hers would thaw me into tears,
And I should melt till I were lost again.
Dol. Then let Ventidius;
He's rough by nature.
Ant. Oh! he'll speak too harshly;
He'll kill her with the news: thou, only thou.
Dol. Nature has cast me in so soft a mould,
That——I should speak
So faintly; with such fear to grieve her heart,
She'd not believe it earnest.
Ant. Therefore; therefore,
Thou only, thou art fit: think thyself me.
And when thou speak'st (but let it first be long)
Take off the edge from every sharper sound,
And let our parting be as gently made
As other loves begin. Wilt thou do this?
Dol. What you have said, so sinks into my soul,
That, if I must speak, I shall speak just so.
Ant. I leave you then to your sad task, farewell.
I sent her word to meet you.
[*Goes to the door, comes back.*
I forgot;
Let her be told, I'll make her peace with mine:
Her crown and dignity shall be preserved,
If I have power with Cæsar——O be sure
To think on that.
Dol. Fear not, I will remember.
Ant. And tell her, too, how much I was constrain'd;
I did not this but with extremest force.
Desire her not to hate my memory,
For I still cherish hers;——insist on that.
Dol. Trust me, I'll not forget it.
Ant. Then that's all.
[*Goes and returns again.*
Wilt thou forgive my fondness this once more?
Tell her, though we shall never meet again,
If I should hear she took another love,
The news would break my heart—Now I must go;
For every time I have returned I feel
My soul more tender; and my next command
Would be to bid her stay, and ruin both.
[*Exit.*

Dol. Men are but children of a larger growth,
Our appetites as apt to change as theirs,
And full as craving too, and full as vain;
And yet the soul, shut up in her dark room,
Viewing so clear abroad, at home sees nothing;
But, like a mole in earth, busy and blind,
Works all her folly up, and casts it outward
To the world's open view: thus I discover'd,
And blamed the love of ruined Antony;
Yet wish that I were he, to be so ruin'd.

Enter VENTIDIUS *above.*

Vent. Alone, and talking to himself! concern'd too!
Perhaps my guess is right; he loved her once,
And may pursue it still.
Dol. O friendship! friendship!
Ill canst thou answer this; and reason, worse:
Unfaithful in th' attempt; hopeless to win;
And, if I win, undone. Mere madness all.
And, yet th' occasion fair. What injury
To him, to wear the robe which he throws by?
Vent. None, none at all. This happens as I wish,
To ruin her yet more with Antony.

Enter CLEO. *with* ALEX. CHAR. *and* IRAS, *on the other side.*

Dol. She comes! what charms have sorrow on that face! [sweetness;
Sorrow seems pleased to dwell with so much
Yet now and then, a melancholy smile [night,
Breaks loose, like light'ning in a winter's
And shows a moment's day.
Vent. If she should love him too! her eunuch there!
That porc'pisce bodes ill weather. Draw, draw nearer,
Sweet devil, that I may hear.
Alex. Believe me; try
[DOL. *goes over to* CHAR. *and* IRAS.
To make him jealous; jealousy is like
A polish'd glass held to the lips when life's in doubt: [show it.
If there be breath, 'twill catch the damp and
Cleo. I grant you jealousy's a proof of love,
But 'tis a weak and unavailing medicine;
Alex. 'Tis your last remedy, and strongest too:
And then this Dolabella, who so fit
To practise on? he's handsome, valiant, young,
And looks as he were laid for nature's bait,
To catch weak women's eyes.
He stands already more than half suspected
Of loving you: the least kind word or glance,
You give this youth, will kindle him with love:
Then like a burning vessel set adrift,
You'll send him down amain before the wind,
To fire the heart of jealous Antony.
Cleo. Can I do this? Ah, no; my love's so true,
That I can neither hide it where it is,
Nor show it where it is not.
Alex. Force yourself.
Th' event will be, your lover will return
Doubly desirous to possess the good
Which once he fear'd to lose.
Cleo. I must attempt it:
But oh! with what regret!
[*Exit* ALEX. *she comes up to* DOL.
Vent. So now the scene draws near; they're in my reach.
Cleo. [*To* DOL.] Discoursing with my women! might not I
Share in your entertainment?
Char. You have been
The subject of it, Madam.
Cleo. How! and how!
Iras. Such praises of your beauty!
Cleo. Mere poetry.
Your Roman wits, your Gallus and Tibulelus,
Have taught you this from Cytheris and Delia.
Dol. Those Roman wits have never been in Egypt,
Cytheris and Delia else had been unsung:
I, who have seen——had I been born a poet,
Should choose a nobler name.
Cleo. You flatter me,
But 'tis your nation's vice; all of your country
Are flatterers, and all false. Your friend's like you.
I'm sure he sent you not to speak these words.
Dol. No, Madam; yet he sent me——
Cleo. Well, he sent you——
Dol. Of a less pleasing errand.
Cleo. How less pleasing?
Less to yourself, or me?
Dol. Madam, to both;
For you must mourn, and I must grieve to cause it.
Cleo. You Charmion and your fellow, stand at distance.
Hold up, my spirits. [*Aside.*]——Well, now your mournful matter;
For I'm prepared, perhaps can guess it, too.
Dol. I wish you would; for 'tis a thankless office
To tell ill news: and I, of all your sex,
Most fear displeasing you.
Cleo. Of all your sex,
I soonest would forgive you, if you should.
Vent. Most delicate advances! woman! woman!
Dear, damn'd, inconstant sex!
Cleo. In the first place,
I am to be forsaken; is't not so?
Dol. I wish I could not answer to that question.
Cleo. Then pass it o'er, because it troubles you: [Egypt.
Next, I'm to lose my kingdom——Farewell,
Yet, is there any more?
Dol. Madam, I fear
Your too deep sense of grief, has turn'd your reason.
Cleo. No, no, I'm not run mad; I can bear fortune;
And love may be expell'd by other love,
As poisons are by poisons.
Dol. ——You o'erjoy me, Madam,
To find your griefs so moderately borne,
You've heard the worst; all are not false like him.
Cleo. No; Heaven forbid they should.
Dol. Some men are constant.
Cleo. And constancy deserves reward, that's certain.
Dol. Deserves it not; but give it leave to hope.
Vent. I'll swear thou hast my leave. I have enough. [*Exit.*
Dol. I came prepared,
To tell you heavy news; news, which I thought
Would fright the blood from your pale cheeks to hear;
But you have met it with a cheerfulness
That makes my task more easy; and my tongue,
Which on another's message was employ'd,
Would gladly speak its own.

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Cleo. Hold, Dolabella.
First tell me, were you chosen by my lord?
Or sought you this employment?
Dol. He pick'd me out; and as his bosom-friend,
He charged me with his words.
Cleo. The message then
I know was tender, and each accent smooth,
To mollify that rugged word Depart.
Dol. Oh! you mistake; he chose the harshest words;
He coin'd his face in the severest stamp,
And fury shook his fabric like an earthquake;
He heaved for vent, and burst like bellowing Ætna, [ever;
In sounds scarce human, "Hence, away for
Let her begone, the blot of my renown,
And bane of all hopes.
[*All the time of this speech* CLEOPATRA *seems more and more concerned, till she sinks quite down.*
Let her be driven as far as men can think
From man's commerce; she'll poison to the centre."
Cleo. Oh, I can bear no more. [*Faints.*
Dol. Help, help! O wretch! cursed, cursed! wretch!
What have I done!
Char. Heaven be praised,
She comes again.
Cleo. Why have you brought me back to this loathed being,
Th' abode of falsehood, violated vows,
And injured love? For pity, let me go;
For, if there be a place of long repose,
I'm sure I want it. Unkind, unkind.
Dol. Believe me 'tis against myself I speak, [*Kneeling.*
That sure deserves belief; I injured him;
My friend ne'er spoke those words. Oh, had you seen
How often he came back, and every time
With something more obliging and more kind,
To add to what he said; what dear farewells,
How almost vanquish'd by his love he parted,
And lean'd to what unwillingly he left;
I, traitor as I was, for love of you, [false!)
(But what can you not do, who made me
I forged that lie; for whose forgiveness kneels
This self-accused, self-punished criminal].
Cleo. With how much ease believe we what we wish!
Rise, Dolabella; if you have been guilty,
I have contributed, and too much love
Has made me guilty too. [feign'd,
The advance of kindness which I made, was
To call back fleeting love by jealousy;
But 'twould not last. Oh! rather let me lose,
Than so ignobly trifle with his heart.
Dol. I find your breast fenced round from human reach,
Transparent as a rock of solid crystal;
Seen through but never pierced.
Cleo. Could you not beg
An hour's admittance to his private ear,
Before we part? for I have far to go,
If death be far, and never must return.

VENTIDIUS, *with* OCTAVIA *behind.*

Vent. From whence you may discover—O, sweet, sweet!
Would you indeed? the pretty hand in earnest?
Dol. I will, for this reward. [*Takes her hand.*
——Draw it not back,
'Tis all I e'er will beg.
Vent. They turn upon us.
Seem not to have observed them, and go on.
[*They enter.*
Dol. Saw you the emperor, Ventidius?
Vent. No.
I sought him; but I heard that he was private.
None with him, but Hipparchus his freedman.
Dol. Know you his business?
Vent. Giving him instructions,
And letters to his brother Cæsar.
Dol. Well, he must be found.
[*Exit* DOL. *and* CLEO.
Oct. Most glorious impudence!
Vent. She look'd, methought,
As she would say, take your old man, Octavia,
Thank you, I'm better here.
Well, but what use
Make we of this discovery?
Oct. Let it die.
Vent. I pity Dolabella; but she's dangerous:
And, Antony
Must needs have some remains of passion still,
Which may ferment into a worse relapse
If now not fully cured.——But see he comes—

Enter ANTONY.

Ant. Octavia, I was looking for you, my love:
What, are your letters ready? I have given
My last instructions.
Oct. Mine, my lord, are written.
[*Drawing him aside*
Ant. Ventidius!
Vent. My lord?
Ant. A word in private.
When saw you Dolabella?
Vent. Now, my lord,
He parted hence, and Cleopatra with him.
Ant. Speak softly. 'Twas by my command he went,
To bear my last farewell.
Vent. It look'd, indeed, [*Aloud.*
Like your farewell.
Ant. More softly——My farewell!
What secret meaning have you in those words
Of my farewell? He did it by my order.
Vent. Then he obey'd your order, I suppose? [*Aloud.*
You bid him do it with all gentleness,
All kindness and all—love.
Ant. How she mourn'd!
The poor forsaken creature!
Vent. She took it as she ought; she bore your parting
As she did Cæsar's, as she would another's,
Were a new love to come.
Ant. Thou dost belie her; [*Aloud.*
Most basely, most maliciously belie her.
Vent. I thought not to displease you; I have done.
Oct. You seem disturb'd, my lord.
[*Coming up.*
Ant. A very trifle.
Retire, my love.
Vent. It was indeed a trifle.
He sent——
Ant. No more. Look how thou disobey'st me;
Thy life shall answer it. [*Angrily.*
Oct. Then 'tis no trifle.
Vent. [*To* OCT.] 'Tis less, a very nothing: you too saw it,
As well as I, and therefore 'tis no secret.
Ant. She saw it!
Vent. Yes: she saw young Dolabella——
Ant. Young Dolabella——
Vent. Young, I think him young,
And handsome too; and so do others think him.

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But what of that? He went by your command,
Indeed 'tis probable, with some kind message;
For she received it graciously: she smiled:
And then he grew familiar with her hand,
Squeezed it, and worried it with ravenous kisses;
She blush'd, and sigh'd, and smiled, and blush'd again;
At last took occasion to talk softly.
And then she cried aloud, That constancy
Should be rewarded—This I saw and heard.
Ant. What woman was it, whom you heard and saw
So playful with my friend?
Not Cleopatra?
Vent. Even she, my lord!
Ant. My Cleopatra?
Vent. Your Cleopatra;
Dolabella's Cleopatra.
Every man's Cleopatra.
Ant. 'Tis false.
I know 'tis false, and see the plot betwixt you.
Vent. What has my age deserved, that you should think
I would abuse your ears with perjury?
If Heaven be true, she's false.
Ant. Though Heaven and earth
Should witness it, I'll not believe her tainted.
Vent. I'll bring you then a witness
From hell to prove her so. Nay, go not back;
[*Seeing* ALEXAS *just entering, and starting back.*
For stay you must and shall.
Alex. What means my lord?
Vent. To make you do what most you hate; speak truth.
Alex. My noble lord.
Vent. My most illustrious pander,
No fine set speech, no cadence, no turn'd periods,
But a plain home-spun truth, is what I ask:
I did, myself, o'erhear your queen make love
To Dolabella. Speak; for I will know,
By your confession, what more past betwixt them; [ment;
How near the business draws to your employ-
And when the happy hour.
Ant. Speak truth, Alexas, whether it offend
Or please Ventidius, care not. Justify
Thy injured queen from malice. Dare his worst.
Alex. As far as love may plead for woman's frailty
Urged by desert and greatness of the lover;
So far, divine Octavia, may my queen
Stand even excused to you for loving him,
Who is your lord: so far from brave Ventidius,
May her past actions hope a fair report.
Ant. 'Tis well and truly spoken; mark, Ventidius.
Alex. To you, most noble emperor, her strong passion
Stands not excused, but wholly justified.
Her beauty's charms alone, without her crown,
From Ind and Meroe drew the distant vows
Of sighing kings; and at her feet were laid
The sceptres of the earth, exposed on heaps,
To choose where she would reign;
She thought a Roman only could deserve her;
And, of all Romans, only Antony.
And, to be less than wife to you, disdain'd
Their lawful passion.
Ant. 'Tis but truth.
Alex. And yet though love, and your unmatch'd desert,
Have drawn her from the due regard of honour,
At last, Heaven open'd her unwilling eyes
To see the wrongs she offer'd fair Octavia,
Whose holy bed she lawlessly usurp'd.
The sad effects of this unprosperous war,
Confirm'd those pious thoughts.
Vent. [*Aside.*] Oh, wheel you there?
Observe him now; the man begins to mend.
And talk substantial reason. Fear not, eunuch.
The emperor has given thee leave to speak.
Alex. Else had I never dared t' offend his ears
With what the last necessity has urged
On my forsaken mistress; yet I must not
Presume to say her heart is wholly alter'd.
Ant. No, dare not for thy life, I charge thee, dare
Not pronounce that fatal word.
Oct. Must I bear this? Good Heaven afford me patience! [*Aside.*
Vent. On, sweet eunuch; my dear half man, proceed.
Alex. Yet Dolabella
Has loved her long; he, next my god-like lord, [passion,
Deserves her best; and should she meet his
Rejected, as she is, by him she loved——
Ant. Hence, from my sight, for I can bear no more!
Let furies drag thee quick to hell! each torturing hand
Do thou employ, till Cleopatra comes,
Then join thou too, and help to torture her.
Oct. 'Tis not well!
Indeed, my lord, 'tis much unkind to me,
To show this passion, this extreme concernment,
For an abandon'd, faithless prostitute.
Ant. Octavia, leave me! I am much dis-
Leave me, I say! [order'd!
Oct. My lord!
Ant. I bid you leave me.
Oct. Yes, I will go; but never to return.
My lord, my lord, love will not always last,
When urged with long unkindness and disdain.
Take her again whom you prefer to me;
She stays but to be call'd. Poor cozen'd man:
Let a feign'd parting give her back your heart,
Which a feign'd love first got; for injured me,
Though my just sense of wrongs forbid my stay,
My duty shall be yours.
To the dear pledges of our former love,
My tenderness and care shall be transferr'd,
And they shall cheer by turns my widow'd nights!
So take my last farewell! for I despair
To have you whole, and scorn to take you half. [*Exit.*
Vent. I combat Heaven, which blasts my best designs!
My last attempt must be to win her back;
But, oh! I fear in vain. [*Exit.*
Ant. Why was I framed with this plain, honest heart,
Which knows not to disguise its griefs and weakness,
But bears its workings outward to the world?
I should have kept the mighty anguish in,
And forced a smile at Cleopatra's falsehood:
Octavia had believed it, and had staid.
But I am made a shallow-forded stream,
Seen to the bottom; all my clearness scorn'd,

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And all my faults exposed—See where he comes

Enter DOLABELLA.

Who has profaned the sacred name of friend,
And worn it into vileness!
With how secure a brow, and specious form
He gilds the secret villain! sure that face
Was meant for honesty; but Heaven mismatch'd it,
And furnish'd treason out with nature's pomp,
To make its work more easy.
Well, Dolabella, you perform'd my message?
Dol. I did unwillingly.
Ant. Unwillingly!
Was it so hard for you to bear our parting?
You should have wish'd it.
Dol. Why?
Ant. Because you love me.
And she received my message, with as true,
With as unfeign'd a sorrow, as you brought it?
Dol. She loves you even to madness.
Ant. Oh! I know it.
You, Dolabella, do not better know
How much she loves me. And should I
Forsake this beauty, this all perfect creature?
Dol. I could not, were she mine.
Ant. And yet you first
Persuaded me. How come you alter'd since?
Dol. I said at first I was not fit to go:
I could not hear her sighs, and see her tears,
But pity must prevail: and so, perhaps,
It may again with you; for I have promised
That she should take her last farewell: and, see,
She comes to claim my word.

Enter CLEOPATRA.

Ant. False Dolabella!
Dol. What's false, my lord?
Ant. Why, Dolabella's false,
And Cleopatra's false; both false and faithless.
Draw near, you well-join'd wickedness, you serpents
Whom I have in my kindly bosom warm'd,
Till I am stung to death.
Dol. My lord, have I
Deserved to be thus used?
Cleo. Can Heaven prepare
A newer torment. Can it find a curse
Beyond our separation?
Ant. Yes, if fate
Be just, much greater:
Two, two such!
Oh! there's no further name, two such—to me,
To me, who lock'd my soul within your breasts,
Had no desires, no joys, no life but you;
A friend and mistress,
Was what the world could give. O Cleopatra!
O Dolabella! how could you betray
This tender heart, which with an infant fondness
Lay lulled betwixt your bosoms, and there slept
Secure of injured faith?
Dol. If she has wrong'd you,
Heaven, hell, and you revenge it.
Ant. If she has wrong'd me!
Ventidius heard it;
Octavia saw it.
Cleo. They are enemies.
Ant. Alexas is not so; he, he confess'd it;
He, who, next to hell, best knew it, he avow'd it.
Why do I seek a proof beyond yourself?
[*To* DOL.
You whom I sent to bear my last farewell,
Return'd to plead her stay.
Dol. What shall I answer?
If to have loved be guilt, then I have sinn'd;
But if to have repented of that love
Can wash away my crime, I have repented.
Yet, if I have offended past forgiveness,
Let her not suffer: she is innocent.
Ant. Thin cobweb art of falsehood,
Seen, and broke through at first.
Dol. Forgive your mistress.
Cleo. Forgive your friend.
Ant. I can forgive
A foe; but not a mistress, and a friend:
Treason is there in its most horrid shape,
Where trust is greatest. I'll hear no more;
Hence from my sight, for ever.
Cleo. How? for ever!
I cannot go one moment from your sight,
And must I go for ever?
My joys, my only joys are center'd here;
What place have I to go to? my own kingdom?
That I have lost for you; or to the Romans?
They hate me for your sake. Or must I wander
The wide world o'er, a helpless, banish'd woman?
Banish'd for love of you: banish'd from you;
Ay, there's the banishment! Oh! hear me; hear me,
With strictest justice; for I beg no favour;
And if I have offended you, then kill me,
But do not banish me.
Ant. I must not hear you.
I have a fool within me takes your part;
But honour stops my ears. I am not to be moved.
Cleo. Then we must part? Farewell, my cruel lord.
Th' appearance is against me; and I go,
Unjustified, for ever from your sight.
How I have loved, you know; how yet I love,
My only comfort is, I know myself:
I love you more, even now you are unkind,
Than when you loved me most; so well, so truly,
I'll never strive against it; but die pleased
To think you once were mine.
Ant. Good Heaven, they weep at parting.
Must I weep too? That calls them innocent.
I must not weep; and yet I must, to think
That I must not forgive———
Live; but live wretched, 'tis but just you should,
Who made me so: live from each other's sight:
Let me not hear you meet. Set all the earth,
And all the seas, betwixt your sunder'd loves:
View nothing common but the sun and skies:
Now, all take several ways;
And each your own sad fate with mine deplore;
That you were false, and I could trust no more.
[*Exeunt severally.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—The Temple.

Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMION, *and* IRAS.

Cleo. I could tear out these eyes that gain'd his heart,
And had not power to keep it. Oh, the curse
Of doting on, even when I find it dotage!

Bear witness, gods, you heard him bid me go.
You, whom he mock'd with imprecating vows
Of promised faith——I'll die, I will not bear it.

Enter ALEXAS.

Art thou there, traitor!——Oh,
Oh, for a little breath, to vent my rage.
Alex. Yes, I deserve it, for my ill-timed truth.
Cleo. I would reason
More calmly with you. Did you not o'errule,
And force my plain, direct, and open love,
Into these crooked paths of jealousy?
Now, what's th' event? Octavia is removed;
But Cleopatra banish'd.
Alex. Believe me, Madam, Antony is yours.
His heart was never lost; but started off
To jealousy, love's last retreat and covert;
Where it lies hid in shades, watchful in silence,
And listening for the sound that calls it back.
Some other, any man, 'tis so advanced,
May perfect this unfinish'd work, which I
(Unhappy only to myself) have left
So easy to his hand.
Cleo. Look well thou do't; else——
Alex. Else, what your silence threatens—Antony
Is mounted up the Pharos; from whose turret,
He stands surveying our Egyptain galleys,
Engaged with Cæsar's fleet, now death, or conquest;
If the first happen, fate acquits my promise,
If we o'ercome, the conqueror is yours.
[*A distant shout within.*
Char. Have comfort, Madam: Did you mark that shout? [*Second shout nearer.*
Iras. Hark, they redouble it.
Alex. 'Tis from the port.
The loudness shows it near. Good news, kind Heavens.

Enter SERAPION.

Ser. Where, where's the queen?
O horror, horror,
Egypt has been, the latest hour is come.
The queen of nations from her ancient seat
Is sunk for ever in the dark abyss.
Time has unroll'd her glories to the last,
And now closed up the volume.
Cleo. Be more plain:
Say, whence thou cam'st, (though fate is in thy face,
Which from thy haggard eyes look wildly out,
And threatens ere thou speak'st.)
Ser. I came from Pharos,
From viewing (spare me and imagine it)
Our land's last hope, your navy——
Cleo. Vanquish'd.
Ser. No,
They fought not.
Cleo. Then they fled.
Ser. Nor that. I saw,
With Antony your well appointed fleet
Row out; and thrice he waved his hand on high, [back.
And thrice with cheerful cries they shouted
The well-timed oars,
Now dipp'd from every bark, now smoothly run
To meet the foe, and soon, indeed, they met,
But not as foes. In few we saw their caps
On either side thrown up, the Egyptian galleys,
Received like friends, pass'd through, and fell behind [ward,
The Roman rear, and now, they all come for-
And ride within the port.
Cleo. Enough, Serapion:
I've heard my doom. This needed not, you gods:
When I lost Antony, your work was done.
Where's my lord? How bears he this last blow?
Ser. His fury cannot be expressed by words;
Thrice he attempted headlong to have fallen
Full on his foes, and aim'd at Cæsar's galley;
Withheld, he raves on you, cries, he's betray'd.
Should he now find you——
Alex. Shun him, seek your safety,
Till you can clear your innocence.
Cleo. I'll stay.
Alex. You must not; haste you to the monument,
While I make speed to Cæsar.
Cleo. Cæsar! No,
I have no business with him.
Alex. I can work him,
To spare your life, and let this madman perish.
Cleo. Base, fawning wretch! wouldst thou betray him too?
Hence from my sight, I will not hear a traitor;
'Twas thy design brought all this ruin on us.
Serapion, thou art honest; counsel me;
But haste, each moment's precious.
Ser. Retire; you must not yet see Antony.
He who began this mischief,
'Tis just he tempt the danger: let him clear you;
And, since he offer'd you his servile tongue,
To gain a poor precarious life from Cæsar,
Let him expose that fawning eloquence,
And speak to Antony.
Alex. O Heavens! I dare not:
I meet my certain death.
Cleo. Slave, thou deserv'st it.
Not that I fear my lord will I avoid him;
I know him noble: When he banish'd me,
And thought me false, he scorn'd to take my life:
But I'll be justify'd, and then die with him.
Alex. O pity me, and let me follow you.
Cleo. To death, if thou stir hence. Speak, if thou canst,
Now for thy life, which basely thou wouldst save, [pion.
While mine I prize at this. Come, good Sera-
[*Exeunt* CLEO. SER. CHAR. *and* IRAS.
Alex. Oh! that I less could fear to lose this being,
Which like a snow-ball in my coward hand,
The more 'tis grasp'd, the faster melts away.
Poor reason! What a wretched aid art thou!
For still, in spite of thee,
These two long lovers, soul and body, dread
Their final separation. Let me think:
What can I say, to save myself from death?
No matter what becomes of Cleopatra.
Ant. Which way? Where? [*Within.*
Vent. This leads to th' monument.
[*Within.*
Alex. Ah me! I hear him: yet I'm unprepared,
My gift of lying's gone;

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And this court devil, which I so oft have raised,
Forsakes me at my need. I dare not stay;
Yet cannot go far hence. [*Exit.*

Enter ANTONY *and* VENTIDIUS.

Ant. O happy Cæsar! thou hast men to lead.
Think not 'tis thou hast conquer'd Antony;
But Rome has conquer'd Egypt. I'm betray'd.
Vent. The nation is one universal traitor; and their queen
The very spirit and extract of them all.
Ant. Is there yet left
A possibility of aid and valour?
Is there one god unsworn to my destruction?
For, if there be,
Methinks I cannot fall beneath the fate
Of such a boy as Cæsar.
Vent. There yet remain
Three legions in the town. The last assault
Lopp'd off the rest. If death be your design,
As I must wish it now, these are sufficient
To make a heap about us of dead foes;
An honest pile for burial.
Ant. They're enough.
We'll not divide our stars; but side by side
Fight emulous, and with malicious eyes
Survey each other's acts.
Vent. Now you shall see I love you. By my few hours of life,
I am so pleased with this brave Roman fate,
That I would not be Cæsar to outlive you.
When we put off this flesh and mount together,
It shall be shown to all th' ethereal crowd,
Lo, this is he who died with Antony.
Ant. Who knows but we may pierce through all their troops,
And reach my veterans yet? 'Tis worth the tempting.

Enter ALEXAS, *trembling.*

Vent. See, see, that villain!
See how he has set his count'nance for deceit;
And promises a lie, before he speaks!
Let me despatch him first. [*Drawing.*
Ant. Hold; he's not worth your killing. On thy life,
(Which thou may'st keep because I scorn to take it)
No syllable to justify thy queen;
Save thy base tongue its office.
Alex. Sir, she's gone,
Where she shall never be molested more
By love or you.
Ant. Fled to her Dolabella!
Die, traitor, I revoke my promise, die.
[*Going to kill him.*
Alex. O hold, she is not fled.
Ant. She is. My eyes
Are open to her falsehood. My whole life
Has been a golden dream of love and friendship:
But now I wake, I'm like a merchant, roused
From soft repose, to see his vessel sinking,
And all his wealth cast o'er. Ungrateful woman! [mer,
Who follow'd me, but as the swallow summer,
But, now my winter comes, she spreads her wings,
And seeks the spring of Cæsar.
Alex. Think not so:
Her fortunes have, in all things, mix'd with yours.
Had she betray'd her naval force to Rome,
How easily might she have gone to Cæsar,
Secure by such a bribe!
Vent. She sent it first,
To be more welcome after.
Ant. 'Tis too plain;
Else would she have appear'd to clear herself.
Alex. She could not bear
To be accused by you; but shut herself,
Within her monument: look'd down and sigh'd: [tears
While, from her unchanged face, the silent
Dropp'd, as they had not leave, but stole their parting.
Some undistinguish'd words she inly murmur'd; [looks
At last she raised her eyes, and with such
As dying Lucrece cast——
Ant. My heart forbodes——
Vent. Go on.
Alex. She snatch'd her poniard,
And, ere we could prevent the fatal blow,
Plunged it within her breast: then turn'd to me;
Go, bear my lord, said she, my last farewell,
And ask him, if he yet suspect my faith.
More she was saying, but death rush'd betwixt.
She half pronounced your name with her last breath,
And buried half within her.
Vent. Heaven be praised.
Ant. Then art thou innocent, my poor dear love?
And art thou dead?
Oh, those two words! their sound should be divided:
Hadst thou been false, and died: or hadst thou lived, [death!
And hadst been true—But innocence and
This shows not well above. Then what am I?
The murderer of this truth, this innocence!
Thoughts cannot form themselves in words so horrid
As can express my guilt!
Vent. Is't come to this? The gods have been too gracious,
And thus you thank them for't.
Ant. [*To* ALEX.] Why stay'st thou here?
Thou art not worthy to behold what now
Becomes a Roman emperor to perform.
[*Exit* ALEX.
Vent. Would she had died a little sooner though,
Before Octavia went; you might have treated;
Now 'twill look tame, and would not be received. [gether.
Come, rouse yourself, and let's die warm to-
Ant. O Ventidius!
What should I fight for now? My queen is dead. [pire,
I was but great for her: my power, my em-
Were but my merchandise to buy her love;
And conquer'd kings, my factors. Now she's dead,
Let Cæsar take the world. [
Vent. Would you be taken?
Ant. Yes, I would be taken;
But as a Roman ought, dead, my Ventidius.
Vent. Choose your death;
For I have seen him in such various shapes,
I care not which I take: I'm only troubled,
The life I bear is worn to such a rag,
'Tis scarce worth giving. I could wish, indeed,
We threw it from us with a better grace;
That like two lions taken in the toils,
We might at least thrust out our paws and wound
The hunters that enclose us.

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Ant. Thou hast loved me,
And fain I would reward thee. I must die;
Kill me, and take the merit of my death
To make thee friends with Cæsar.
Vent. Thank your kindness.
You said I loved you; and, in recompense,
You bid me turn a traitor! Did I think
You would have used me thus! that I should die
With a hard thought of you!
Ant. Forgive me, Roman.
Since I have heard of Cleopatra's death,
My reason bears no rule upon my tongue,
But lets my thoughts break all at random out.
I've thought better; do not deny me twice.
Vent. By Heaven I will not,
Let it not be t' outlive you.
Ant. Kill me first,
And then die thou; for 'tis but just thou serve
Thy friend before thyself.
Vent. Give me your hand——
We soon shall meet again. Now, farewell, emperor. [*Embrace.*
Methinks that word's too cold to be my last:
Since death sweeps all distinctions, farewell, friend.
That's all——
I will not make a business of a trifle——
And yet I can not look on you and kill you.
Pray turn your face.
Ant. I do: Strike home, be sure.
Vent. Home, as my sword will reach. [*Stabs himself.*
Ant. O thou mistakest! [back.
That wound was none of thine; give it me
Thou robb'st me of my death.
Vent. I do indeed;
But, think, 'tis the first time I e'er deceived you; gods,
If that may plead my pardon. And, you
Forgive me, if you will, for I die perjured,
Rather than kill my friend. [*Dies.*
Ant. Farewell! ever my leader, even in death!
My queen and thou have got the start of me:
And I'm the lag of honour.—Gone so soon!
Is death no more? 'Tis not worth him
My further thought; for death, for ought I know,
Is but to think no more. [*Falls on his sword.*
Here's to be satisfied.
I've miss'd my heart——O unperforming hand!
Thou never couldst have err'd in a worse time. [*Trampling within.*
Some perhaps from Cæsar! I'll mend
My work, ere they can reach me.
[*Rises upon his knees.*

Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMION, *and* IRAS.

Cleo. Where is my lord? where is he?
My fears were prophets! I am come too late!
O that accursed Alexas! [*Runs to him.*
Ant. Art thou living?
Or am I dead before I knew, and thou
The first kind ghost that meets me?
Cleo. How is it with you?
Ant. 'Tis as with a man
Removing in a hurry; all pack'd up,
But one dear jewel that his haste forgot;
And he, for that, returns upon the spur:
So I come back for thee.
Cleo. Too long, ye Heavens, you have been cruel to me!
O now be kind, and give me back
His fleeting life.
Ant. It will not be, my love:
I keep my soul by force.
Say but thou art not false.
Cleo. 'Tis now too late [you.
To say I'm true: I'll prove it, and die with
Unknown to me, Alexas feign'd my death,
Which, when I knew, I hasted to prevent
This fatal consequence. My fleet betray'd
Both you and me.
Ant. And Dolabella——
Cleo. Scarce esteem'd before he loved; but hated now.
Ant. Enough! my life's not long enough for more. [thee;
Thou say'st thou wilt come after; I believe
For I can now believe whate'er thou say'st,
That we may part more kindly.
Cleo. I will come;
Doubt not, my life, I'll come, and quickly too!
Cæsar shall triumph o'er no part of thee.
Ant. But grieve not, while thou stay'st,
My last disastrous times;
Think we have had a clear and glorious day;
And Heaven did kindly to delay the storm
Just till our close of evening. Ten years love,
And not a moment lost, but all improved,
To th' utmost joys! What ages have we lived!
And now to die each other's! and so dying,
While hand in hand we walk in groves below,
Whole troops of lovers' ghosts shall flock about
And all the train be ours. [us,
Cleo. Your words are like the notes of dying swans,
Too sweet to last. Were there so many hours
For your unkindness, and not one for love?
Ant. No, not a minute—this one kiss—more worth
Than all I leave to Cæsar—— [*Dies.*
Cleo. O tell me so again! [ing!
My lord! my lord! speak, if you yet have be-
Sigh to me if you cannot speak! or cast
One look; do any thing that shows you live.
Iras. He's gone too far to hear you.
Char. Remember, Madam,
He charged you not to grieve.
Cleo. And I'll obey him.
I have not loved a Roman, not to know
What should become his wife—his wife, my Charmion!
For 'tis to that high title I aspire;
And now I'll not die less.
Iras. Will you then die?
Cleo. Why shouldst thou make that question?
Fly both, and bring the cure of all our ills.
Iras. The aspicks, Madam?
Cleo. Must I bid you twice?
[*Exeunt* CHAR. *and* IRAS.
'Tis sweet to die, when they would force life on me,
To rush into the dark abode of death,
And meet my love.
O welcome, welcome.

Enter CHAR. *and* IRAS, *with the aspicks, &c.*

Cleo. Welcome thou kind deceiver!
[*Puts aside the leaves.*
Thou best of thieves; who with an easy key,
Dost open life, and unperceived by us,
Even steals us from ourselves.
Ser. [*Within.*] The queen, where is she?
The town is yielded, Cæsar's at the gates.
Cleo. He comes too late t' invade the rights of death.
Haste, haste, my friend, and rouse the serpent's fury.
[*Holds out her arm, and draws it back.*
Coward flesh——— [me,
Wouldst thou conspire with Cæsar, to betray

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As thou wert none of mine? I'll force thee to't,
And not be sent by him,
But bring myself, my soul to Antony.
[*Shows her arm bloody.*
Take hence; the work is done.
Ser. [*Within.*] Break ope the door,
And guard the traitor well.
[*They apply the aspicks.*
Cleo. Already, death I feel thee in my veins;
I go with such a will to find my lord,
That we shall quickly meet.
A heavy numbness creeps through every limb,
And now 'tis at my head: my eyelids fall,
And my dear love is vanish'd in a mist!
Cæsar, thy worst,
Now part us, if thou canst. [*Dies.*

[IRAS *sinks down at her feet and dies;* CHARMION *stands behind her chair as dressing her head.*

Enter SERAPION, *two* PRIESTS, ALEXAS *bound, and Egyptians.*

2d. Priest. Behold, Serapion, what havock death has made!
Ser. 'Twas what I fear'd.
See how the lovers lie in state together,
As they were giving law to half mankind.
Th' impression of a smile left in her face,
Shows she died pleased with him for whom she lived,
And went to charm him in another world.
Cæsar's just entering; grief has now no leisure.
Secure that villain, as our pledge of safety,
To grace the imperial triumph. Sleep, bless'd pair,
Secure from human chance, long ages out,
While all the storms of fate fly o'er your tomb;
And fame to late posterity shall tell,
No lovers lived so great, or died so well.

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THE

CITY WIVES' CONFEDERACY:

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY SIR JOHN VANBRUGH.

REMARKS.

THOUGH it is not easy to find scenes better written, or characters more happily drawn than some in this comedy, yet it is impossible to bestow unqualified praise upon it as a whole. It seems to be a production that did not put the author to the pains of much reflection; for though it displays great spirit, humour, and vivacity, it does not bear the marks of care: neither does the muse of Vanbrugh wear a very cleanly sock in this occasion, for he has not scrupled to pay court to the bad taste of the time in which he wrote. He has shown vice without punishing it, and profligacy without reforming it. There is not an honest man, or modest woman in his whole Dramatis Personæ; it is not easy to name that description of criminality which has not a representative in these scenes. Rascals that deserve the gallows, and impures that should be sent to Bridewell, are the company which the spectator must condescend to keep, and whose sentiments the reader must be content to put up with. He dips into the lowest ranks, and shows the worst side of human nature. Few dramas can be found so generally satirical; for whilst he professedly lashes the citizens without mercy, he takes every opportunity of hooking in his allusions to the higher orders of society with unsparing asperity.

The city wives and the city husbands are exact duplicates, each of the other. The author, with all his art and contrivance, squeezes little more than two hundred pounds out of the pockets of their husbands; and, in despair to make them better, leaves them so much the worse by how much they are the more confirmed in their iniquity; and when Araminta observes to Clarissa, that "she supposes they are to go on with their dears as they used to do," Clarissa answers, "Just in the same track," and then concludes the play with a comforting remark for all intriguing wives—"that every thing gets well out of a broil but a husband." With this remark the curtain drops; and the audience, delivered from the company of rogues and whores, may go home to their families, and meditate upon the conversation they have been admitted to.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

GRIPE.
MONEYTRAP.
DICK AMLET.
BRASS.
CLIP.
JESSAMIN.

CLARISSA.
ARAMINTA.
CORINNA.
FLIPPANTA.
MRS. AMLET.
MRS. CLOGGIT.

SCENE.—London.

PROLOGUE.

TO BE SPOKEN BY A SHABBY POET.

Ye Gods! what crime had my poor father done,
That you should make a poet of his son?
Or is't for some great services of his,
Y'are pleased to compliment his boy——with this? [*Showing his crown of laurel.*
The honour, I must needs confess, is great,
If, with his crown, you'd tell him where to eat.
'Tis well——But I have more complaints—look here! [*Showing his ragged coat.*
Hark ye: D'ye think this suit good winter wear?
In a cold morning; whu! at a lord's gate,
How you have let the porter let me wait!
You'll say, perhaps you knew I'd get no ha'm
You'd given me fire enough to keep me warm.

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Ah——
A world of blessings to that fire we owe:
Without it, I'd ne'er make this princely show.
I have a brother too, now in my sight,
[*Looking behind the scenes.*
A busy man amongst us here to-night;
Your fire has made him play a thousand pranks,
For which, no doubt, you've had his daily [thanks;
He's thank'd you first, for all his decent plays,
Where he so nick'd it, when he writ for praise.
Next for his meddling with some folks in black,
And bringing——souse——a priest upon his [back;
For building houses here t'oblige the peers,
And fetching all their house about his ears;
For a new play he'as now thought fit to write,
To soothe the town—which they—will damn to-night,
These benefits are such, no man can doubt
But he'll go on, and see your fancy out,
Till for reward of all his noble deeds,
At last like other sprightly folks he speeds:
Has this great recompense fix'd on his brow
At famed Parnassus: has your leave to bow
And walk about the streets—equipp'd—as I am now.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—Covent Garden.

Enter MRS. AMLET *and* MRS. CLOGGIT, *meeting.*

Am. Good morrow, neighbour; good morrow, neighbour Cloggit. How does all at your house this morning?

Clog. Thank you kindly, Mrs. Amlet, thank you kindly; how do you do, I pray?

Am. At the old rate, neighbour, poor and honest; these are hard times, good lack.

Clog. If they are hard with you, what are they with us? You have a good trade going; all the great folks in town help you off with your merchandise.

Am. Yes, they do help us off with them indeed; they buy all.

Clog. And pay——

Am. For some.

Clog. Well, 'tis a thousand pities, Mrs. Amlet, they are not as ready at one as they are at t'other; for, not to wrong them, they give very good rates.

Am. Oh, for that, let's do them justice, neighbour; they never make two words upon the price; all they haggle about is the day of payment.

Clog. There's all the dispute, as you say.

Am. But that's a wicked one. For my part, neighbour, I'm just tired off my legs with trotting after them; besides, it eats out all our profit. Would you believe it, Mrs. Cloggit, I have worn out four pair of pattens with following my old Lady Youthful for one set of false teeth, and but three pots of paint.

Clog. Look you there now!

Am. If they would but once let me get enough by them, to keep a coach to carry me a dunning after them, there would be some conscience in it.

Clog. Ay, that were something. But now you talk of conscience, Mrs. Amlet, how do you speed amongst your city customers?

Am. My city customers! Now, by my truth, neighbour, between the city and the court (with reverence be it spoken,) there's not a ——to choose. My ladies, in the city, in times past, were as full of gold as they were of religion, and as punctual in their payments as they were in their prayers; but since they have set their minds upon quality, adieu one! adieu t'other! their money and their consciences are gone, Heaven knows where. There is not a goldsmith's wife to be found in town, but's as heardhearted as an ancient judge, and as poor as a towering duchess.

Clog. But what the murrain have they to do with quality? Why don't their husbands make them mind their shops?

Am. Their husbands! their husbands, say'st thou, woman? Alack, alack, they mind their husbands, neighbour, no more than they do a sermon!

Clog. Good lack-a-day, that women born of sober parents should be prone to follow ill examples! But, now we talk of quality, when did you hear of your son Richard, Mrs. Amlet? My daughter Flipp says she met him t'other day, in a laced coat, with three fine ladies, his footman at his heels, and as gay as a bridegroom.

Am. Is it possible? Ah, the rogue! Well, neighbour, all's well that ends well; but Dick will be hanged.

Clog. That were pity.

Am. Pity, indeed; for he's a hopeful young man to look on; but he leads a life——Well, where he has it, Heaven knows; but they say, he pays his club with the best of them. I have seen him but once these three months, neighbour, and then the varlet wanted money; but I bid him march, and march he did, to some purpose; for, in less than an hour back comes my gentleman into the house, walks to and fro in the room, with his wig over his shoulder, his hat on one side, whistling a minuet, and tossing a purse of gold from one hand to t'other, with no more respect, Heaven bless us! than if it had been an orange. Sirrah, says I, where have you got that? He answers me never a word, but set's his arms a-kimbo, cocks his saucy hat in my face, turns about upon his ungracious heel, as much as to say, kiss——and I've never set eye on him since.

Clog. Look you there now! To see what the youth of this age come to!

Am. See what they will come to, neighbour. Heaven shield, I say; but Dick's upon the gallop. Well, I must bid you good morrow; I'm going where I doubt I shall meet but a sorry welcome.

Clog. To get in some old debt, I'll warrant you?

Am. Neither better nor worse.

Clog. From a lady of quality?

Am. No, she's but a scrivener's wife; but she lives as well, and pays as ill, as the stateliest countess of them all.

[*Exeunt several ways.*

Enter BRASS.

Brass. Well, surely, through the world's wide extent, there never appeared so impudent a fellow as my school-fellow, Dick. To pass

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himself upon the town for a gentleman, drop into all the best company with an easy air, as if his natural element were in the sphere of quality; when the rogue had a kettle-drum to his father, who was hanged for robbing a church; and has a pedlar to his mother, who carries her shop under her arm. But here he comes.

Enter DICK.

Dick. Well, Brass, what news? Hast thou given my letter to Flippanta?

Brass. I'm just come; I ha'n't knock'd at the door yet. But I've a damned piece of news for you.

Dick. As how?

Brass. We must quit this country.

Dick. We'll be hanged first.

Brass. So you will if you stay.

Dick. Why, what's the matter?

Brass. There's a storm a coming.

Dick. From whence?

Brass. From the worst point in the compass, the law.

Dick. The law! Why, what have I to do with the law?

Brass. Nothing; and therefore it has something to do with you.

Dick. Explain.

Brass. You know you cheated a young fellow at piquet t'other day of the money he had to raise his company.

Dick. Well, what then?

Brass. Why, he's sorry he lost it.

Dick. Who doubts that.

Brass. Ay, but that's not all; he's such a fool to think of complaining on't.

Dick. Then I must be wise to stop his mouth.

Brass. How?

Dick. Give him a little back; if that wont do, strangle him.

Brass. You are very quick in your methods.

Dick. Men must be so that will despatch business.

Brass. Hark you; colonel, your father died in's bed.

Dick. He might have done, if he had not been a fool.

Brass. Why, he robbed a church.

Dick. Ay, but he forgot to make sure of the sexton.

Brass. Are not you a great rogue?

Dick. Or I should wear worse clothes.

Brass. Hark you; I would advise you to change your life.

Dick. And turn ballad singer.

Brass. Not so neither.

Dick. What then?

Brass. Why, if you can get this young wench reform and live honest.

Dick. That's the way to be starved.

Brass. No, she has money enough to buy you a good place, and pay me into the bargain, for helping her to so good a match. You have but this throw left to save you; for you are not ignorant, youngster, that your morals begin to be pretty well known about town; have a care your noble birth, and your honourable relations are not discovered too; there needs but that to have you tossed in a blanket, for the entertainment of the first company of ladies you intrude into; and then, like a dutiful son, you may daggle about with your mother, and sell paint; she's old and weak, and wants somebody to carry her goods after her. How like a dog will you look, with a pair of plod shoes, your hair cropped up to your ears, and a band-box under your arm!

Dick. Why faith, Brass, I think thou art in the right o'nt; I must fix my affairs quickly, or Madam Fortune will be playing some of her bitch tricks with me: therefore I'll tell thee what we'll do: we'll pursue this old rogue's daughter heartily; we'll cheat his family to purpose, and they shall atone for the rest of mankind.

Brass. Have at her then. I'll about your business presently.

Dick. "One kiss—and" success attend thee. [*Exit* DICK.

Brass. A great rogue——Well, I say nothing. But when I have got the thing into a good posture, he shall sign and seal, or I'll have him tumbled out of the house like a cheese. Now for Flippanta. [*He knocks.*

Enter FLIPPANTA.

Flip. Who's that? Brass!

Brass. Flippanta!

Flip. What want you, rogue's face?

Brass. Is your mistress dressed?

Flip. What, already? Is the fellow drunk?

Brass. Why, with respect to her looking-glass, it's almost two.

Flip. What then, fool?

Brass. Why, then it's time for the mistress of the house to come down and look after her family.

Flip. Pr'ythee, don't be an owl. Those that go to bed at night may rise in the morning; we that go to bed in the morning rise in the afternoon.

Brass. When does she make her visits then.

Flip. By candle light: it helps off a muddy complexion; we women hate inquisitive sunshine. But do you know that my lady is going to turn good housewife?

Brass. What, is she going to die?

Flip. Die!

Brass. Why, that's the only way to save money for her family.

Flip. No; but she has thought of a project to save chair-hire.

Brass. As how?

Flip. Why, all the company she used to keep abroad, she now intends shall meet her at her own house. Your master has advised her to set up a basset-table.

Brass. Nay, if he advised her to it, it's right. But has she acquainted her husband with it yet?

Flip. What to do? When the company meet, he'll see them.

Brass. Nay that's true, as you say, he'll know it soon enough.

Flip. Well, I must begone; have you any business with my lady?

Brass. Yes, as ambassador from Araminta, I have a letter for her.

Flip. Give it me.

Brass. Hold——and, as first minister of state to the colonel, I have an affair to communicate to thee.

Flip. What is it? Quick.

Brass. Why——he's in love.

Flip. With what?

Brass. A woman—and her money together.

Flip. Who is she?

Brass. Corinna.

Flip. What would he be at?

Brass. At her if she's at leisure.

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Flip. Which way?

Brass. Honourably—He has ordered me to demand her of thee in marriage.

Flip. Of me!

Brass. Why, when a man of quality has a mind to a city-fortune, wouldst have him apply to her father and mother?

Flip. No.

Brass. No, so I think; men of our end of the town are better bred than to use ceremony.—With a long periwig we strike the lady; with a you-know-what we soften the maid; and when the parson has done his job, we open the affair to the family. Will you slip this letter into her prayer book, my little queen? It's a very passionate one; it's sealed with a heart and dagger; you may see by that what he intends to do with himself.

Flip. Are there any verses in it? If not, I wont touch it.

Brass. Not one word in prose; its dated in rhyme. [*She takes it.*

Flip. Well, but—have you brought nothing else?

Brass. Gad forgive me! I'm the forgetfullest dog. I have a letter for you too—here—'tis in a purse—but it's in prose—you wont touch it.

Flip. Yes, hang it, it is not good to be too dainty.

Brass. How useful a virtue is humility!—Well, child we shall have an answer to-morrow, sha'n't we?

Flip. I can't promise you that; for our young gentlewoman is not so often in my way as she would be. Her father (who is a citizen from the foot to the forehead of him) lets her seldom converse with her mother-in-law and me, for fear she should learn the airs of a woman of quality. But I'll take the first occasion—See, there's my lady; go in, and deliver your letter to her. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—A Parlour.

Enter CLARISSA, *followed by* FLIPPANTA *and* BRASS.

Clar. No messages this morning from any body, Flippanta? Lard, how dull that is!—Oh, there's Brass! I did not see thee, Brass. What news dost thou bring?

Brass. Only a letter from Araminta, Madam.

Clar. Give it me—Open it for me, Flippanta; I am so lazy to-day. [*Sits down.*

Brass. [*To* FLIP.] Be sure now you deliver my master's as carefully as I do this.

Flip. Don't trouble thyself; I'm no novice.

Clar. [*To* BRASS.] 'Tis well; there needs no answer, since she'll be here so soon.

Brass. Your ladyship has no farther commands then?

Clar. Not at this time, honest Brass—Flippanta! [*Exit* BRASS.

Flip. Madam.

Clar. My husband's in love.

Flip. In love!

Clar. With Araminta.

Flip. Impossible!

Clar. This letter from her is to give me an account of it.

Flip. Methinks you are not very much alarmed.

Clar. No; thou know'st I am not much tortured with jealousy.

Flip. Nay, you are much in the right on't, Madam; for jealousy's a city passion; 'tis a thing unknown amongst people of quality.

Clar. Fy! A woman must indeed be of a mechanic mould, who is either troubled or pleased with any thing her husband can do to her. Pr'ythee, mention him no more; 'tis the dullest theme!

Flip. 'Tis splenetic indeed. But when once you open your basset-table, I hope that will put him out of your head.

Clar. Alas, Flippanta, I begin to grow weary even of the thought of that too!

Flip. How so?

Clar. Why, I have thought on't a day and a night already, and four and twenty hours, thou know'st is enough to make one weary of any thing.

Flip. Now, by my conscience, you have more woman in you than all your sex together.—You never know what you would have.

Clar. Thou mistakest the thing quite. I always know what I lack, but I am never pleased with what I have. The want of a thing is perplexing enough, but the possession of it is intolerable.

Flip. Well, I don't know what you are made of, but other women would think themselves blessed in your case: handsome, witty, loved by every body, and of so happy a composure, to care a fig for nobody. You have no one passion but that of your pleasures, and you have in me a servant devoted to all your desires, let them be as extravagant as they will. Yet all this is nothing; you can still be out of humour.

Clar. Alas, I have too much cause!

Flip. Why, what have you to complain of?

Clar. Alas, I have more subjects for spleen than one! Is it not a most horrible thing that I should be but a scrivener's wife?—Come, don't flatter me—don't you think nature designed me for something *plus élevée?*

Flip. Nay, that's certain; but on t'other side, methinks, you ought to be in some measure content, since you live like a woman of quality, though you are none.

Clar. Oh, fy! the very quintessence of it is wanting.

Flip. What's that?

Clar. Why, I dare abuse nobody: I'm afraid to affront people, though I don't like their faces; or to ruin their reputations, though they pique me to it, by taking ever so much pains to preserve them: I dare not raise a lie of a man, though he neglects to make love to me; nor report a woman to be a fool, though she's handsomer than I am. In short, I dare not so much as bid my footman kick the people out of doors, though they come to ask me for what I owe them.

Flip. All this is very hard indeed.

Clar. Ah, Flippanta, the perquisites of quality are of an unspeakable value!

Flip. They are of some use, I must confess: but we must not expect to have every thing.—You have wit and beauty, and a fool to your husband.—Come, come, Madam, that's a good portion for one.

Clar. Alas! what signifies beauty and wit, when one dares neither jilt the men, nor abuse the women? 'Tis a sad thing, Flippanta, when wit's confined, 'tis worse than the rising of the lights; I have been sometimes almost choked with scandal, and durst not cough it up, for want of being a countess.

Flip. Poor lady!

Clar. Oh, liberty is a fine thing, Flippanta:

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it's a great help in conversation to have leave to say what one will. I have seen a woman of quality who has not had one grain of wit, entertain a whole company the most agreeably in the world, only with her malice. But 'tis in vain to repine; I can't mend my condition till my husband dies; so I'll say no more on't, but think of making the most of the state I am in.

Flip. That's your best way, Madam; and in order to it, pray consider how you'll get some ready-money to set your basset-table a-going; for that's necessary.

Clar. Thou say'st true: but what trick I shall play my husband to get some, I don't know; for my pretence of losing my diamond necklace has put the man into such a passion, I'm afraid he wont hear reason.

Flip. No matter; he begins to think 'tis lost in earnest: so I fancy you may venture to sell it, and raise money that way.

Clar. That can't be; for he has left odious notes with all the goldsmiths in town.

Flip. Well, we must pawn it then.

Clar. I'm quite tired with dealing with those pawn-brokers.

Flip. I'm afraid you'll continue the trade a great while for all that. [*Aside.*

Enter JESSAMIN.

Jes. Madam, there's the woman below that sells paint and patches, iron bodice, false teeth, and all sorts of things to the ladies; I can't think of her name.

Flip. 'Tis Mrs. Amlet; she wants money.

Clar. Well, I ha'n't enough for myself; it's an unreasonable thing she should think I have any for her.

Flip. She's a troublesome jade.

Clar. So are all people that come a dunning.

Flip. What will you do with her?

Clar. I have just now thought on't. She's very rich; that woman is, Flippanta; I'll borrow some money of her.

Flip. Borrow! Sure you jest, Madam.

Clar. No, I'm in earnest; I give thee commission to do it for me.

Flip. Me!

Clar. Why dost thou stare, and look so ungainly? Don't I speak to be understood?

Flip. Yes, I understand you well enough; but Mrs. Amlet—

Clar. But Mrs. Amlet must lend me some money; where shall I have any to pay her else?

Flip. That's true; I never thought of that, truly. But here she is.

Enter MRS. AMLET.

Clar. How do you do? How do you do, Mrs. Amlet? I ha'n't seen you these thousand years; and yet I believe I'm down in your books.

Am. Oh, Madam, I don't come for that, alack!

Flip. Good morrow, Mrs. Amlet.

Am. Good morrow, Mrs. Flippanta.

Clar. How much am I indebted to you, Mrs. Amlet?

Am. Nay, if your ladyship desires to see your bill, I believe I may have it about me—There, Madam, if it ben't too much fatigue to you to look it over.

Clar. Let me see it; for I hate to be in debt—where I am obliged to pay. [*Aside.*]—[Reads.] "*Imprimis*, for bolstering out the Countess of Crump's left hip."——Oh, fy! this does not belong to me.

Am. I beg your ladyship's pardon: I mistook indeed: 'tis a countess's bill I have writ out to little purpose. I furnished her two years ago with three pair of hips, and am not paid for them yet. But some are better customers than some. There's your ladyship's bill, Madam.

Clar. [*Reads.*] "For the idea of a new-invented commode."—Ay, this may be mine; but 'tis of a preposterous length. Do you think I can waste time to read every article, Mrs. Amlet? I'd as lief read a sermon.

Am. Alack-a-day, there's no need of fatiguing yourself at that rate: cast an eye only, if your honour pleases, upon the sum total.

Clar. Total, fifty-six pounds—and odd things.

Flip. But six and fifty pounds!

Am. Nay another body would have made it twice as much; but there's a blessing goes along with a moderate profit.

Clar. Flippanta, go to my cashier, let him give you six and fifty pounds. Make haste.—Don't you hear me? Six and fifty pounds. Is it so difficult to be comprehended?

Flip. No, Madam,—I—I comprehend six and fifty pounds, but—

Clar. But go fetch it then.

Flip. What she means I don't know—but I shall, I suppose, before I bring her the money. [*Aside—Exit.*

Clar. [*Setting her hair in a pocket-glass.*]—The trade you follow gives you a great deal of trouble, Mrs. Amlet?

Am. Alack-a-day! a world of pain, Madam——and yet there's small profit as your honour sees by your bill.

Clar. Poor woman!—Sometimes you have great losses, Mrs. Amlet?

Am. I have two thousand pounds owing me, of which I shall never get ten shillings.

Clar. Poor woman!—You have a great charge of children, Mrs. Amlet?

Am. Only one wicked rogue, Madam, who, I think, will break my heart.

Clar. Poor woman!

Am. He'll be hanged, Madam: that will be the end of him. Where he gets it, Heaven knows; but he's always shaking his heels with the ladies; and his elbows with the lords. He's as fine as a prince, and as gim as the best of them. But the ungracious rogue tells all he comes near that his mother is dead, and I am but his nurse.

Clar. Poor woman!

Am. Alas! Madam, he's like the rest of the world—Every body's for appearing to be more than they are, and that ruins all.

Clar. Well, Mrs. Amlet, you'll excuse me; I have a little business. Flippanta will bring you your money presently. Adieu, Mrs. Amlet. [*Exit.*

Am. I return your honour many thanks——Ah, there's a good lady! not so much as read her bill——If the rest were like her, I should soon have money enough to go as fine as Dick himself.

Enter DICK.

Dick. Sure Flippanta must have given my letter by this time. I long to know how it has been received. [*Aside.*

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Am. Misericorde! what do I see?

Dick. Fiends and hags!—the witch, my mother!

Am. Nay, 'tis he—Ah, my poor Dick, what art thou doing here?

Dick. What a misfortune! [*Aside.*

Am. Good Lard, how thou art bravely decked!—But it's all one; I'm thy mother still; and though thou art a wicked child, nature will speak; I love thee still——Ah, Dick! my poor Dick! [*Embracing him.*

Dick. Blood and thunder!—Will you ruin me? [*Breaking from her.*

Am. Ah, the blasphemous rogue, how he swears!

Dick. You destroy all my hopes.

Am. Will your mother's kiss destroy you, varlet! Thou art an ungracious bird. Kneel down, and ask my blessing, sirrah.

Dick. Death and furies!

Am. Ah, he's a proper young man!——See what a shape he has——Ah, poor child!

[*Running to embrace him, he still avoiding her.*

Dick. Oons, keep off! the woman's mad. If any body comes, my fortune's lost.

Am. What fortune, ha? Speak, Graceless—Ah, Dick, thou'lt be hanged, Dick.

Dick. Good, dear mother, don't call me Dick here.

Am. Not call thee Dick?—Is it not thy name?—What shall I call thee?—Mr. Amlet?—Ha!—Art not thou a presumptuous rascal?—Hark you, sirrah; I hear of your tricks; you disown me for your mother, and say I am but your nurse.—Is not this true?

Dick. No: I love you, I respect you, [*Taking her hand.*] I am all duty. But if you discover me here, you ruin the fairest prospect that man ever had.

Am. What prospect?—Ha!—Come, this is a lie, now.

Dick. No, my honoured parent, what I say is true; I'm about a great fortune. I'll bring you home a daughter-in-law in a coach and six horses, if you'll but be quiet. I can't tell more now.

Am. Is it possible?

Dick. 'Tis true, by Jupiter.

Am. My dear lad——

Dick. For Heaven's sake——

Am. But tell me, Dick——

Dick. I'll follow you home in a moment, and tell you all.

Am. What a shape is there!

Dick. Pray, mother, go.

Am. I must receive some money here first, which shall go for thy wedding-dinner.

Dick. Here's somebody coming——'Sdeath, she'll betray me!

Enter FLIPPANTA.

[*He makes signs to his mother.*

Good morrow, dear Flippanta, how do all the ladies within?

Flip. At your service, colonel: as far at least as my interest goes.

Am. Colonel!——Look you, now, how Dick's respected. [*Aside.*

Dick. Waiting for thee, Flippanta, I was making acquaintance with this old gentlewoman here.

Am. The pretty lad! He's as impudent as a page. [*Aside.*

Dick. Who is this good woman, Flippanta?

Flip. A gin of all trades; an old daggling cheat, that hobbles about from house to house, to bubble the ladies of their money. I have a small business of yours in my pocket, colonel.

Dick. An answer to my letter?

Flip. So quick indeed? No, it's your letter itself.

Dick. Hast thou not given it then yet?

Flip. I han't had an opportunity; but 'twont be long first. Wont you go in and see my lady?

Dick. Yes, I'll go make her a short visit. But, dear Flippanta, don't forget; my life and fortune are in your hands.

Flip. Never fear; I'll take care of them.

Am. How he traps them! Let Dick alone. [*Aside*

Dick. [*To his Mother.*] Your servant, good Madam. [*Exit.*

Am. Your honour's most devoted.——A pretty, civil, well-bred gentleman this, Mrs. Flippanta.——Pray whom may he be?

Flip. A man of great note—Colonel Shapely.

Am. Is it possible?——I have heard much of him, indeed, but never saw him before. One may see quality in every limb of him——He's a fine man, truly.

Flip. I think you are in love with him, Mrs. Amlet.

Am. Alas, those days are done with me! but if I were as fair as I was once, and had as much money as some folks, Colonel Shapely should not catch cold for want of a bed-fellow. I love your men of rank; they have something in their air does so distinguish them from the rascality.

Flip. People of quality are fine things indeed, Mrs. Amlet, if they had but a little more money; but for want of that they are forced to do things their great souls are ashamed of——For example, here's my lady—she owes you but six and fifty pounds.

Am. Well!

Flip. Well, and she has it not by her to pay you.

Am. How can that be?

Flip. I don't know; her cash-keeper's out of humour; he says he has no money.

Am. What a presumptuous piece of vermin is a cash-keeper? Tell his lady he has no money!——Now, Mrs. Flippanta, you may see his bags are full, by his being so saucy.

Flip. If they are, there's no help for it; he'll do what he pleases, till he comes to make up his yearly accounts.

Am. But Madam plays sometimes——so, when she has good fortune, she may pay me out of her winnings.

Flip. Oh, ne'er think of that, Mrs. Amlet; if she had won a thousand pounds, she'd rather die in a gaol, than pay off a farthing with it. Play-money, Mrs. Amlet, amongst people of quality, is a sacred thing, and not to be profaned; 'tis consecrated to their pleasures; 'twould be sacrilege to pay their debts with it.

Am. Why, what shall we do, then? For I ha'n't one penny to buy bread.

Flip. I'll tell you—it just now comes in my head—I know my lady has a little occasion for money at this time:—so if you lend her a hundred pounds, d'ye see—then she may pay you your six and fifty out of it.

Am. Sure, Mrs. Flippanta, you think to make a fool of me?

Flip. No, the devil fetch me if I do——You shall have a diamond necklace in pawn.

Am. O ho, a pawn! That's another case—and when must she have the money?

Flip. In a quarter of an hour.

Am. Say no more. Bring the necklace to my house; it shall be ready for you.

Flip. I'll be with you in a moment.

Am. Adieu, Mrs. Flippanta.

Flip. Adieu, Mrs. Amlet.——[*Exit* AMLET.] ——So——this ready money will make us all happy——this spring will set our basset-table a-going, and that's a wheel will turn twenty others. My lady's young and handsome; she'll have a dozen intrigues upon her hands, before she has been twice at her prayers. So much the better; the more the grist the richer the miller; sure never wench got into so hopeful a place; here's a fortune to be sold, a mistress to be debauched, and a master to be ruined. If I don't feather my nest, and get a good husband, I deserve to die both a maid and a beggar. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—MR. GRIPE'S *House.*

Enter CLARISSA *and* DICK.

Clar. What in the name of dulness is the matter with you colonel? You are as studious as a cracked chymist.

Dick. My head, Madam, is full of your husband.

Clar. The worst furniture for a head in the universe.

Dick. I am thinking of his passion for your friend Araminta.

Clar. Passion!——Dear colonel, give it a less violent name.

Enter BRASS.

Dick. Well, Sir, what want you?

Brass. The affair I told you of goes ill. [*To* DICK *aside.*] There's an action out.

Dick. The devil there is!

Clar. What news brings Brass?

Dick. Before Gad I can't tell, Madam: the dog will never speak out. My Lord What-d'ye-call-him waits for me at my lodging; is not that it?

Brass. Yes, Sir.

Dick. Madam, I ask your pardon.

Clar. Your servant, Sir. [*Exeunt* DICK *and* BRASS.] Jessamin? [*She sits down.*

Enter JESSAMIN.

Jes. Madam.

Clar. Where's Corinna? Call her to me, if her father ha'n't locked her up: I want her company.

Jes. Madam, her guitar-master is with her.

Clar. Pshaw! she's always taken up with her impertinent guitar-man. Flippanta stays an age with that old fool, Mrs. Amlet: and Araminta, before she can come abroad, is so long a placing her coquette-patch, that I must be a year without company. How insupportable is a moment's uneasiness to a woman of spirit and pleasure!

Enter FLIPPANTA.

Oh, art thou come at last? Pr'ythee Flippanta, learn to move a little quicker; thou knowest how impatient I am.

Flip. Yes, when you expect money; if you had sent me to buy a prayer-book, you'd have thought I had flown.

Clar. Well, hast thou brought me any, after all?

Flip. Yes, I have brought some. There: [*Giving her a purse.*] the old hag has struck off her bill, the rest is in that purse.

Clar. 'Tis well: but take care, Flippanta, my husband don't suspect any thing of this: 'twould vex him, and I don't love to make him uneasy: so I would spare him these little sort of troubles, by keeping them from his knowledge.

Flip. See the tenderness she has for him, and yet he's always a complaining of you.

Clar. 'Tis the nature of them, Flippanta: a husband is a growling animal.

Flip. How exactly you define them!

Clar. Oh, I know them, Flippanta: though I confess my poor wretch diverts me sometimes with his ill humours. I wish he would quarrel with me to-day a little to pass away the time, for I find myself in a violent spleen.

Flip. Why, if you please to drop yourself in his way, six to four but he scolds one rubber with you.

Clar. Ay, but thou knowest he's as uncertain as the wind; and if, instead of quarrelling with me, he should grow fond, he'd make me as sick as a dog.

Flip. If he's kind you must provoke him: if he kisses you, spit in his face.

Clar. Alas! when men are in the kissing fit (like lap-dogs) they take that for a favour.

Flip. Nay, then I don't know what you'll do with him.

Clar. I'll e'en do nothing at all with him. ——Flippanta.

Flip. Madam.

Clar. My cardinal and gloves, and a coach to the door.

Flip. Why, whither are you going?

Clar. I can't tell yet; but I would go spend some money, since I have it.

Flip. Why, you want nothing that I know of.

Clar. How awkward an objection now is that ——as if a woman of education bought things because she wanted them! Quality always distinguishes itself; and therefore as the mechanic people buy things, because they have occasion for them, you see women of rank always buy things, because they have not occasion for them. Now there, Flippanta, you see the difference between a woman that has breeding, and one that has none. Oh, ho, here's Araminta come at last.

Enter ARAMINTA.

Lard, what a tedious while you have let me expect you! I was afraid you were not well: how do you do to-day?

Ara. As well as a woman can do, that has not slept all night.

Flip. Methinks, Madam, you are pretty well awake, however.

Ara. Oh, 'tis not a little thing will make a woman of my spirits look drowsy.

Clar. But pr'ythee, what was't disturbed you?

Ara. Not your husband, don't trouble yourself; at least I am not in love with him yet.

Clar. Well remembered——I had quite forgot that matter. I wish you much joy; you have made a noble conquest indeed.

Ara. But now I have subdued the country, pray is it worth my keeping? You know the ground, you have tried it.

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Clar. A barren soil, Heaven can tell.

Ara. Yet if it were well cultivated, it would produce something, to my knowledge. Do you know 'tis in my power to ruin this poor thing of yours? His whole estate is at my service.

Flip. Cods-fish, strike him, Madam, and let my lady go your halves. There's no sin in plundering a husband, so his wife has share of the booty.

Ara. Whenever she gives me her orders, I shall be very ready to obey them.

Clar. Why, as odd a thing as such a project may seem, Araminta, I believe I shall have a little serious discourse with you about it. But pr'ythee tell me how you have passed the night; for I am sure your mind has been roving upon some pretty thing or other.

Ara. Why, I have been studying all the ways my brain could produce to plague my husband.

Clar. No wonder indeed you look so fresh this morning, after the satisfaction of such pleasing ideas all night.

Ara. Why, can a woman do less than study mischief, when she has tumbled and tossed herself into a burning fever, for want of sleep, and sees a fellow lie snoring by her, stock-still, in a fine breathing sweat?

Clar. Now see the difference of women's tempers: if my dear would make but one nap of his whole life, and only waken to make his will, I should be the happiest wife in the universe. But we'll discourse more of these matters as we go, for I must make a tour among the shops.

Ara. I have a coach waits at the door—we'll talk of them as we rattle along.

Clar. The best place in nature—for you know a hackney-coach is a natural enemy to a husband. [*Exeunt* CLAR. *and* ARA.

Flip. What a pretty little pair of amiable persons are there gone to hold a council of war together! Poor birds! what would they do with their time, if the plaguing their husbands did not help them to employment! Well, if idleness be the root of all evil, then matrimony's good for something——for it sets many a poor woman to work. But here comes Miss. I hope I shall help her into the holy state ere long. And when she's once there, if she don't play her part as well as the best of them, I'm mistaken. Ha'n't I lost the letter I'm to give her?——No, here 'tis: so now we shall see how pure nature will work with her, for art she knows none yet.

Enter CORINNA.

Cor. What does my mother-in-law want with me, Flippanta? They tell me, she was asking for me.

Flip. She's just gone out; so I suppose 'twas no great business.

Cor. Then I'll go into my chamber again.

Flip. Nay, hold a little, if you please. I have some business with you myself, of more concern than what she had to say to you.

Cor. Make haste then, for you know my father wont let me keep you company: he says, you'll spoil me.

Flip. I spoil you! He's an unworthy man to give you such ill impressions of a woman of my honour.

Cor. Nay, never take it to heart, Flippanta; for I don't believe a word he says. But he does so plague me with his continual scolding, I'm almost weary of my life.

Flip. Why, what is't he finds fault with?

Cor. Nay, I don't know, for I never mind him: when he has babbled for two hours together, methinks I have heard a mill going, that's all. It does not at all change my opinion, Flippanta—it only makes my head ache.

Flip. Nay, if you can bear it so, you are not to be pitied so much as I thought.

Cor. Not pitied! Why, is it not a miserable thing, such a young creature as I am should be kept in perpetual solitude, with no other company but a parcel of old fumbling masters, to teach me geography, arithmetic, philosophy, and a thousand useless things? Fine entertainment, indeed, for a young maid at sixteen! Methinks one's time might be better employed.

Flip. Those things will improve your wit.

Cor. Fiddle faddle? ha'n't I wit enough already? My mother-in-law has learned none of this trumpery, and is not she as happy as the day is long?

Flip. Then you envy her, I find.

Cor. And well I may. Does she not do what she has a mind to, in spite of her husband's teeth!

Flip. Look you there now: [*Aside.*] if she has not already conceived that as the supreme blessing of life!

Cor. I'll tell you what, Flippanta: if my mother-in-law would but stand by me a little, and encourage me, and let me keep her company, I'd rebel against my father to-morrow, and throw all my books in the fire. Why he can't touch a groat of my portion, do you know that, Flippanta?

Flip. So——I shall spoil her.——[*Aside.*]—Pray Heaven the girl don't debauch me.

Cor. Look you: in short, he may think what he pleases, he may think himself wise; but thoughts are free, and I may think in my turn. I'm but a girl, 'tis true, and a fool too, if you believe him; but let him know, a foolish girl may make a wise man's heart ache; so he had as good be quiet——Now its out.

Flip. Very well, I love to see a young woman have spirit; it's a sign she'll come to something.

Cor. Ah, Flippanta, if you would but encourage me, you'd find me quite another thing. I'm a devilish girl in the bottom; I wish you'd but let me make one amongst you.

Flip. That never can be, till you are married. ——Come, examine your strength a little. Do you think you durst venture upon a husband?

Cor. A husband! Why a——if you would but encourage me—Come, Flippanta, be a true friend now. I'll give you advice, when I have got a little more experience. Do you, in your very conscience and soul, think I am old enough to be married.

Flip. Old enough! Why you are sixteen, are you not?

Cor. Sixteen! I am sixteen, two months, and odd days, woman. I keep an exact account.

Flip. The deuce you are!

Cor. Why do you then truly and sincerely think I am old enough?

Flip. I do, upon my faith, child.

Cor. Why then, to deal as fairly with you, Flippanta, as you do with me, I have thought so any time these three years.

Flip. Now I find you have more wit than ever I thought you had; and to show you what an opinion I have of your discretion, I'll show you a thing I thought to have thrown into the fire.

Cor. What is it, for Jupiter's sake?

Flip. Something will make your heart chuck within you.

Cor. My dear Flippanta!

Flip. What do you think it is?

Cor. I don't know, nor I don't care—but I'm mad to have it.

Flip. It's a four cornered thing——

Cor. What, like a cardinal's cap?

Flip. No, 'tis worth a whole conclave of them. How do you like it? [*Showing the letter.*

Cor. Oh, lard, a letter!—Is there ever a token in it?

Flip. Yes, and a precious one too. There's a handsome young gentleman's heart.

Cor. A handsome young gentleman's heart? Nay, then it's time to look grave. [*Aside.*

Flip. There.

Cor. I sha'n't touch it.

Flip. What's the matter now?

Cor. I sha'n't receive it.

Flip. Sure you jest.

Cor. You'll find I don't. I understand myself better than to take letters, when I don't know who they are from.

Flip. I'm afraid I commended your wit too soon.

Cor. 'Tis all one—I sha'n't touch it, unless I know who it comes from.

Flip. Hey-day! open it, and you'll see.

Cor. Indeed I shall not.

Flip. Well——then I must return it where I had it——

Cor. That wont serve your turn, Madam; my father must have an account of this.

Flip. Sure you are not in earnest?

Cor. You'll find I am.

Flip. So, here's fine work!——This 'tis to deal with girls before they come to know the distinction of sexes.

Cor. Confess who you had it from, and perhaps, for this once, I mayn't tell my father.

Flip. Why then since it must out, 'twas the colonel: but why are you so scrupulous, Madam?

Cor. Because, if it had come from any body else—I would not have given a farthing for it. [*Twitching it eagerly out of her hand.*

Flip. Ah, my dear little rogue, [*Kissing her.*] you frightened me out of my wits.

Cor. Let me read it, let me read it, let me read it, let me read it, I say. Um, um, um—Cupid's—um, um, um,—Darts, um, um, um,—Beauty,—um,—Charms,—um, um, um,—Angel,—um,—Goddess,—um, [*Kissing the letter.*] um, um, um,—truest Lover,—um, um—eternal Constancy,—um, um, um,—Cruel,—um, um, um,—Racks,—um, um, um—Tortures,—um, um,—fifty Daggers,—um, um, um,—bleeding Heart,—um, um,—dead Man.—Very well, a mighty civil letter, I promise you; not one smutty word in it: I'll go lock it up in my comb-box.

Flip. Well——but what does he say to you.

Cor. Not a word of news, Flippanta; 'tis all about business.

Flip. Does he not tell you he's in love with you.

Cor. Ay, but he told me that before.

Flip. How so? He never spoke to you.

Cor. He sent me word by his eyes.

Flip. Did he so! Mighty well, I thought you had been to learn that language.

Cor. Oh, but you thought wrong, Flippanta——What, because I don't go a visiting, and see the world, you think I know nothing. But you should consider, Flippanta, that the more one's alone, the more one thinks; and 'tis thinking that improves a girl. I'll have you to know, when I was younger than I am now, by more than I'll boast of, I thought of things would have made you stare again.

Flip. Well, since you are so well versed in your business, I suppose I need not inform you, that if you don't write your gallant an answer—he'll die.

Cor. Nay, now, Flippanta, I confess you tell me something I did not know before. Do you speak in serious sadness? Are men given to die if their mistresses are sour to them.

Flip. Um——I can't say they all die——No, I can't say they do; but truly, I believe it would go very hard with the colonel.

Cor. Lard, I would not have my hands in blood for thousands; and, therefore, Flippanta——if you'll encourage me——

Flip. Oh, by all means an answer.

Cor. Well, since you say it then, I'll e'en in and do it, though I protest to you, (lest you should think me too forward now) he's the only man that wears a beard I'd ink my fingers for. May be, if I marry him, in a year or two's time I mayn't be so nice. [*Aside.* [*Exit* COR.

Flip. Now Heaven give him joy; he's like to have a rare wife o' thee. But where there's money, a man has a plaster to his sore. They have a blessed time on't who marry for love. See!—here comes an example——Araminta's dread lord.

Enter MONEYTRAP.

Mon. Ah, Flippanta! How do you do, good Flippanta? How do you do?

Flip. Thank you, Sir, well, at your service.

Mon. And how does the good family, your master, and your fair mistress? Are they at home?

Flip. Neither of them; my master has been gone out these two hours, and my lady is just gone with your wife.

Mon. Well, I wont say I have lost my labour, however, as long as I have met with you, Flippanta; for I have wished a great while for an opportunity to talk with you a little.—You wont take it amiss, if I should ask you a few questions?

Flip. Provided you leave me to my liberty in my answers. What's this Cot-quean going to pry into now! [*Aside.*

Mon. Pr'ythee, good Flippanta, how do your master and mistress live together?

Flip. Live! Why—like man and wife, generally out of humour, quarrel often, seldom agree, complain of one another; and perhaps, have both reason. In short, 'tis as much as 'tis at your house.

Mon. Good lack! But whose side are you generally of?

Flip. O' the right side always, my lady's.—And if you'll have me give you my opinion of these matters, Sir, I do not think a husband can ever be in the right.

Mon. Ha!

Flip. Little, peeking, creeping, sneaking, stingy, covetous things.

Mon. Ha!

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Flip. Fit for nothing but tailors and dry nurses.

Mon. Ha!

Flip. A dog in a manger, snarling and biting, to starve gentlemen with good stomachs.

Mon. Ha!

Flip. A sentry upon pleasure, sent to be a plague on lovers, and damn poor women before their time.

Mon. A husband is indeed——

Flip. Sir, I say he is nothing—a beetle without wings, a windmill without sails, a ship in a calm.

Mon. Ha!

Flip. A quack without drugs.

Mon. Ha!

Flip. A lawyer without knavery.

Mon. Ha!

Flip. A courtier without flattery.

Mon. Ha!

Flip. A king without an army; or, a people with one—Have I drawn him, Sir?

Mon. Why truly, Flippanta, I can't deny but there are some general lines of resemblance. But, you know there may be exceptions.

Flip. Hark you, Sir, shall I deal plainly with you? Had I got a husband, I would put him in mind, that he was married as well as I. [*Sings.*

For were I the thing call'd a wife,
And my fool grew too fond of his power,
He should look like an ass all his life
For a prank that I'd play him in an hour.

Tol lol la ra tal tol, &c.—Do you observe that, Sir?

Mon. I do; and think you would be in the right on't. But pr'ythee, why dost not give this advice to thy mistress?

Flip. For fear it should go round to your wife, Sir, for you know they are play-fellows.

Mon. Oh, there is no danger of my wife; she knows I'm none of those husbands.

Flip. Are you sure she knows that, Sir?

Mon. I'm sure she ought to know it, Flippanta, for really I have but four faults in the world.

Flip. And pray what may they be?

Mon. Why, I'm a little slovenly, I shift but once a week.

Flip. Fough!

Mon. I am sometimes out of humour.

Flip. Provoking!

Mon. I don't give her so much money as she'd have.

Flip. Insolent!

Mon. And a—perhaps, I mayn't be quite so young as I was.

Flip. The devil!

Mon. Oh, but then consider how 'tis on her side, Flippanta. She ruins me with washing, is always out of humour, ever wanting money, and will never be older.

Flip. That last article, I must confess, is a little hard upon you.

Mon. Ah, Flippanta! didst thou but know the daily provocations I have, thou'dst be the first to excuse my faults. But now I think on't—Thou art none of my friend, thou dost not love me at all; no, not at all.

Flip. And whither is this little reproach going to lead us now?

Mon. You have power over your fair mistress, Flippanta.

Flip. Sir!

Mon. But what then? you hate me.

Flip. I understand you not.

Mon. There's not a moment's trouble her naughty husband gives her, but I feel it too.

Flip. I don't know what you mean.

Mon. If she did but know what part I take in her sufferings——

Flip. Mighty obscure.

Mon. Well, I'll say no more; but——

Flip. All Hebrew.

Mon. If thou wouldst but tell her on't.

Flip. Still darker and darker.

Mon. I should not be ungrateful.

Flip. Ah, now I begin to understand you.

Mon. Flippanta—there's my purse.

Flip. Say no more; now you explain, indeed—You are in love.

Mon. Bitterly—and I do swear by all the gods—

Flip. Hold—Spare them for another time, you stand in no need of them now. A usurer that parts with his purse, gives sufficient proof of his sincerity.

Mon. I hate my wife, Flippanta.

Flip. That we'll take upon your bare word.

Mon. She's the devil, Flippanta.

Flip. You like your neighbour's better.

Mon. Oh, an angel!

Flip. What pity it is the law don't allow trucking!

Mon. If it did, Flippanta!

Flip. But since it don't, Sir—keep the reins upon your passion: don't let your flame rage too high, lest my lady should be cruel, and it should dry you up to a mummy.

Mon. 'Tis impossible she can be so barbarous to let me die. Alas, Flippanta, a very small matter would save my life.

Flip. Then y'are dead——for we women never grant any thing to a man who will be satisfied with a little.

Mon. Dear Flippanta, that was only my modesty; but since you'll have it out—I am a very dragon; and so your lady will find—if ever she think fit to be——Now, I hope you'll stand my friend.

Flip. Well, Sir, as far as my credit goes, it shall be employed in your service.

Mon. My best Flippanta—tell her—I'm all hers—tell her—my body's hers—tell her—my soul's hers—and tell her—my estate's hers. Lard have mercy upon me, how I'm in love!

Flip. Poor man! what a sweat he's in! But hark—I hear my master; for Heaven's sake compose yourself a little, you are in such a fit, o' my conscience he'll smell you out.

Mon. Ah, dear, I'm in such an emotion, I dare not be seen: put me in this closet for a moment.

Flip. Closet, man! it's too little; your love would stifle you. Go air yourself in the garden a little, you have need on't, i'faith. [*She puts him out.*] A rare adventure, by my troth. This will be curious news to the wives. Fortune has now put their husbands into their hands, and I think they are too sharp to neglect its favours.

Enter GRIPE.

Gripe. Oh, here's the right hand; the rest of the body can't be far off. Where's my wife, housewife?

Flip. An admirable question! Why, she's gone abroad, Sir.

Gripe. Abroad, abroad, abroad already!—Why, she uses to be stewing in her bed three hours after this time, as late as 'tis. What makes her gadding so soon?

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Flip. Business, I suppose.

Gripe. Business! she has a pretty head for business truly: Oh, ho, let her change her way of living, or I'll make her change a light heart for a heavy one.

Flip. And why would you have her change her way of living, Sir? You see it agrees with her. She never looked better in her life.

Gripe. Don't tell me of her looks, I have done with her looks long since. But I'll make her change her life, or——

Flip. Indeed, Sir, you wont.

Gripe. Why, what shall hinder me, insolence?

Flip. That which hinders most husbands; contradiction.

Gripe. Suppose I resolve I wont be contradicted?

Flip. Suppose she resolves you shall.

Gripe. A wife's resolution is not good by law.

Flip. Nor a husband's by custom.

Gripe. I tell thee I will not bear it.

Flip. I tell you, Sir, you will bear it.

Gripe. Oons, I have borne it three years already.

Flip. By that you see it is but giving your mind to it?

Gripe. My mind to it! Death and the devil! My mind to it?

Flip. Look ye, Sir, you may swear and damn, and call the furies to assist you; but till you apply the remedy to the right place, you'll never cure the disease. You fancy you have got an extravagant wife, is't not so?

Gripe. Pr'ythee, change me that word fancy, and it is so.

Flip. Why there's it. Men are strangely troubled with the vapours of late. You'll wonder now, if I tell you, you have the most reasonable wife in town; and that all the disorders you think you see in her, are only here, here, here, in your own head.

[*Thumping his forehead.*

Gripe. She is then, in thy opinion, a reasonable woman?

Flip. By my faith I think so.

Gripe. I shall run mad——Name me an extravagance in the world she is not guilty of.

Flip. Name me an extravagance in the world she is guilty of.

Gripe. Come then: does she not put the whole house in disorder?

Flip. Not that I know of, for she never comes into it but to sleep.

Gripe. 'Tis very well. Does she employ any one moment of her life in the government of her family?

Flip. She is so submissive a wife, she leaves it entirely to you.

Gripe. Admirable! Does not she spend more money in coach-hire and chair-hire, than would maintain six children?

Flip. She's too nice of your credit to be seen daggling in the streets.

Gripe. Good! Do I set eye on her sometimes in a week together?

Flip. That, Sir, is because you are never stirring at the same time; you keep odd hours; you are always going to bed when she's rising; and rising just when she's coming to bed.

Gripe. Yes, truly, night into day, and day into night, bawdy-house play, that's her trade; but these are trifles. Has she not lost her diamond necklace? Answer me to that, trapes.

Flip. Yes; and has sent as many tears after it, as if it had been her husband.

Gripe. Ah!——the devil take her; but enough. 'Tis resolved, and I will put a stop to the course of her life, and so she shall know the first time I meet with her; [*Aside.*] which, though we are man and wife, and lie under one roof, 'tis very possible may not be this fortnight.

[*Exit* GRIPE.

Flip. Nay, thou hast a blessed time on't, that must be confessed. What a miserable devil is a husband! Insupportable to himself, and a plague to every thing about him.—Their wives do by them as children do by dogs, tease and provoke them till they make them so peevish, they snarl and bite at every thing that comes in their reach. This wretch here is grown perverse to that degree, he's for his wife keeping at home, and making hell of his house, so he may be the devil in it, to torment her. How niggardly soever he is of all things he possesses, he is willing to purchase her misery at the expense of his own peace. But he'd as good be still, for he'll miss of his aim. If I know her (which I think I do,) she'll set his blood in such a ferment, it shall bubble out at every pore of him; whilst hers is so quiet in her veins, her pulse shall go like a pendulum.

[*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—MRS. AMLET'S *House.*

Enter DICK.

Dick. Where's this old woman?—A-hey.—What the devil, nobody at home! Ha! her strong box!—And the key in't! 'tis so. Now fortune be my friend. What the deuce—Not a penny of money in cash!—Nor a checker note!—Nor a bank-bill—[*Searches the strong box.*]—Nor a crooked stick!—Nor a—mum—here's something—A diamond necklace, by all the gods! 'Oons, the old woman—Zest.

[*Claps the necklace in his pocket, then runs and asks her blessing.*

Enter MRS. AMLET.

——Pray, mother, pray to, &c.

Am. Is it possible! Dick upon his humble knee. Ah, my dear child!—May Heaven be good unto thee.

Dick. I'm come, my dear mother, to pay my duty to you, and to ask your consent to——

Am. What a shape is there!

Dick. To ask your consent, I say, to marry a great fortune; for what is riches in this world without a blessing? And how can there be a blessing without respect and duty to parents.

Am. What a nose he has!

Dick. And therefore it being the duty of every good child not to dispose of himself in marriage without the——

Am. Now the Lord love thee [*Kissing him.*]—for thou art a goodly young man. Well Dick—and how goes it with the lady? Are her eyes open to thy charms? Does she see what's for her own good? Is she sensible of the blessings thou hast in store for her? Ha? Is all sure? Hast thou broke a piece of money with her? Speak, bird, do: don't be modest, and hide thy love from thy mother, for I'm an indulgent parent.

Dick. Nothing under Heaven can prevent

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my good fortune, but its being discovered I am your son.

Am. Then thou art still ashamed of thy natural mother——Graceless! Why, I'm no whore, sirrah.

Dick. I know you are not—A whore? Bless us all!

Am. No; my reputation's as good as the best of 'em; and though I'm old, I'm chaste, you rascal, you.

Dick. Lord, that is not the thing we talk of, mother; but——

Am. I think, as the world goes, they may be proud of marrying their daughter into a vartuous family.

Dick. 'Oons, vartue is not the case——

Am. Where she may have a good example before her eyes.

Dick. Oh, Lord, Oh, Lord, Oh, Lord!

Am. I'm a woman that don't so much as encourage an incontinent look towards me.

Dick. I tell you, 'sdeath, I tell you——

Am. If a man should make an uncivil motion to me, I'd spit in his lascivious face; and all this you may tell them, sirrah.

Dick. Death and furies! the woman's out of her—

Am. Don't you swear, you rascal you, don't you swear; we shall have thee damned at last, and then I shall be disgraced.

Dick. Why then, in cold blood hear me speak to you: I tell you it's a city-fortune I'm about, she cares not a fig for your virtue, she'll hear of nothing but quality; she has quarrelled with one of her friends for having a better complexion, and is resolved she'll marry, to take place of her.

Am. What a cherry lip is there!

Dick. Therefore, good dear mother, now have a care and don't discover me; for if you do, all's lost.

Am. Dear, dear, how thy fair bride will be delighted; go, get thee gone, go: go fetch her home, go fetch her home; I'll give her a sack posset, and a pillow of down she shall lay her head upon. Go, fetch her home, I say.

Dick. Take care then of the main chance, my dear mother; remember, if you discover me——

Am. Go, fetch her home, I say.

Dick. You promise me then——

Am. March.

Dick. But swear to me——

Am. Be gone, sirrah.

Dick. Well, I'll rely upon you—But one kiss before I go.

[*Kisses her heartily, and runs off.*

Am. Now the Lord love thee; for thou art a comfortable young man. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—Gripe's *House.*

Enter Corinna *and* Flippanta.

Cor. But hark you, Flippanta, if you don't think he loves me dearly, don't give him my letter, after all.

Flip. Let me alone.

Cor. When he has read it, let him give it you again.

Flip. Don't trouble yourself.

Cor. And not a word of the pudding to my mother-in-law.

Flip. Enough.

Cor. When we come to love one another to the purpose she shall know all.

Flip. Ay, then 'twill be time enough.

Cor. But remember 'tis you makes me do all this now, so if any mischief comes on't, 'tis you must answer for't.

Flip. I'll be your security.

Cor. I'm young, and know nothing of the matter; but you have experience, so it's your business to conduct me safe.

Flip. Poor innocence!

Cor. But tell me in serious sadness, Flippanta, does he love me with the very soul of him?

Flip. I have told you so a hundred times, and yet you are not satisfied.

Cor. But methinks, I'd fain have him tell me so himself.

Flip. Have patience, and it shall be done.

Cor. Why, patience is a virtue; that we must all confess——But, I fancy, the sooner it's done the better, Flippanta.

Enter Jessamin.

Jes. Madam, yonder's your geography-master waiting for you.

Cor. Ah, how I am tired with these old fumbling fellows, Flippanta.

Flip. Well, don't let him break your heart, you shall be rid of them all ere long.

Cor. Nay, 'tis not the study I am so weary of, Flippanta, 'tis the odious thing that teaches me. Were the colonel my master, I fancy I could take pleasure in learning every thing he could show me.

Flip. And he can show you a great deal, I can tell you that. But get you gone in, here's somebody coming; we must not be seen together.

Cor. I will, I will, I will——Oh, the dear colonel! [*Running off.*

Enter Mrs. Amlet.

Flip. O, ho, it's Mrs. Amlet——What brings you so soon to us again, Mrs. Amlet?

Am. Ah, my dear Mrs. Flippanta, I'm in a furious fright.

Flip. Why, what's come to you?

Am. Ah! mercy on us all——Madam's diamond necklace——

Flip. What of that?

Am. Are you sure you left it in my house?

Flip. Sure I left it! a very pretty question, truly.

Am. Nay, don't be angry; say nothing to Madam of it, I beseech you! it will be found again, if it be Heaven's good will. At least, 'tis I must bear the loss on't. 'Tis my rogue of a son has laid his birdlime fingers on't.

Flip. Your son, Mrs. Amlet!—do you breed your children up to such tricks as these, then?

Am. What shall I say to you, Mrs. Flippanta?—Can I help it? He has been a rogue from his cradle, Dick has. But he has his deserts too. And now it comes in my head, mayhap he may have no ill design in this neither.

Flip. No ill design, woman! He's a pretty fellow, if he can steal a diamond necklace with a good one.

Am. You don't know him Mrs. Flippanta.

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so well as I that bore him. Dick's a rogue, 'tis true, but—mum—

Flip. What does the woman mean?

Am. Hark you, Mrs. Flippanta, is not here a young gentlewoman in your house that wants a husband?

Flip. Why do you ask?

Am. By way of conversation only, it does not concern me; but when she marries, I may chance to dance at the wedding. Remember, I tell you so; I, who am but Mrs. Amlet.

Flip. You dance at her wedding!—You!

Am. Yes, I, I; but don't trouble Madam about her necklace: perhaps it mayn't go out of the family.—Adieu, Mrs. Flippanta. [*Exit.*

Flip. What—what—what does the woman mean? Mad! what a hodge-podge of a story's here? The necklace lost—and her son Dick—and a fortune to marry—and she shall dance at the wedding—and——She does not intend, I hope, to propose a match between her son Dick and Corinna? By my conscience I believe she does. An old beldam!

Enter BRASS.

Brass. Well, hussy, how stand our affairs? Has miss writ us an answer yet? My master's very impatient yonder.

Flip. And why the deuce does he not come himself? Why does he send such idle fellows as these of his errands? Here I had her alone just now: he wont have such an opportunity again this month, I can tell him that.

Brass. So much the worse for him; 'tis his business.——But now, my dear, let thee and I talk a little of our own: I grow most damnably in love with thee; dost hear that?

Flip. Phu! thou art always timing things wrong: my head is full, at present, of more important things than love.

Brass. Then it's full of important things indeed: dost want a privy counsellor?

Flip. I want an assistant.

Brass. To do what?

Flip. Mischief.

Brass. I'm thy man—touch.

Flip. But before I venture to let thee into my project, pr'ythee tell me whether thou findest a natural disposition to ruin a husband, to oblige his wife?

Brass. Is she handsome?

Flip. Yes.

Brass. Why then my disposition's at her service.

Flip. She's beholden to thee.

Brass. Not she alone, neither—therefore don't let her grow vain upon't; for I have three or four affairs of that kind going at this time.

Flip. Well, go carry this epistle from Miss to thy master; and when thou comest back, I'll tell thee thy business.

Brass. I'll know it before I go, if you please.

Flip. Thy master waits for an answer.

Brass. I'd rather he should wait than I.

Flip. Why then, in short, Araminta's husband is in love with my lady.

Brass. Very well, child, we have a Rowland for her Oliver: thy lady's husband is in love with Araminta.

Flip. Who told you that, sirrah?

Brass. 'Tis a negotiation I am charged with, pert. Did not I tell thee I did business for half the town? I have managed master Gripe's little affairs for him these ten years, you slut you.

Flip. Hark thee, Brass, the game's in our hands, if we can but play the cards.

Brass. Pique and repique, you jade you, if the wives will fall into good intelligence.

Flip. Let them alone; I'll answer for them they don't slip the occasion.—See, here they come. They little think what a piece of good news we have for them.

Enter CLARISSA *and* ARAMINTA.

Clar. Jessamin! Here, boy, carry up these things into my dressing-room, and break as many of them by the way as you can, be sure. ——Oh, art thou there, Brass! What news?

Brass. Madam, I only called in as I was going by.——But some little propositions, Mrs. Flippanta has been starting, have kept me here to offer your ladyship my humble service.

Clar. What propositions?

Brass. She'll acquaint you, Madam.

Ara. Is there any thing new, Flippanta?

Flip. Yes, and pretty too.

Clar. That follows of course——but let's have it quick.

Flip. Why, Madam, you have made a conquest.

Clar. Hussy——but of whom? Quick.

Flip. Of Mr. Moneytrap, that's all.

Ara. My husband?

Flip. Yes, your husband, Madam: you thought fit to corrupt ours, so now we are even with you.

Ara. Sure thou art in jest, Flippanta.

Flip. Serious as my devotions.

Brass. And the cross intrigue, ladies, is what our brains have been at work about.

Ara. My dear! [*To* CLARISSA.

Clar. My life!

Ara. My angel!

Clar. My soul! [*Hugging one another.*

Ara. The stars have done this.

Clar. The pretty little twinklers.

Flip. And what will you do for them now?

Clar. What grateful creatures ought; show them we don't despise their favours.

Ara. But is not this a wager between these two blockheads?

Clar. I would not give a shilling to go the winner's halves.

Ara. Then 'tis the most fortunate thing that ever could have happened.

Clar. All your last night's ideas, Araminta, were trifles to it.

Ara. Brass, my dear, will be useful to us.

Brass. At your service, Madam.

Clar. Flippanta will be necessary, my life.

Flip. She waits your commands, Madam.

Ara. For my part, then, I recommend my husband, to thee, Flippanta, and make it my earnest request thou wont leave him one half-crown.

Flip. I'll do all I can to obey you, Madam.

Brass. [*To* CLAR.] If your ladyship would give me the same kind orders for yours——

Char. Oh, if thou sparest him, Brass, I 'm thy enemy till I die.

Brass. 'Tis enough, Madam: I'll be sure to give you a reasonable account of him. But how do you intend we shall proceed, ladies?—Must we storm the purse at once, or break ground in form, and carry it by little and little?

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Clar. Storm, dear Brass, storm; ever whilst you live, storm.

Ara. Oh, by all means——Must it not be so, Flippanta?

Flip. In four and twenty hours, two hundred pounds a-piece, that's my sentence.

Brass. Very well. But, ladies, you'll give me leave to put you in mind of some little expense in favours, 'twill be necessary you are at, to these honest gentlemen.

Ara. Favours, Brass!

Brass. Um——a——some small matters, Madam, I doubt must be.

Clar. Now, that's a vile article, Araminta; for that thing your husband is so like mine—

Flip. Phu! there's a scruple indeed! Pray, Madam, don't be so squeamish; though the meat be a little flat, we'll find you savoury sauce to it.

Clar. This wench is so mad——

Flip. Why, what, in the name of Lucifer, is it you have to do that's so terrible?

Brass. A civil look only.

Ara. There's no great harm in that.

Flip. An obliging word.

Clar. That one may afford them.

Brass. A little smile, *à-propos*.

Ara. That's but giving one's self an air.

Flip. Receive a little letter perhaps.

Clar. Women of quality do that from fifty odious fellows.

Brass. Suffer (may be) a squeeze by the hand.

Ara. One's so used to that one does not feel it.

Flip. Or if a kiss would do't——

Clar. I'd die first.

Brass. Indeed, ladies, I doubt 'twill be necessary to——

Clar. Get their wretched money, without paying so dear for it.

Flip. Well, just as you please for that, my ladies—But I suppose you'll play upon the square with your favour, and not pique yourselves upon being one more grateful than another.

Brass. And state a fair account of receipts and disbursements.

Ara. That, I think, should be indeed.

Clar. With all my heart, and Brass shall be our book-keeper. So, get thee to work, man, as fast as thou canst; but not a word of all this to thy master.

Brass. I'll observe my order, Madam. [*Exit.*

Clar. I'll have the pleasure of telling him myself; he'll be violently delighted with it.—'Tis the best man in the world, Araminta; he'll bring us rare company to-morrow; all sorts of gamesters; and thou shalt see, my husband will be such a beast to be out of humour at it.

Ara. The monster! But, hush! here's my dear approaching: pr'ythee, let's leave him to Flippanta.

Flip. Ay, pray do; I'll bring you a good account of him, I'll warrant you.

Clar. Despatch, then; for the basset-table's in haste. [*Exeunt* CLARISSA *and* ARAMINTA.

Flip. So; now have at him. Here he comes——We'll try if we can pillage the usurer, as he does other folks.

Enter MONEYTRAP.

Mon. Well, my pretty Flippanta, is thy mistress come home?

Flip. Yes, Sir.

Mon. And where is she, pr'ythee?

Flip. Gone abroad, Sir.

Mon. How dost mean?

Flip. I meant right, Sir—My lady will come home and go abroad ten times in an hour, when she is either in very good humour or very bad.

Mon. Good-lack! But I'll warrant, in general, 'tis her naughty husband that makes her house uneasy to her——But hast thou said a little something to her, chicken, for an expiring lover, ha?

Flip. Said!—Yes, I have said; much good may it do me!

Mon. Well, and how?

Flip. And how.——And how do you think you would have me do't? And you have such a way with you, one can refuse you nothing.—But I have brought myself into a fine business by it.

Mon. Good-lack!—But I hope, Flippanta—

Flip. Yes, your hopes will do much, when I am turned out of doors.

Mon. Was she, then, terrible angry?

Flip. Oh, had you seen how she flew, when she saw where I was pointing! for you must know, I went round the bush, and round the bush, before I came to the matter.

Mon. Nay, 'tis a ticklish point, that must be owned.

Flip. On my word is it—I mean, where a lady is truly virtuous; for that's our case, you must know.

Mon. A very dangerous case, indeed.

Flip. But I can tell you one thing—she has an inclination to you?

Mon. Is it possible.

Elip. Yes, and I told her so, at last.

Mon. Well, and what did she answer thee?

Flip. Slap—and bid me bring it to you for a token. [*Giving him a slap on the face.*

Mon. And you have lost none on't by the way, with a pox t'ye. [*Aside.*

Flip. Now this, I think, looks the best in the world.

Mon. Yea; but it really feels a little oddly.

Flip. Why you must know, ladies have different ways of expressing their kindness, according to the humour they are in. If she had been in a good one, it had been a kiss. But as long as she has sent you something your affairs go well.

Mon. Why, truly I am a little ignorant in the mysterious paths of love; so I must be guided by thee. But pr'ythee, take her in a good humour next token she sends me.

Flip. Ah—Good humour!

Mon. What's the matter?

Flip. Poor lady!

Mon. Ha!

Flip. If I durst tell all——

Mon. What then?

Flip. You would not expect to see her in one a good while.

Mon. Why, I pray?

Flip. I must own I did take an unseasonable time to talk of love-matters to her.

Mon. Why, what's the matter?

Flip. Nothing.

Mon. Nay, pr'ythee, tell me.

Flip. I dare not.

Mon. You must indeed.

Flip. Why, when women are in difficulties, how can they think of pleasure?

Mon. Why, what difficulties can she be in?

Flip. Nay, I do but guess, after all; for she has that grandeur of soul, she'd die before she'd tell.

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Mon. But what dost thou suspect?

Flip. Why, what should one suspect, where a husband loves nothing but the getting of money, and a wife nothing but spending on't?

Mon. So she wants that same then?

Flip. I say no such thing: I know nothing of the matter: pray, make no wrong interpretation of what I say; my lady wants nothing that I know of. 'Tis true, she has had ill luck at cards of late; I believe she has not won once this month, but what of that?

Mon. Ha!

Flip. 'Tis true, I know her spirit's that, she'd see her husband hanged, before she'd ask him for a farthing.

Mon. Ha!

Flip. And then I know him again; he'd see her drown'd, before he'd give her a farthing: but that's a help to your affair, you know.

Mon. 'Tis so indeed.

Flip. Ah——Well, I'll say nothing; but if she had none of those things to fret her——

Mon. Why, really, Flippanta—

Flip. I know what you are going to say now; you are going to offer your service, but 'twont do; you have a mind to play the gallant now, but it must not be; you want to be showing your liberality, but 'twont be allowed; you'll be pressing me to offer it, and she'll be in a rage. We shall have the devil to do.

Mon. You mistake me, Flippanta, I was only going to say—

Flip. Ay, I know what you were going to say well enough; but I tell you it will never do so. If one could find out some way now——ay——let me see——

Mon. Indeed I hope——

Flip. Pray, be quiet——no—but I'm thinking—hum—she'll smoke that, though——Let us consider—If one could find out a way to——'Tis the nicest point in the world to bring about; she'll never touch it, if she knows from whence it comes.

Mon. Shall I try if I can reason her husband out of twenty pounds, to make her easy the rest of her life?

Flip. Twenty pounds, man! Why, you shall see her set that upon a card. Oh, she has a great soul! Besides, if her husband should oblige her, it might, in time, take off her aversion to him, and, by consequence, her inclination to you. No, no; it must never come that way.

Mon. What shall we do then?

Flip. Hold still——I have it——I'll tell you what you shall do.

Mon. Ay.

Flip. You shall make her a—restitution—of two hundred pounds.

Mon. Ha!—a restitution!

Flip. Yes, yes, 'tis the luckiest thought in the world. Madam often plays, you know; and folks who do so, meet now and then with sharpers. Now you shall be a sharper.

Mon. A sharper!

Flip. Ay, ay, a sharper; and having cheated her of two hundred pounds, shall be troubled in mind, and send it her back again. You comprehend me?

Mon. Yes, I—I comprehend; but—a—wont she suspect, if it be so much?

Flip. No, no; the more the better.

Mon. Two hundred pounds!

Flip. Yes, two hundred pounds——Or—let me see—so even a sum may look a little suspicious——ay—let it be two hundred and thirty: that odd thirty will make it look so natural, the devil wont find it out.

Mon. Ha!

Flip. Pounds, too, look I dont know how: guineas, I fancy, were better—Ay—guineas—it shall be guineas. You are of that mind, are you not?

Mon. Um—a guinea, you know, Flippanta, is—

Flip. A thousand times genteeler; you are certainly in the right on't; it shall be as you say—two hundred and thirty guineas.

Mon. Ho——Well, if it must be guineas—Let's see—two hundred guineas——

Flip. And thirty; two hundred and thirty. If you mistake the sum, you spoil all. So, go put them in a purse, while it's fresh in your head, and send them to me with a penitential letter, desiring I'll do you the favour to restore them to her.

Mon. Two hundred and thirty pounds in a bag!

Flip. Guineas, I say, guineas.

Mon. Ay, guineas; that's true. But, Flippanta, if she don't know they come from me, then I give my money for nothing, you know.

Flip. Phu! leave that to me: I'll manage the stock for you; I'll make it produce something, I'll warrant you.

Mon. Well, Flippanta, 'tis a great sum indeed; but I'll go try what I can do for her. You say, two hundred guineas in a purse?

Flip. And thirty if the man's in his senses.

Mon. And thirty, 'tis true; I always forget that thirty. [*Exit.*

Flip. So get thee gone; thou art a rare fellow, i'faith——Brass—it's thee, is't not?

Enter BRASS.

Brass. It is, huswife. How go matters! I staid till this gentleman was gone. Hast done any thing towards our common purse?

Flip. I think I have; he's going to make us a restitution of two or three hundred pounds.

Brass. A restitution!——Good.

Flip. A new way, sirrah, to make a lady take a present without putting her to the blush.

Brass. 'Tis very well, mighty well indeed. Pr'ythee, where's thy master? Let me try if I can persuade him to be troubled in mind too.

Flip. Not so hasty; he's gone into his closet to prepare himself for a quarrel I have advised him to——with his wife.

Brass. What to do?

Flip. Why, to make her stay at home, now she has resolved to do it beforehand. You must know, sirrah, we intend to make a merit of our basset-table, and get a good pretence for the merry companions we intend to fill his house with.

Brass. Very nicely spun, truly; thy husband will be a happy man.

Flip. Hold your tongue, you fool you—See, here comes your master.

Brass. He's welcome.

Enter DICK.

Dick. My dear Flippanta, how many thanks have I to pay thee!

Flip. Do you like her style?

Dick. The kindest little rogue! there's nothing but she gives me leave to hope. I

am the happiest man the world has in it's care.

Flip. Not so happy as you think for, neither, perhaps; you have a rival, Sir, I can tell you that.

Dick. A rival!

Flip. Yes, and a dangerous one too.

Dick. Who, in the name of terror?

Flip. A devilish fellow, one Mr. Amlet.

Dick. Amlet! I know no such man.

Flip. You know the man's mother, though; you met her here, and are in her favour, I can tell you. If he worst you in your mistress, you shall e'en marry her, and disinherit him.

Dick. If I have no other rival than Mr. Amlet, I believe I sha'n't be much disturbed in my amour.—But cann't I see Corinna?

Flip. I don't know; she has always some of her masters with her. But I'll go and see if she can spare you a moment, and bring you word. [*Exit.*

Dick. I wish my old hobbling mother ha'n't been blabbing something here she should not do.

Brass. Fear nothing; all's safe on that side yet.—But how speaks young mistress's epistle? Soft and tender?

Dick. As pen can write.

Brass. So you think all goes well there?

Dick. As my heart could wish.

Brass. You are sure on't?

Dick. Sure on't.

Brass. Why, then, ceremony aside.—[*Putting on his hat.*]——You and I must have a little talk, Mr. Amlet.

Dick. Ah, Brass, what art thou going to do? wont ruin me?

Brass. Look you, Dick, few words. You are in a smooth way of making your fortune; I hope all will roll on. But how do you intend matters shall pass 'twixt you and me in this business?

Dick. Death and furies! What a time dost thou take to talk on't?

Brass. Good words, or I betray you. They have already heard of one Mr. Amlet in the house.

Dick. Here's a son of a whore! [*Aside.*

Brass. In short, look smooth, and be a good prince. I am your valet, 'tis true; your footman sometimes, which I'm enraged at: but you have always had the ascendant, I confess. When we were school-fellows, you made me carry your books, make your exercise, own your rogueries, and sometimes take a whipping for you. When we were fellow-'prentices, though I was your senior, you made me open the shop, clean my master's shoes, cut last at dinner, and eat all the crust. In our sins too, you still kept me under; you soared up to adultery with our mistress, while I was at humble fornication with the maid. Nay, in our punishments you still made good your post; for when once upon a time I was sentenced to be but whipped, I cannot deny but you were condemned to be hanged. So that in all times, I must confess, your inclinations have been greater and nobler than mine. —However, I cannot consent that you should at once fix fortune for life, and I dwell in my humilities for the rest of my days.

Dick. Hark thee, Brass: if I do not most nobly by thee, I'm a dog.

Brass. And when?

Dick. As soon as ever I am married.

Brass. Ah, the pox take thee!

Dick. Then you mistrust me?

Brass. I do, by my faith. Look you, Sir, some folks we mistrust, because we don't know them——others we mistrust, because we do know them——and for one of these reasons, I desire there may be a bargain before-hand. If not, [*Raising his voice.*] look ye, Dick Amlet——

Dick. Soft, my dear friend and companion ——The dog will ruin me. [*Aside.*]——Say, what is it will content thee.

Brass. O ho!

Dick. But how canst thou be such a barbarian?

Brass. I learned it at Algiers.

Dick. Come, make thy Turkish demand, then?

Brass. You know you gave me a bank-bill this morning to receive for you.

Dick. I did so, of fifty pounds, 'tis thine. So, now thou art satisfied, all's fixed.

Brass. It is not, indeed. There's a diamond necklace you robbed your mother of e'en now.

Dick. Ah, you Jew!

Brass. No words.

Dick. My dear Brass!

Brass. I insist.

Dick. My old friend.

Brass. Dick Amlet, [*Raising his voice.*] I insist.

Dick. Ah, the cormorant!—Well, 'tis thine: but thou'lt never thrive with it.

Brass. When I find it begins to do me mischief, I'll give it you again. But I must have a wedding-suit.

Dick. Well.

Brass. Some good lace.

Dick. Thou sha't.

Brass. A stock of linen.

Dick. Enough?

Brass. Not yet——a silver sword.

Dick. Well, thou sha't have that too. Now thou hast every thing.

Brass. God forgive me, I forgot a ring of remembrance; I would not forget all these favours for the world. A sparkling diamond will be always playing in my eye, and put me in mind of them.

Dick. This unconscionable rogue! [*Aside.*] Well, I'll bespeak one for thee.

Brass. Brilliant.

Dick. It shall. But if the thing don't succeed after all!——

Brass. I'm a man of honour, and restore. And so, the treaty being finished, I strike my flag of defiance, and fall into my respects again. [*Taking off his hat.*

Enter FLIPPANTA.

Flip. I have made you wait a little—but I could not help it. Her geography-master is but just gone; he has been showing her Prince Eugene's march into Italy.

Dick. Pr'ythee, let me come to her; I'd show her a part of the world he has never shown her yet.

Flip. So I told her, you must know; and she said, she could like to travel in good company. So, if you'll slip up those back stairs, you shall try if you can agree upon the journey.

Dick. My dear Flippanta!

Flip. None of your dear acknowledgments, I beseech you; but up stairs as hard as you can drive.

Dick. I'm gone. [*Exit.*

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Flip. And do you follow him, Jack-a-dandy, and see he is not surprised.

Brass. I thought that was your post, Mrs. Useful—But if you'll come and keep me in humour, I don't care if I share the duty with you.

Flip. No words, sirrah, but follow him; I have somewhat else to do.

Brass. The jade's so absolute, there's no contesting with her. One kiss, though, to keep the sentinel warm. [*Gives her a long kiss.*] So—— [*Exit* BRASS.

Flip. A nasty rogue! [*Wiping her mouth.*] But, let me see; what have I to do now? This restitution will be here quickly, I suppose: in the mean time, I'll go know if my lady is ready for the quarrel yet. Master, yonder, is so full on't, he's ready to burst; but we'll give him vent by and by, with a witness.

[*Exit.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—GRIPE'S *House.*

Enter CORINNA, DICK, *and* BRASS.

Brass. Don't fear; I'll give you timely notice. [*Goes to the door.*

Dick. Come, you must consent, you shall consent——How can you leave me thus upon the rack? A man who loves you to that excess that I do?

Cor. Nay, that you love me, Sir, that I'm satisfied in; for you have sworn you do: and I'm so pleased with it, I'd fain have you do so as long as you live; so we must never marry.

Dick. Not marry, my dear! Why, what's our love good for, if we don't marry?

Cor. Ah!—I'm afraid it will be good for little if we do.

Dick. Why do you think so?

Cor. Because I hear my father and mother, and my uncle and aunt, and Araminta and her husband, and twenty other married folks, say so from morning to night.

Dick. Oh, that's because they are bad husbands and bad wives; but in our case there will be a good husband and a good wife, and so we shall love for ever.

Cor. Why, there may be something in that, truly; and I'm always willing to hear reason, as a reasonable young woman ought to do. But are you sure, Sir, though we are very good now, we shall be so when we come to be better acquainted.

Dick. I can answer for myself, at least.

Cor. I wish you could answer for me too. You see I am a plain-dealer, Sir; I hope you don't like me the worse for it.

Dick. Oh, by no means—'tis a sign of admirable morals; and I hope, since you practise it yourself, you'll approve of it in your lover. In one word, therefore, for 'tis in vain to mince the matter, my resolution's fixed, and the world can't stagger me: I marry—or I die.

Cor. Indeed, Sir, I have much ado to believe you: the disease of love is seldom so violent.

Dick. Madam, I have two diseases to end my miseries; if the first don't do it, the latter shall——[*Drawing his sword.*]——one's in my my heart, t'other's in my scabbard.

Cor. Not for a diadem.—[*Catching hold of him.*]—Ah, put it up, put it up.

Dick. How absolute is your command!—[*Dropping his sword.*] A word, you see, disarms me.

Cor. What a power I have over him! [*Aside.*]—The wondrous deeds of love!——Pray, Sir, let me have no more of these rash doings, though——perhaps I mayn't be always in the saving humour——I'm sure if I had let him stick himself, I should have been envied by all the great ladies in the town. [*Aside.*

Dick. Well, Madam, have I then your promise?—You'll make me the happiest of mankind.

Cor. I don't know what to say to you: but I believe I had as good promise; for I find I shall certainly do it.

Dick. Then let us seal the contract, thus——

[*Kisses her.*

Cor. Um—He has almost taken away my breath—He kisses purely. [*Aside.*

Dick. Hark—somebody comes.

Brass. [*Peeping in.*] Gar there—the enemy—No, hold, y'are safe; 'tis Flippanta.

Enter FLIPPANTA.

Flip. Come, have you agreed the matter? If not, you must end it another time; for your father's in motion: so, pray kiss and part.

Cor. That's sweet and sour. [*They kiss.*] Adieu t'ye, Sir.

[*Exeunt* DICK *and* CORINNA.

Enter CLARISSA.

Clar. Have you told him I'm at home, Flippanta?

Flip. Yes, Madam.

Clar. And that I'll see him?

Flip. Yes, that too. But here's news for you; I have just now received the restitution.

Clar. That's killing pleasure. And how much has he restored me?

Flip. Two hundred and thirty.

Clar. Wretched rogue! But retreat; your master's coming to quarrel.

Flip. I'll be within call, if matters run high. [*Exit.*

Enter GRIPE.

Gripe. O ho!—are you there, 'ifaith? Madam, your humble servant; I'm very glad to see you at home; I thought I should never have had that honour again.

Clar. Good morrow, my dear: how d'ye do? Flippanta says you are out of humour, and that you have a mind to quarrel with me. Is it true, ha?——I have a terrible pain in my head; I give you notice on't beforehand.

Gripe. And how the pox should it be otherwise? It is a wonder you are not dead—as a' would you were! [*Aside.*]—with the life you lead. Are you not ashamed? And do you not blush to——

Clar. My dear child, you crack my brain. Soften the harshness of your voice: say what thou wou't, but let it be in an agreeable tone.

Gripe. Tone, Madam! don't tell me of a tone——

Clar. Oh, if you will quarrel, do it with

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temperance; let it be all in cool blood, even and smooth, as if you were not moved with what you said; and then I'll hear you, as if I were not moved with it neither.

Gripe. Had ever man such need of patience! Madam, Madam, I must tell you, Madam——

Clar. Another key, or I'll walk off.

Gripe. Don't provoke me.

Clar. Shall you be long, my dear, in your remonstrances?

Gripe. Yes, Madam, and very long.

Clar. If you would quarrel *in ubregée*, I should have a world of obligation to you.

Gripe. What I have to say, forsooth, is not to be expressed *in ubregée;* my complaints are too numerous.

Clar. Complaints! of what, my dear? Have I ever given you subject of complaint, my life?

Gripe. Oh, pox! my dear, and my life! I desire none of your *tendres*.

Clar. How! find fault with my kindness, and my expressions of affection and respect! The world will guess by this, what the rest of your complaints may be. I must tell you, I'm scandalized at your procedure.

Gripe. I must tell you, I am running mad with yours.

Clar. Ah, how insupportable are the humours of some husbands! so full of fancies, and so ungovernable! What have you in the world to disturb you?

Gripe. What have I to disturb me! I have you, death, and the devil!

Clar. Ah, merciful Heaven, how he swears! —You should never accustom yourself to such words as these; indeed, my dear, you should not; your mouth's always full of them.

Gripe. Blood and thunder, Madam,——

Clar. Ah, he'll fetch the house down! Do you know you make me tremble for you!—Flippanta! Who's there? Flippanta!

Gripe. Here's a provoking devil for you!

Enter FLIPPANTA.

Flip. What, in the name of Jove, is the matter? You raise the neighbourhood.

Clar. Why, here's your master in a most violent fuss, and no mortal soul can tell for what.

Gripe. Not tell for what?

Clar. No, my life. I have begged him to tell me his griefs, Flippanta; and then he swears; good lord, how he does swear?

Gripe. Ah, you wicked jade! Ah, you wicked jade!

Clar. Do you hear him, Flippanta? Do you hear him?

Flip. Pray, Sir, let us know a little what puts you in all this fury?

Clar. Pr'ythee, stand near me, Flippanta: there's an odd froth about his mouth, looks as if his poor head were going wrong; I'm afraid he'll bite.

Gripe. The wicked woman, Flippanta! the wicked woman!

Clar. Can any body wonder I shun my own house, when he treats me at this rate in it?

Gripe. At this rate! Why, in the devil's name——

Clar. Do you hear him again?

Flip. Come, a little moderation, Sir, and try what that will produce.

Gripe. Hang her! 'tis all a pretence to justify her going abroad.

Clar. A pretence, a pretence! Do you hear how black a charge he loads me with? Charges me with a pretence! Is this the return for all my downright open actions? You know, my dear, I scorn pretences; whene'er I go abroad, it is without pretence.

Gripe. Give me patience.

Flip. You have a great deal, Sir.

Clar. And yet he's never content, Flippanta.

Gripe. What shall I do?

Clar. What a reasonable man would do; own yourself in the wrong, and be quiet.—Here's Flippanta has understanding, and I have moderation; I'm willing to make her judge of our differences.

Flip. You do me a great deal of honour, Madam: but I tell you beforehand, I shall be a little on master's side.

Gripe. Right; Flippanta has sense. Come, let her decide. Have I not reason to be in a passion? Tell me that.

Clar. You must tell her for what, my life.

Gripe. Why, for the trade you drive, my soul.

Flip. Look you, Sir, pray take things right; I know Madam does fret you a little now and then, that's true; but, in the main she is the softest, sweetest, gentlest lady breathing.—Let her but live entirely to her own fancy, and she'll never say a word to you from morning to night.

Gripe. 'Oons! let her but stay at home, and she shall do what she will—in reason, that is.

Flip. D'ye hear that, Madam? Nay, now I must be on master's side: you see how he loves you: he desires only your company.—Pray give him that satisfaction, or I must pronounce against you.

Clar. Well, I agree. Thou knowest I don't love to grieve him: let him be always in good humour, and I'll be always at home.

Flip. Look you there, Sir, what would you have more?

Gripe. Well, let her keep her word, and I'll have done quarrelling.

Clar. I must not, however, so far lose the merit of my consent, as to let you think I'm weary of going abroad, my dear: what I do, is purely to oblige you; which, that I may be able to perform, without a relapse, I'll invent what ways I can to make my prison supportable to me.

Flip. Her prison! pretty bird! her prison! don't that word melt you, Sir?

Gripe. I must confess I did not expect to find her so reasonable.

Flip. Oh, Sir, soon or late wives come into good humour; husbands must only have a little patience to wait for it.

Clar. The innocent little diversions, dear, that I shall content myself with, will be chiefly play and company.

Gripe. Oh, I'll find you employment, your time sha'n't lie upon your hands; though, i. you have a mind for such a companion as a ——let me see——Araminta, for example; why, I sha'n't be against her being with you from morning till night.

Clar. You can't oblige me more, 'tis the best woman in the world.

Gripe. Is not she?

Clar. Then, my dear, to make our home pleasant, we'll have concerts of music sometimes.

Gripe. Music, in my house?

Clar. Yes, my child, we must have music, or the house will be so dull, I shall get the spleen, and be going abroad again.

Flip. Nay, she has so much complaisance

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for you, Sir, you can't dispute such things with her.

Gripe. Ay, but if I have music——

Clar. Ay, but Sir, I must have music——

Flip. Not every day, Madam don't mean.

Clar. No, bless me, no; but three concerts a week: three days more we'll play after dinner at ombre, piquet, basset, and so forth, and close the evening with a handsome supper and a ball.

Gripe. A ball!

Clar. Then, my love, you know there is but one day more upon our hands, and that shall be the day of conversation: we'll read verses, talk of books, invent modes, tell lies, scandalize our friends, be pert upon religion; and, in short, employ every moment of it, in some pretty witty exercise or other.

Flip. What order you see 'tis she purposes to live in! A most wonderful regularity!

Gripe. Regularity with a pox—— [*Aside*.

Clar. And as this kind of life, so soft, so smooth, so agreeable, must needs invite a vast deal of company to partake of it, 'twill be necessary to have the decency of a porter at our door, you know.

Gripe. A porter—a scrivener have a porter, Madam!

Clar. Positively, a porter.

Gripe. Why, no scrivener since Adam ever had a porter, woman!

Clar. You will therefore be renowned in story for having the first, my life.

Gripe. Flippanta!

Flip. Hang it, Sir, never dispute a trifle; if you vex her, perhaps she'll insist upon a Swiss. [*Aside to* GRIPE.

Gripe. But Madam——

Clar. But, Sir, a porter, positively, a porter; without that the treaty's null, and I go abroad this moment.

Flip. Come, Sir, never lose so advantageous a peace for a pitiful porter.

Gripe. Why, I shall be hooted at, the boys will throw stones at my porter. Besides, where shall I have money for all this expense?

Clar. My dear, who asks you for any? Don't be in a fright, chicken.

Gripe. Don't be in a fright, Madam! but where, I say——

Flip. Madam plays, Sir, think on that; women that play have inexhaustible mines, and wives who receive least money from their husbands, are many times those who spend the most.

Clar. So, my dear, let what Flippanta says content you. Go, my life, trouble yourself with nothing, but let me do just as I please, and all will be well. I'm going into my closet, to consider of some more things to enable me to give you the pleasure of my company at home, without making it too great a misery to a yielding wife. [*Exit* CLARISSA.

Flip. Mirror of goodness! Pattern to all wives. Well, sure, Sir, you are the happiest of all husbands.

Gripe. Yes—and a miserable dog for all that too, perhaps.

Flip. Why, what can you ask more than this matchless compliance?

Gripe. I don't know what I can ask, and yet I'm not satisfied with what I have neither; the devil mixes in it all, I think; complaisant or perverse, it feels just as it did.

Flip. Why, then your uneasiness is only a disease, Sir; perhaps, a little bleeding and purging would relieve you.

Clar. [*Within*.] Flippanta!

Flip. Madam calls. I come, Madam. Come, be merry, be merry, Sir, you have cause, take my word for't.——Poor devil. [*Aside*. *Exit*.

Gripe. I don't know that, I don't know that: but this I do know, that an honest man, who has married a jade, whether she's pleased to spend her time at home, or abroad, had better have lived a bachelor.

Enter BRASS.

Brass. Oh, Sir, I am mighty glad I have found you.

Gripe. Why, what's the matter, pr'ythee?

Brass. Can nobody hear us?

Gripe. No, no, speak quickly.

Brass. You ha'n't seen Araminta, since the last letter I carried her from you?

Gripe. Not I: I go prudently; I don't press things like your young firebrand lovers.

Brass. But seriously, Sir, are you very much in love with her?

Gripe. As mortal man has been.

Brass. I'm sorry for't.

Gripe. Why so, dear Brass?

Brass. If you were never to see her more now? Suppose such a thing, d'you think 'twould break your heart?

Gripe. Oh!

Brass. Nay, now I see you love her; would you did not.

Gripe. My dear friend.

Brass. I'm in your interest deep; you see it.

Gripe. I do; but speak, what miserable story hast thou for me.

Brass. I had rather the devil had, phu,—— flown away with you quick, than to see you so much in love as I perceive you are, since——

Gripe. Since what?——ho.

Brass. Araminta, Sir——

Gripe. Dead?

Brass. No.

Gripe. How then?

Brass. Worse.

Gripe. Out with't.

Brass. Broke.

Gripe. Broke!

Brass. She is poor lady! in the most unfortunate situation of affairs. But I have said too much.

Gripe. No, no, 'tis very sad, but let's hear it.

Brass. Sir, she charged me on my life never to mention it to you, of all men living.

Gripe. Why, who shouldst thou tell it to, but to the best of her friends?

Brass. Ay, why, there's it now, it's going just as I fancied. Now will I be hanged if you are not enough in love to be engaging in this matter. But I must tell you, Sir, that as much concern as I have for that most excellent, beautiful, agreeable, distressed, unfortunate lady, I'm too much your friend and servant, ever to let it be said, 'twas the means of your being ruined for a woman——by letting you know she esteemed you more than any other man upon earth.

Gripe. Ruined! what dost thou mean?

Brass. Mean! Why, I mean that women always ruin those that love them, that's the rule.

Gripe. The rule!

Brass. Yes, the rule; why, would you have them ruin those that don't? How shall they bring that about?

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Gripe. But is there a necessity then they should ruin somebody!

Brass. Yes, marry is there; how would you have them support their expense else? Why, Sir, you can't conceive now—you can't conceive, what Araminta's privy-purse requires. Only her privy-purse, Sir! Why, what do you imagine now she gave me for the last letter I carried her from you? 'Tis true, 'twas from a man she liked, else, perhaps I had had my bones broke. But what do you think she gave me?

Gripe. Why, mayhap——a shilling.

Brass. A guinea, Sir, a guinea. You see by that how fond she was on't, by the by. But then, Sir, her coach-hire, her chair-hire, her pin-money, her play-money, her china, and her charity—would consume peers: a great soul, a very great soul! but what's the end of all this?

Gripe. Ha!

Brass. Why, I'll tell you what the end is—a nunnery!

Gripe. A nunnery!

Brass. A nunnery——In short, she is at last reduced to that extremity, and attacked with such a battalion of duns, that rather than tell her husband (who you know, is such a dog, he'd let her go if she did,) she has e'en determined to turn Papist, and bid the world adieu for life.

Gripe. Oh, terrible! a Papist!

Brass. Yes, when a handsome woman has brought herself into difficulties, the devil can't help her out of——To a nunnery, that's another rule, Sir.

Gripe. But, but, but, pr'ythee, Brass, but——

Brass. But all the buts in the world, Sir, wont stop her; she's a woman of a noble resolution. So, Sir, your humble servant; I pity her, I pity you. Turtle and mate; but the fates will have it so, all's packed up, and I am now going to call her a coach, for she resolves to slip off without saying a word: and the next visit she receives from her friends will be through a melancholy grate with a veil instead of a top-knot. [*Going.*

Gripe. It must not be, by the Powers, it must not; she was made for the world, and the world was made for her.

Brass. And yet you see, Sir how small a share she has on't.

Gripe. Poor woman! Is there no way to save her?

Brass. Save her! No: how can she be saved? Why, she owes above five hundred pounds.

Gripe. Oh!

Brass. Five hundred pounds, Sir; she is like to be saved indeed!——Not but that I know them in this town would give me one of the five, if I would persuade her to accept of the other four: but she had forbid me mentioning it to any soul living; and I have disobeyed her only to you; and so——I'll go and call a coach.

Gripe. Hold——dost think, my poor Brass, one might not order it so, as to compound those debts for——for——twelve pence in the pound?

Brass. Sir, d'ye hear? I have already tried them with ten shillings, and not a rogue will prick up his ear at it. Though, after all, for three hundred pounds, all in glittering gold, I could set their chops a watering. But where's that to be had with honour? There's the thing, Sir——I'll go and call a coach.

Gripe. Hold, once more: I have a note in my closet of two hundred, ay—and fifty, I'll go and give it her myself.

Brass. You will; very genteel truly. Go, slap dash, and offer a woman of her scruples money! bolt in her face; why you might as well offer her a scorpion, and she would as soon touch it.

Gripe. Shall I carry it to her creditors then, and treat with them.

Brass. Ay, that's a rare thought.

Gripe. Is not it, Brass?

Brass. Only one little inconvenience by the way.

Gripe. As how?

Brass. That they are your wife's creditors as well as hers; and, perhaps, it might not be altogether so well to see you clearing the debts of your neighbour's wife, and leaving those of your own unpaid.

Gripe. Why, that's true now.

Brass. I am wise, you see, Sir.

Gripe. Thou art; and I am but a young lover: but what shall we do then?

Brass. Why, I am thinking, that if you give me the note, do you see; and that I promise to give you an account of it——

Gripe. Ay, but look you, Brass——

Brass. But look you!——Why what, d'ye think I am a pickpocket! D'ye think I intend to run away with your note? your paltry note.

Gripe. I don't say so——I say only, that in case—

Brass. Case, Sir! there's no case but the case I have put you; and since you heap cases upon cases, where there is but three hundred rascally pounds in the case——I'll go and call a coach.

Gripe. Pr'ythee, don't be so testy. Come, no more words, follow me to my closet, and I'll give thee the money.

Brass. A terrible effort you make indeed! you are so much in love, your wits are all upon the wing, just agoing: and for three hundred pounds you put a stop to their flight. Sir, your wits are worth that, or your wits are worth nothing. Come away.

Gripe. Well, say no more, thou shalt be satisfied. [*Exeunt.*

Enter DICK.

Dick. S't——Brass!——S't——

Re-enter BRASS.

Brass. Well, Sir!

Dick. 'Tis not well, Sir; 'tis very ill, Sir: we shall be all blown up.

Brass. What, with pride and plenty?

Dick. No, Sir, with an officious slut that will spoil all. In short, Flippanta has been telling her mistress and Araminta of my passion for the young gentlewoman; and truly to oblige me (supposed no ill match by the by,) they are resolved to propose it immediately to her father.

Brass. That's the devil! we shall come to papers and parchments, jointures and settlements, relations meet on both sides; that's the devil?

Dick. I intended this very day to propose to

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Flippanta the carrying her off; and I am sure the young housewife would have tucked up her coats and have marched.

Brass. Ay, with the body and the soul of her.

Dick. Why then, what damned luck is this?

Brass. 'Tis your damned luck, not mine: I have always seen it in your ugly phiz, in spite of your powdered periwig—Pox take ye—he'll be hanged at last. Why don't you try to get her off yet?

Dick. I have no money, you dog; you know you have stripped me of every penny.

Brass. Come, damn it, I'll venture one cargo more upon your rotten bottom; but if ever I see one glance of your hempen fortune again, I'm off of your partnership for ever. ——I shall never thrive with him.

Dick. An impudent rogue! but he's in possession of my estate, so I must bear with him. [*Aside.*

Brass. Well, come, I'll raise a hundred pounds for your use, upon my wife's jewels here; [*Pulling out the necklace.*] her necklace shall pawn for't.

Dick. Remember, though, that if things fail, I am to have the necklace again? you know you agreed to that.

Brass. Yes; and if I make it good you'll be the better for't: if not, I shall: so you see where the cause will pinch.

Dick. Why, you barbarous dog, you wont offer to——

Brass. No words now; about your business, march. Go stay for me at the next tavern: I'll go to Flippanta, and try what I can do for you.

Dick. Well, I'll go, but don't think to—— Oh, pox, Sir—— [*Exit.*

Brass. Will you begone?—A pretty title you'd have to sue me upon truly, if I should have a mind to stand upon the defensive, as perhaps I may. I have done the rascal service enough to lull my conscience upon't, I am sure; but 'tis time enough for that. Let me see——First, I'll go to Flippanta, and put a stop to this family-way of match-making—then sell our necklace for what ready money 'twill produce; and by this time to-morrow, I hope, we shall be in possession of—t'other jewel, here; a precious jewel, as she's set in gold:——I believe for the stone itself, we may part with it again to a friend—for a tester. [*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—GRIPE'S *House.*

Enter BRASS *and* FLIPPANTA.

Brass. Well, you agree I'm in the right, don't you?

Flip. I don't know: if your master has the estate he talks of, why not do it all aboveboard? Well, though I am not much of his mind, I'm much in his interest, and will therefore endeavour to serve him in his own way.

Brass. That's kindly said, my child, and I believe I shall reward thee, one of these days, with as pretty a fellow to thy husband for't, as——

Flip. Hold your prating, Jack-a-dandy, and leave me to my business.

Brass. I obey—Adieu— [*Kisses her. Exit.*

Flip. Rascal!

Enter CORINNA.

Cor. Ah, Flippanta! I'm ready to sink down; my legs tremble under me, my dear Flippy.

Flip. And what's the affair?

Cor. My father's there within, with my mother and Araminta; I never saw him in so good a humour in my life.

Flip. And is that it that frightens you so?

Cor. Ah, Flippanta! they are just going to speak to him about my marrying the colonel.

Flip. Are they so? So much the worse: they're too hasty.

Cor. Oh, no, not a bit; I slipped out on purpose, you must know, to give them an opportunity; would 'twere done already!

Flip. I tell you, no: get you in again immediately, and prevent it.

Cor. My dear, dear, I am not able; I never was in such a way before.

Flip. Never in a way to be married before, ha? Is not that it?

Cor. Ah, lord! if I am thus before I come to't, Flippanta, what shall I be upon the very spot! Do but feel with what a thumpaty thump it goes. [*Putting her hand to her heart.*

Flip. Nay, it does make a filthy bustle, that's the truth on't, child. But I believe I shall make it leap another way, when I tell you, I'm cruelly afraid your father wont consent, after all.

Cor. Why, he wont be the death of me, will he?

Flip. I don't know; old folks are cruel; but we'll have a trick for him. Brass and I have been consulting upon the matter, and agreed upon a surer way of doing it, in spite of his teeth.

Cor. Ay, marry, Sir, that were something.

Flip. But then he must not know a word of any thing towards it.

Cor. No, no.

Flip. So, get you in immediately——

Cor. One, two, three, and away. [*Running off.*

Flip. And prevent your mother's speaking on't.

Cor. But is t'other way sure, Flippanta?

Flip. Fear nothing, 'twill only depend upon you.

Cor. Nay then——Oh, ho, ho, ho, how pure that is! [*Exit.*

Flip. Poor child! we may do what we will with her, as far as marrying her goes: when that's over, 'tis possible she may not prove altogether so tractable. But who's here? My sharper, I think. Yes.

Enter MONEYTRAP.

Mon. Well, my best friend, how go matters? Had the restitution been received, ha? Was she pleased with it?

Flip. Yes, truly; that is, she was pleased to see there was so honest a man in this immoral age.

Mon. Well, but a—does she know that 'twas I that——

Flip. Why, you must know I begun to give her a little sort of a hint, and—and so—why, and so she began to put on a sort of a severe,

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haughty, reserved, angry, forgiving air. But, soft; here she comes: you'll see how you stand with her presently: but don't be afraid. Courage.

Mon. He, hem.

Enter CLARISSA.

'Tis no small piece of good fortune, Madam, to find you at home: I have often endeavoured it in vain.

Clar. 'Twas then unknown to me; for, if I could often receive the visits of so good a friend at home, I should be more reasonably blamed for being so much abroad.

Mon. Madam you make me——

Clar. You are the man of the world whose company I think is most to be desired. I don't compliment you when I tell you so, I assure you.

Mon. Alas, Madam! your poor, humble servant—

Clar. My poor humble servant, (however with all the esteem I have for him,) stands suspected with me for a vile trick I doubt he has played me—which, if I could prove upon him, I'm afraid I should punish him very severely.

Mon. I hope, Madam, you'll believe I'm not capable of——

Clar. Look you, look you, you are capable of whatever you please; you have a great deal of wit, and know how to give a nice and gallant turn to every thing; but if you will have me continue your friend, you must leave me in some uncertainty in this matter.

Mon. I do then protest to you, Madam that—

Clar. Come, protest nothing about it; I am but too penetrating, as you may perceive; but we sometimes shut our eyes rather than break with our friends; for a thorough knowledge of the truth of this business would make me very seriously angry.

Mon. 'Tis very certain, Madam, that——

Clar. Come, say no more on't, I beseech you, for I am in a good deal of heat while I but think on't: if you'll walk in, I will follow you presently.

Mon. Your goodness, Madam, is——

Flip. No fine speeches, you'll spoil all.

Mon. Thou art a most incomparable person.

Flip. Nay, it goes rarely; but get you in, and I'll say a little something to my lady for you, while she's warm.

Mon. But, s't, Flippanta, how long dost think she may hold out?

Flip. Phu, not a twelvemonth.

Mon. Boo.

Flip. Away, I say. [*Pushing him out.*

Clar. Is he gone; What a wretch it is! He never was quite such a beast before.

Flip. Poor mortal! his money's finely laid out, truly.

Clar. I suppose there may have been much such another scene within, between Araminta and my dear: but I left him so unsupportably brisk, 'tis impossible he can have parted with any money: I'm afraid Brass has not succeeded as thou hast done, Flippanta.

Flip. By my faith, but he has, and better too; he presents his humble duty to Araminta, and has sent her—this. [*Showing the note.*

Clar. A bill from my love for two hundred and fifty pounds. The monster! he would not part with ten, to save his lawful wife from everlasting torment.

Flip. Never complain of his avarice, Madam, as long as you have his money.

Clar. But is he not a beast, Flippanta! Methinks the restitution looked better by half.

Flip. Madam, the man's beast enough, that's certain: but which way will you go to receive his beastly money; for I must not appear with his note?

Clar. That's true: why, send for Mrs. Amlet; that's a mighty useful woman, that Mrs. Amlet.

Flip. Marry, is she; we should have been basely puzzled how to dispose of the necklace without her, 'twould have been dangerous offering it to sale.

Clar. It would so; for I know your master has been laying out for't amongst the goldsmiths. But I stay here too long: I must in and coquette it a little more to my lover—Araminta will get ground on me else. [*Exit.*

Flip. And I'll go send for Mrs. Amlet. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—Opens, and discovers ARAMINTA, CORINNA, GRIPE *and* MONEYTAP, *at a Tea-Table, very gay and laughing.*

CLARISSA *comes in to them.*

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Mon. Mighty well! Oh, mighty well, indeed!

Clar. Save you, save you, good folks; you are all in rare humour, methinks.

Gripe. Why, what should we be otherwise for, Madam?

Clar. Nay, I don't know, not I, my dear; but I ha'n't had the happiness of seeing you so since our honey-moon was over, I think.

Gripe. Why, to tell you the truth, my dear, 'tis the joy of seeing you at home.—[*Kisses her.*]—You see what charms you have, when you are pleased to make use of them.

Ara. Very gallant, truly.

Clar. Nay, and what's more, you must know, he's never to be otherwise henceforwards; we have come to an agreement about it.

Mon. Why, here's my love and I have been upon just such another treaty too.

Ara. Well, sure there's some very peaceful star rules at present. Pray Heaven continue its reign!

Mon. Pray do you continue its reign, you ladies, for 'tis all in your power. [*Leering at* CLARISSA.

Gripe. My neighbour Moneytrap says true: at least I'll confess frankly, —[*Oggling* ARAMINTA.]—'tis in one lady's power to make me the best humoured man on earth.

Mon. And I'll answer for another, that has the same over me. [*Oggling* CLARISSA.

Clar. 'Tis mighty fine, gentlemen, mighty civil husbands, indeed.

Gripe. Nay, what I say's true, and so true that all quarrels being now at an end, I am willing if you please to dispense with all that fine company we talked of to-day, be content with the friendly conversation of our two good neighbours here, and spend all my toying hours alone with my sweet wife.

Mon. Why, truly, I think now, if these good women pleased, we might make up the prettiest little neighbourly company, between

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our two families, and set a defiance to all the impertinent people in the world.

Clar. The rascals! [*Aside.*

Ara. Indeed I doubt you'd soon grow weary, if we grew fond.

Gripe. Never, never: for our wives have wit, neighbour, and that never palls.

Clar. And our husbands have generosity, Araminta, and that seldom palls.

Gripe. So, that's a wipe for me, now——because I did not give her a new year's gift, last time: but be good, and I'll think of some teacups for you—next year.

Mon. And perhaps I may not forget a fan, or as good a thing——hum, huzzy.

Clar. Well, upon these encouragements, Araminta, we'll try how good we can be.

Gripe. Well, this goes most rarely. Poor Moneytrap! he little thinks what makes his wife so easy in his company. [*Aside.*

Mon. I can but pity poor neighbour Gripe. Lard lard, what a fool does his wife and I make of him! [*Aside.*

Clar. Are not those two wretched rogues, Araminta? [*Aside to* ARAMINTA.

Ara. They are, indeed. [*Aside to* CLARISSA.

Enter JESSAMIN.

Jes. Sir, here's Mr. Clip, the goldsmith, desires to speak with you.

Gripe. Cods so, perhaps some news of your necklace, my dear.

Clar. That would be news indeed.

Gripe. Let him come in. [*Exit* JESSAMIN

Enter MR. CLIP.

Mr. Clip, your servant, I'm glad to see you: how do you do?

Clip. At your service, Sir, very well. Your servant, Madam Gripe.

Clar. Horrid fellow! [*Aside.*

Gripe. Well, Mr. Clip, no news yet of my wife's necklace?

Clip. If you please to let me speak with you in the next room, I have something to say to you.

Gripe. Ay, with all my heart. Shut the door after us.—[*They come forward; and the scene shuts behind them.*]—Well, any news?

Clip. Look you, Sir, here's a necklace brought me to sell, at least very like that you described to me.

Gripe. Let's see't—Victoria! the very same. Ah, my dear Mr. Clip—[*Kisses him.*]—But who brought it you:—You should have seized him.

Clip. 'Twas a young fellow that I know: I can't tell whether he may be guilty, though it is like enough. But he has only left it me now, to show a brother of our trade, and will call upon me again presently.

Gripe. Wheedle him hither, dear Mr. Clip. Here's my neighbour Moneytrap in the house; he's a justice, and will commit him presently.

Clip. 'Tis enough.

Enter BRASS.

Gripe. Oh, my friend Brass!

Brass. Hold, Sir——I think that's a gentleman I am looking for. Mr. Clip—Oh, your servant——What, are you acquainted here?—I have just been at your shop.

Clip. I only stopped here to show Mr. Gripe the necklace you left.

Brass. Why, Sir, do you understand jewels? [*To* GRIPE.]—I thought you only dealt in gold. But I smoke the matter—hark you, a word in your ear—you are going to play the gallant again, and make a purchase on't for Araminta—ha, ha!

Gripe. Where had you the necklace?

Brass. Look you, don't trouble yourself about that; it's in commission with me, and I can help you to a pennyworth on't.

Gripe. A pennyworth on't, villain! [*Strikes at him.*

Brass. Villain! a hey, a hey! is it you or me, Mr. Clip, he is pleased to compliment?

Clip. What do you think of it, Sir?

Brass. Think of it!—now the devil fetch me if I know what to think of it!

Gripe. You'll sell a pennyworth, rogue, of a thing you have stolen from me.

Brass. Stolen! pray, Sir, what wine have you drank to-day? It has a very merry effect upon you.

Gripe. You villain, either give me an account how you stole it, or——

Brass. O ho, Sir, if you please, don't carry your jest too far, I don't understand hard words—I give you warning of it: if you ha'n't a mind to buy the necklace, you may let it alone—I know how to dispose of it. What a pox—

Gripe. Oh, you sha'n't have that trouble, Sir. Dear Mr. Clip, you may leave the necklace here.—I'll call at your shop, and thank you for your care.

Clip. Sir, your humble servant. [*Going.*

Brass. O ho, Mr. Clip, if you please, Sir, this wont do—[*Stopping him.*]—I don't understand raillery in such matters.

Clip. I leave it with Mr. Gripe—do you and he dispute it. [*Exit.*

Brass. Ay, but 'tis from you, by your leave, Sir, that I expect it. [*Going after him.*

Gripe. You expect, you rogue, to make your escape, do you? But I have other accounts besides this to make up with you. To be sure the dog has cheated me of two hundred and fifty pounds.——Come, villain, give me an account of—

Brass. Account of?—Sir, give me an account of my necklace, or I'll make such a noise in your house, I'll raise the devil in't.

Gripe. Well said, courage.

Brass. Blood and thunder, give it me, or—

Gripe. Come, hush, be wise, and I'll make no noise of this affair.

Brass. You'll make no noise; but I'll make a noise, and a damned noise too. Oh, don't think to——

Gripe. I tell thee, I will not hang thee.

Brass. But I tell you, I will hang you, if you don't give me my necklace. I will, rot me.

Gripe. Speak softly, be wise; how came it thine? Who gave it thee?

Brass. A gentleman, a friend of mine.

Gripe. What's his name?

Brass. His name!——I'm in such a passion I have forgot it.

Gripe. Ah, brazen rogue!—thou hast stole it from my wife: 'tis the same she lost six weeks ago.

Brass. This has not been in England a month.

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Gripe. You are a son of a whore.

Brass. Give me my necklace.

Gripe. Give me my two hundred and fifty pound note.

Brass. Yet I offer peace: one word without passion. The case stands thus: either I'm out of my wits, or you are out of yours; now 'tis plain I'm not out of my wits, *ergo*——

Gripe. My bill, hang-dog, or I'll strangle thee. [*They struggle.*

Brass. Murder, murder!

Enter CLARISSA, ARAMINTA, CORINNA, FLIPPANTA, *and* MONEYTRAP.

Flip. What's the matter? what's the matter here.

Gripe. I'll matter him.

Clar. What makes thee cry out thus, poor Brass?

Brass. Why, your husband, Madam—he's in his altitudes here.

Gripe. Robber!

Brass. Here, he has cheated me of a diamond necklace.

Cor. Who, papa? Ah, dear me!

Clar. Pr'ythee, what's the meaning of this great emotion, my dear?

Gripe. The meaning is, that——I'm quite out of breath——this son of a whore has got your necklace, that's all.

Clar. My necklace?

Gripe. That birdlime there——stole it.

Clar. Impossible.

Brass. Madam, you see master's a little—touched, that's all. Twenty ounces of blood let loose, would set all right again.

Gripe. Here, call a constable presently.—Neighbour Moneytrap, you will commit him.

Brass. D'ye hear? d'ye hear? See how wild he looks! how his eyes roll in his head! tie him down, or he'll do some mischief or other.

Gripe. Let me come at him.

Clar. Hold—Pr'ythee my dear, reduce things to a little temperance, and let us coolly into the secret of this disagreeable rupture.

Gripe. Well, then, without passion: why, you must know—(but I'll have him hanged)—you must know that he came to Mr. Clip—to Mr. Clip the dog did——with a necklace to sell: so Mr. Clip having notice before that—(can you deny it, you dog?)—that you had lost yours, brings it to me. Look at it here; do you know it again? Ay, you traitor! [*To* BRASS.

Brass. He makes me mad. Here's an appearance of something now to the company, and yet nothing in it in the bottom.

[CLAR. *Aside to* FLIPPANTA *showing the necklace.*

Flip. 'Tis it, faith; here's some mystery in this—we must look about us.

Clar. The safest way is, point blank to disown the necklace.

Flip. Right: stick to that.

Gripe. Well, Madam, do you know your old acquaintance—ha?

Clar. Why, truly, my dear, though (as you may all imagine) I should be very glad to recover so valuable a thing as my necklace, yet I must be just to all the world—this necklace is not mine.

Brass. Huzza. Here constable, do your duty. Mr. Justice, I demand my necklace, and satisfaction of him.

Gripe. I'll die before I part with it——I'll keep it, and have him hanged.

Clar. But be a little calm, my dear—do, my bird—and then thou'lt be able to judge rightly of things.

Gripe. Oh, good lack! Oh, good lack!

Clar. No, but don't give way to fury and interest both; either of them are passions strong enough to lead a wise man out of the way.—The necklace not being really mine, give it the man again, and come drink a dish of tea.

Brass. Ay, Madam says right.

Gripe. Oons, if you, with your addle head, don't know your own jewels, I with my solid one do: and if I part with it, may famine be my portion.

Clar. But don't swear and curse thyself at this fearful rate; don't, my dove: be temperate in your words, and just in all your actions, 'twill bring a blessing upon you and your family.

Gripe. Bring thunder and lightning upon me and my family, if I part with my necklace.

Clar. Why, you'll have the lightning burn your house about your ears, my dear, if you go on in these practices.

Mon. A most excellent woman this! [*Aside.*

Enter MRS. AMLET.

Gripe. I'll keep my necklace.

Brass. Will you so? Then here comes one has a title to it, if I ha'n't; let Dick bring himself off with her as he can. Mrs. Amlet, you are come in a very good time; you lost a necklace t'other day, and who do you think has got it?

Am. Marry, that I know not; I wish I did.

Brass. Why, then, here's Mr. Gripe has it, and swears 'tis his wife's.

Gripe. And so I do, sirrah—Look here, mistress, do you pretend this is yours?

Am. Not for the round world I would not say it; I only kept it to do Madam a small courtesy, that's all.

Clar. Ah, Flippanta, all will out now. [*Aside to* FLIPPANTA.

Gripe. Courtesy! what courtesy?

Am. A little money only, that Madam had present need of: please to pay me that, and I demand no more.

Brass. So, here's fresh game: I have started a new hare, I find. [*Aside.*

Gripe. How, forsooth! is this true? [*To* CLARISSA.

Clar. You are in a humour at present, love, to believe any thing; so I wont take the pains to contradict it.

Brass. This damned necklace will spoil all our affairs: this is Dick's luck again. [*Aside.*

Gripe. Are you not ashamed of these ways? Do you see how you are exposed before your best friends here? Don't you blush at it?

Clar. I do blush, my dear—but 'tis for you—that here it should appear to the world, you keep me so bare of money, I'm forced to pawn my jewels.

Gri e. Impudent housewife! [*Raising his hand to strike her.*

Clar. Softly, chicken, you might have prevented all this, by giving me the two hundred and fifty pounds you sent to Araminta e'en now.

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Brass. You see, Sir, I delivered your note: how I have been abused to-day!

Gripe. I am betrayed—Jades on both sides, I see that. [*Aside.*

Mon. But, Madam, Madam, is this true that I hear? Have you taken a present of two hundred and fifty pounds? Pray what were you to return for these pounds, Madam, ha?

Ara. Nothing, my dear: I only took them to reimburse you of about the same sum you sent to Clarissa.

Mon. Hum, hum, hum.

Gripe. How, gentlewoman, did you receive money from him?

Clar. Oh, my dear, it was only in jest; I knew you'd give it again to his wife.

Am. But, amongst all this bustle, I don't hear a word of my hundred pounds. Is it Madam will pay me, or master?

Gripe. I pay? The devil shall pay.

Clar. Look you, my dear: malice apart, pay Mrs. Amlet her money, and I'll forgive you the wrong you intended my bed with Araminta. Am not I good wife, now.

Gripe. I burst with rage, and will get rid of this noose, though I tuck myself up in another.

Mon. Nay, pray, e'en tuck me up with you. [*Exeunt* MONEYTRAP *and* GRIPE.

Clar. and Ara. B'ye, dearies.

Enter DICK.

Cor. Look, look, Flippanta, here's the colonel at last.

Dick. Ladies I ask your pardon, I have stayed so long, but——

Am. Ah, rogue's face, have I got thee, old Good-for nought? Sirrah, sirrah, do you think to amuse me with your marriages, and your great fortunes? Thou hast played me a rare prank, o' my conscience. Why, you ungracious rascal, what do you think will be the end of all this? Now Heaven forgive me, but I have a great mind to hang thee for't.

Cor. She talks to him very familiarly, Flippanta.

Flip. So methinks, by my faith.

Brass. Now the rogue's star is making an end of him. [*Aside.*

Dick. What shall I do with her?

Am. Do but look at him, my dames; he has the countenance of a cherubim, but he's a rogue in his heart.

Clar. What is the meaning of all this, Mrs. Amlet?

Am. The meaning, good lack!—Why, this all-to-be-powdered rascal here is my son, an't please you. Ha, Graceless!—Now I'll make you own your mother, vermin.

Clar. What, the colonel your son?

Am. 'Tis Dick, Madam, that rogue Dick, I have so often told you of, with tears trickling down my old cheeks.

Ara. The woman's mad, it can never be.

Am. Speak, rogue, am I not thy mother, ha? Did I not bring thee forth? Say then?

Dick. What will you have me say? You had a mind to ruin me, and you have done it: would you do any more?

Clar. Then, Sir, you are son to good Mrs. Amlet?

Ara. And have had the assurance to put upon us all this while?

Flip. And the confidence to think of marrying Corinna?

Brass. And the impudence to hire me for your servant, who am as well born as yourself.

Clar. Indeed, I think he should be corrected.

Ara. Indeed, I think he deserves to be cudgelled.

Flip. Indeed, I think he might be pumped.

Brass. Indeed, I think he will be hanged.

Am. Good lack-a-day, good lack-a-day! there's no need to be so smart upon him, neither: if he is not a gentleman, he's a gentleman's fellow. Come hither, Dick, they sha'n't run thee down, neither: cock up thy hat, Dick, and tell them, though Mrs. Amlet is thy mother, she can make thee amends, with ten thousand good pounds to buy thee some lands, and build thee a house in the midst on't.

Omnes. How!

Clar. Ten thousand pounds, Mrs. Amlet?

Am. Yes, forsooth, though I should lose the hundred you pawned your necklace for. Tell them of that, Dick.

Cor. Look you, Flippanta, I can hold no longer, and I hate to see the young man abused. And so, Sir, if you please, I'm your friend and servant, and what's mine is yours; and when our estates are put together, I don't doubt but we shall do as well as the best of them.

Dick. Sayest thou so, my little queen? Why, then, if dear mother will give us her blessing, the parson shall give us a tack; we'll get her a score of grand children, and a merry house we'll make her. [*They kneel to* MRS. AMLET.

Am. Ah——ha, ha, ha, ha——the pretty pair, the pretty pair!——Rise, my chickens, rise, rise, and face the proudest of them. And if Madam does not deign to give her consent, a fig for her, Dick——Why, how now?

Clar. Pray, Mrs. Amlet, don't be in a passion; the girl is my husband's girl, and if you can have his consent, upon my word you shall have mine, for any thing that belongs to him.

Flip. Then all's peace again, but we have been more lucky than wise.

Ara. And I suppose for us Clarissa, we are to go on with our dears, as we used to do.

Clar. Just in the same track; for this late treaty of agreement with them was so unnatural, you see it could not hold. But 'tis just as well with us as if it had. Well, 'tis a strange fate, good folks. But while you live, every thing gets well out of a broil but a husband. [*Exeunt omnes.*

EPILOGUE.

I've heard wise men in politics lay down,
What feats by little England might be done,
Were all agreed, and all would act as one.
Ye wives a useful hint from this might take,
The heavy, old, despotic kingdom shake.
And make your matrimonial monsieurs quake.
Our heads are feeble, and we're cramp'd by laws;
Our hands are weak, and not too strong our cause:

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Yet would these heads and hands, such as they are,
In firm confed'racy resolve on war,
You'd find your tyrants—what I've found my dear.
What only two united can produce,
You've seen to-night, a sample for your use.
Single, we found, we nothing could obtain;
We join our force—and we subdued our men.
Believe me, my dear sex, they are not brave;
Try each your man, you'll quickly find your slave.
I know they'll make campaigns, risk blood and life;
But this is a more terrifying strife;
They'll stand a shot, who'll tremble at a wife.
Beat then your drums, and your shrill trumpets sound,
Let all your visits of your feats resound,
And deeds of war in cups of tea go round.
The stars are with you—fate is in your hand,
In twelve months time you've vanquish'd half the land:
Be wise, and keep them under good command.
This year will to your glory long be known,
And deathless ballads hand your triumphs down;
Your late achievements ever will remain,
For though you cannot boast of many slain,
Your prisoners show you've made a brave campaign.

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THE LAME LOVER:

A FARCE,

IN THREE ACTS.

BY SAMUEL FOOTE, ESQ.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	HAY-MARKET.
SIR LUKE LIMP, . . .	*Mr. Foote.*
SERJEANT CIRCUIT, . .	*Mr. Vandermere.*
COLONEL SECRET, . .	*Mr. Robson.*
JACK, ...	*Mr. Weston.*
MR. WOODFORD, . . .	*Mr. Knowles.*
MR. FAIRPLAY, . . .	*Mr. Wheeler.*
FIRST SERVANT, . . .	*Mr. Dancer.*
SECOND SERVANT, . .	*Mr. Griffiths.*
MRS. CIRCUIT, . . .	*Mrs. Gardner.*
CHARLOTTE, ...	*Mrs. Jewell.*
MRS. SIMPER, ...	*Mrs. Saunders.*
BETTY, ...	*Mrs. Read.*

PROLOGUE.

WRITTEN AND SPOKEN BY MR. GENTLEMAN.

PROLOGUES, like cards of compliment, we find
Most as unmeaning as politely kind;
To beg a favour, or to plead excuse,
Of both appears to be the general use.
Shall my words, tipt with flattery, prepare
A kind exertion of your tenderest care?
Shall I present our Author to your sight,
All pale and trembling for his fate this night?
Shall I solicit the most powerful arms
To aid his cause—the force of beauty's charms?
Or tell each critic, his approving taste
Must give the sterling stamp, wherever placed?
This might be done—but so to seek applause
Argues a conscious weakness in the cause.
No—let the Muse in simple truth appear,
Reason and *Nature* are the judges here:
If by their strict and self-describing laws,
The several characters to night she draws;
If from the whole a pleasing piece is made,
On the true principles of light and shade;
Struck with the harmony of just design,
Your eyes—your ears—your hearts, will all combine
To grant applause:—but if an erring hand
Gross disproportion marks in motley band,
If the group'd figures false connections show,
And glaring colours without meaning glow;
Your wounded feelings, turn'd a different way,
Will justly damn th' *abortion* of a play.
As Farquhar has observed, our English law,
Like a fair spreading oak, the Muse should draw,
By Providence design'd and wisdom made
For honesty to thrive beneath its shade;
Yet from its boughs some insects shelter find,
Dead to each nobler feeling of the mind,
Who thrive, alas! too well, and never cease
To prey on justice, property, and peace.
At such to-night, with other *legal* game
Our venturous author takes satiric aim;
And brings, he hopes, originals to view,
Nor pilfers from th' Old Magpie nor the New.*
But will to Candour cheerfully submit;
She reigns in boxes, galleries, and pit.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Enter SERJEANT CIRCUIT *and* CHARLOTTE.

Char. I tell you, Sir, his love to me is all a pretence: it is amazing that you, who are so acute, so quick in discerning on other occasions, should be so blind upon this.

Ser. But where are your proofs, Charlotte? What signifies your opening matters which your evidence cannot support?

* Alluding to Mr. Garrick's Prologue to the Jubilee.

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Char. Surely, Sir, strong circumstances in every court should have weight.

Ser. So they have, collaterally, child, that is, by way, as it were, of corroboration, or where matters are doubtful; then, indeed, as Plowden wisely observes, "*Les circonstances ajout beaucoup depoids aux faits.*"—You understand me?

Char. Not perfectly well.

Ser. Then to explain by case in point; A, we will suppose, my dear, robs B of a watch upon Hounslow Heath—d'ye mind, child?

Char. I do, Sir.

Ser. A is taken up and is indicted; B swears positively to the identity of A—d'ye observe?

Char. Attentively.

Ser. Then what does me A, but sets up the alibi C to defeat the affidavit of B.—You take me?

Char. Clearly.

Ser. So far you see, then, the balance is even.

Char. True.

Ser. But then to turn the scale, child, against A in favour of B, they produce the circumstance D, viz. B's watch found in the pocket of A; upon which the testimony of C being contradicted by B,—no, by D,—why, then A, that is to say, C,—no, D,—joining B, they convict C,—no, no, A,—against the affidavit of C. So this being pretty clear, child, I leave the application to you.

Char. Very obliging, Sir. But suppose, now, Sir, it should appear that the attention of Sir Luke Limp is directed to some other object, would not that induce you to——

Ser. Other object! Where?

Char. In this very house.

Ser. Here! why the girl is *non compos;* there's nobody here, child, but a parcel of Abigails.

Char. No, Sir?

Ser. No.

Char. Yes, Sir, one person else.

Ser. Who is that?

Char. But remember, Sir, my accusation is confined to Sir Luke.

Ser. Well, well.

Char. Suppose, then, Sir, those powerful charms which made a conquest of you, may have extended their empire over the heart of Sir Luke.

Ser. Why, hussy, you don't hint at your mother in law?

Char. Indeed, Sir, but I do.

Ser. Ay; why this is point blank treason against my sovereign authority; but can you, Charlotte, bring proof of any overt acts?

Char. Overt acts!

Ser. Ay; that is, any declaration by writing, or even word of mouth, is sufficient; then let 'em demur if they dare.

Char. I can't say that, Sir; but another organ has been pretty explicit.

Ser. Which?

Char. In those cases a very infallible one—the eye.

Ser. Pshaw! nonsense and stuff.—The eye!—The eye has no authority in a court of law.

Char. Perhaps not, Sir; but it is a decisive evidence in a court of love.

Ser. Hark you, hussy, why, you would not file an information against the virtue of Madam your mother; you would not insinuate that she has been guilty of *crim. con.*

Char. Sir, you mistake me; it is not th lady, but the gentleman, I am about to impeach.

Ser. Have a care, Charlotte! I see on what ground your action is founded—jealousy.

Char. You were never more deceived in your life; for it is impossible, my dear Sir, that jealousy can subsist without love.

Ser. Well.

Char. And from that passion (thank Heaven) I am pretty free at present.

Ser. Indeed!

Char. A sweet object to excite tender desires!

Ser. And why not, hussy?

Char. First, as to his years.

Ser. What then?

Char. I own, Sir, age procures honour, but I believe it is very rarely productive of love.

Ser. Mighty well.

Char. And though the loss of a leg can't be imputed to Sir Luke Limp as a fault—

Ser. How!

Char. I hope, Sir, at least you will allow it a misfortune.

Ser. Indeed!

Char. A pretty thing truly, for a girl at my time of life to be tied to a man with one foot in the grave.

Ser. One foot in the grave! the rest of his body is not a whit the nearer for that.—There has been only an execution issued against part of his personals, his real estate is unencumbered and free——besides, you see he does not mind it a whit, but is as alert, and as merry as a defendant, after non-suiting a plaintiff for omitting an S.

Char. O, Sir! I know how proud Sir Luke is of his leg, and have often heard him declare that he would not change his bit of timber for the best flesh and bone in the kingdom.

Ser. There's a hero for you?

Char. To be sure, sustaining unavoidable evils with constancy is a certain sign of greatness of mind.

Ser. Doubtless.

Char. But then to derive a vanity from a misfortune, will not I'm afraid be admitted as a vast instance of wisdom, and indeed looks as if the man had nothing better to distinguish himself by.

Ser. How does that follow?

Char. By inuendo.

Ser. *Negatur.*

Char. Besides, Sir, I have other proofs of your hero's vanity, not inferior to that I have mentioned.

Ser. Cite them.

Char. The paltry ambition of levying and following titles.

Ser. Titles! I don't understand you.

Char. I mean the poverty of fastening in public upon men of distinction, for no other reason but because of their rank; adhering to Sir John till the baronet is superseded by my lord: quitting the puny peer for an earl; and sacrificing all three to a duke.

Ser. Keeping good company! a laudable ambition.

Char. True, Sir, if the virtues that procured the father a peerage could with that be entailed on the son.

Ser. Have a care, hussy—there are severe laws against speaking evil of dignities—

Char. Sir!

Ser. *Scandalum magnatum* is a statute must

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not be trifled with; why, you are not one of those vulgar sluts that think a man the worse for being a lord?

Char. No, Sir; I am contented with only not thinking him the better.

Ser. For all this, I believe, hussy, a right honourable proposal would soon make you alter your mind.

Char. Not unless the proposer had other qualities than what he possesses by patent—Besides, Sir, you know Sir Luke is a devotee to the bottle.

Ser. Not a whit the less honest for that.

Char. It occasions one evil at least; that when under its influence, he generally reveals all, sometimes more than he knows.

Ser. Proofs of an open temper, you baggage: but, come, come, all these are but trifling objections.

Char. You mean, Sir, they prove the object a trifle.

Ser. Why, you pert jade, do you play on my words? I say Sir Luke is—

Char. Nobody.

Ser. Nobody! how the deuce do you make that out? He is neither person attainted or outlawed; may, in any of his majesty's courts, sue or be sued, appear by attorney, or in *propria persona*; can acquire, buy, procure, purchase, possess, and inherit, not only personalities, such as goods and chattels, but even realities, as all lands, tenements, and hereditaments, whatsoever and wheresoever.

Char. But, Sir——

Ser. Nay, further, child, he may sell, give, bestow, bequeath, devise, demise, lease, or to farm, lett, ditto lands, to any person, whomsoever, and——

Char. Without doubt, Sir; but there are, notwithstanding, in this town, a great number of nobodies, not described by Lord Coke.

Ser. Hey!

Char. There is your next door neighbour, Sir Harry Hen, an absolute blank.

Ser. How so, Mrs. Pert?

Char. What, Sir! a man who is not suffered to hear, see, smell, or, in short, to enjoy the free use of any one of his senses; who, instead of having a positive will of his own, is denied even a paltry negative: who can neither resolve or reply, consent or deny, without first obtaining the leave of his lady: an absolute monarch to sink into the sneaking state of being a slave to one of his subjects—Oh, fy!

Ser. Why, to be sure, Sir Harry Hen, is, as I may say——

Char. Nobody, Sir, in the fullest sense of the word—Then your client, Lord Solo.

Ser. Heyday!—Why, you would not annihilate a peer of the realm, with a prodigious estate, and an allowed judge too of the elegant arts?

Char. O yes, Sir, I am no stranger to that nobleman's attributes: but then, Sir, please to consider, his power as a peer he gives up to a proxy; the direction of his estate to a rapacious, artful attorney: and as to his skill in the elegant arts, I presume you confine them to painting and music. He is directed in the first by Mynheer Van Eisel, a Dutch dauber; and in the last is but the echo of Signora Florenza, his lordship's mistress, and an opera singer.

Ser. Mercy upon us! at what a rate the jade runs!

Char. In short, Sir, I define every individual, who, ceasing to act for himself, becomes the tool, the mere engine, of another man's will, to be nothing more than a cypher.

Ser. At this rate the jade will half unpeople the world: but what is all this to Sir Luke? to him not one of your cases apply.

Char. Every one—Sir Luke has not a first principle in his whole composition; not only his pleasures, but even his passions, are prompted by others; and he is as much directed to the objects of his love and his hatred, as in his eating, drinking, and dressing. Nay, though he is active, and eternally busy, yet his own private affairs are neglected; and he would not scruple to break an appointment that was to determine a considerable part of his property, in order to exchange a couple of hounds for a lord, or to buy a pad-nag for a lady. In a word—but he's at hand, and will explain himself best; I hear his stump on the stairs.

Ser. I hope you will preserve a little decency before your lover at least.

Char. Lover! ha, ha, ha!

Enter SIR LUKE LIMP.

Sir L. Mr. Serjeant, your slave—Ah! are you there, my little—O Lord! Miss, let me tell you something for fear of forgetting—Do you know that you are new christened, and have had me for a gossip?

Char. Christened! I don't understand you.

Sir L. Then lend me your ear—Why, last night, as Colonel Kill'em, Sir William Weezy, Lord Frederick Forstop, and I, were carelessly sliding the Ranelagh round, picking our teeth, after a damned muzzy dinner at Boodle's, who should trip by but an abbess, well known about town, with a smart little nun in her suit. Says Weezy (who, between ourselves, is as husky as hell) Who is that? odds flesh, she's a delicate wench! Zounds! cried Lord Frederick, where can Weezy have been not to have seen the Harrietta before? for you must know Frederick is a bit of Macaroni, and adores the soft Italian termination in *a*.

Char. He does?

Sir L. Yes, a delitanti all over.—Before? replied Weezy; crush me if ever I saw any thing half so handsome before!—No? replied I in an instant; Colonel, what will Weezy say when he sees the Charlotta?—Hey! you little——

Char. Meaning me, I presume.

Sir L. Without doubt; and you have been toasted by that name ever since.

Ser. What a vast fund of spirits he has!

Sir L. And why not, my old splitter of causes?

Ser. I was just telling Charlotte, that you was not a whit the worse for the loss.

Sir L. The worse! much the better, my dear. Consider, I can have neither strain, splint, spavin, or gout; have no fear of corns, kibes, or that another man should kick my shins, or tread on my toes.

Ser. Right.

Sir L. What, d'ye think I would change with Bill Spindle for one of his drumsticks, or chop with Lord Lumber for both of his logs?

Ser. No!

Sir L. No, damn it, I am much better.—Look there—Ha!—What is there I am not able to do! To be sure I am a little awkward at run-

ping; but then, to make me amends, I'll hop with any man in town for his sum.

Ser. Ay, and I'll go his halves.

Sir L. Then as to your dancing, I am cut out at Madam Cornelly's, I grant, because of the crowd; but as far as a private set of six couple, or moving a chair-minuet, match me who can.

Char. A chair minuet! I don't understand you.

Sir L. Why, child, all grace is confined to the motion of the head, arms, and chest, which may sitting be as fully displayed as if one had as many legs as a polypus—As thus—tol de rol—don't you see?

Ser. Very plain.

Sir L. A leg! a redundancy! a mere nothing at all. Man is from nature an extravagant creature. In my opinion, we might all be full as well as we are with but half the things that we have.

Char. Ay, Sir Luke; how do you prove that?

Sir L. By constant experience.—You must have seen the man who makes and uses pens without hands.

Ser. I have.

Sir L. And not a twelvemonth agone, I lost my way in a fog, at Mile-End, and was conducted to my house in May-Fair by a man as blind as a beetle.

Ser. Wonderful!

Sir L. And as to hearing and speaking, those organs are of no manner of use in the world.

Ser. How!

Sir L. If you doubt it, I will introduce you to a whole family, dumb as oysters, and deaf as the dead, who chatter from morning till night by only the help of their fingers.

Ser. Why, Charlotte, these are cases in point.

Sir L. Oh! clear as a trout-stream; and it is not only, my little Charlotte, that this piece of timber answers every purpose, but it has procured me many a bit of fun in my time.

Ser. Ay!

Sir L. Why, it was but last summer at Tunbridge, we were plagued the whole season with a bullet-headed Swiss from the canton of Bern, who was always boasting what, and how much he dared do; and then as to pain, no Stoic, not Diogenes, held it more in contempt. By gods, he was no more minds it dan notings at all—So, foregad, I gave my German a challenge.

Ser. As how!—Mind, Charlotte.

Sir L. Why, to drive a corkin-pin into the calves of our legs.

Ser. Well, well.

Sir L. Mine, you may imagine, was easily done—but when it came to the Baron—

Ser. Ay, ay.

Sir L. Our modern Cato soon lost his coolness and courage, screwed his nose up to his foretop, rapped out a dozen oaths in high Dutch, limped away to his lodgings, and was there laid up for a month—Ha, ha, ha!

Enter a SERVANT, *and delivers a card to* SIR LUKE.

Sir L. [*Reads.*] "Sir Gregory Goose desires the honour of Sir Luke Limp's company to dine. An answer is desired." Gadso! a little unlucky; I have been engaged for these three weeks.

Ser. What, I find Sir Gregory is returned for the corporation of Fleesum.

Sir L. Is he so? Oh ho!—That alters the case.—George, give my compliments to Sir Gregory, and I'll certainly come and dine there. Order Joe to run to alderman Inkle's in Threadneedle-street; sorry can't wait upon him, but confined to bed two days with new influenza.

Char. You make light, Sir Luke, of these sort of engagements.

Sir L. What can a man do? These damned fellows (when one has the misfortune to meet them) take scandalous advantage; teaze, when will you do me the honour, pray, Sir Luke, to take a bit of mutton with me? Do you name the day.—They are as bad as a beggar, who attacks your coach at the mounting of a hill; there is no getting rid of them, without a penny to one and a promise to t'other.

Ser. True; and then for such a time too—three weeks! I wonder they expect folks to remember. It is like a retainer in Michaelmas term for the summer assizes.

Sir L. Not but upon these occasions, no man in England is more punctual than——

Enter a SERVANT, *who gives* SIR LUKE *a Letter.*

From whom?

Serv. Earl of Brentford. The servant waits for an answer.

Sir L. Answer!—By your leave, Mr. Serjeant and Charlotte [*Reads.*] "Taste for music—Mons. Duport—fail—Dinner upon table at five"—Gadso! I hope Sir Gregory's servant an't gone.

Serv. Immediately upon receiving the answer.

Sir L. Run after him as fast as you can—tell him, quite in despair—recollect an engagement that can't in nature be missed.—and return in an instant. [*Exit* SERV.

Char. You see, Sir, the knight must give way for my lord.

Sir L. No, faith, it is not that, my dear Charlotte; you saw that it was quite an extempore business.—No, hang it, no, it is not for the title; but to tell you the truth, Brentford has more wit than any man in the world; it is that makes me fond of his house.

Char. By the choice of his company he gives an unanswerable instance of that.

Sir L. You are right, my dear girl. But now to give you a proof of his wit: You know Brentford's finances are a little out of repair, which procures him some visits that he would very gladly excuse.

Ser. What need he fear? His person is sacred; for by the tenth of William and Mary——

Sir L. He knows that well enough; but for all that——

Ser. Indeed, by a late act of his own house, (which does them infinite honour) his goods or chattels may be——

Sir L. Seized upon when they can find them; but he lives in ready-furnished lodgings, and hires his coach by the month.

Ser. Nay, if the sheriff return *non inventus.*——

Sir L. A pox o' your law, you make me lose sight of my story. One morning, a Welch coachmaker came with his bill to my lord, whose name was unluckily Loyd. My lord

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had the man up. You are called, I think, Mr. Loyd?—At your Lordship's service, my Lord.——What, Loyd with an *L*?—It was with an *L* indeed, my lord.—Because in your part of the world I have heard that Loyd and Floyd were synonymous; the very same names.—Very often, indeed, my lord.—But you always spell yours with an L?—Always.—That, Mr. Loyd, is a little unlucky; for you must know I am now paying my debts alphabetically, and in four or five years you might have come in with an F; but I am afraid I can give you no hopes for your L.——Ha, ha, ha!

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. There was no overtaking the servant.

Sir L. That is unlucky: Tell my lord I'll attend him.—I'll call on Sir Gregory myself.

Ser. Why, you wont leave us, Sir Luke?

Sir L. Pardon, dear Serjeant and Charlotte; have a thousand things to do for half a million of people, positively; promised to procure a husband for Lady Cicely Sulky, and match a coach-horse for Brigadier Whip; after that, must run into the city to borrow a thousand for young At-all at Almack's; send a Cheshire cheese by the stage to Sir Timothy Tankard in Suffolk; and get at the Herald's office a coat of arms to clap on the coach of Billy Bengal, a nabob newly arrived: so you see I have not a moment to lose.

Ser. True, true.

Sir L. At your toilet to-morrow at ten you may—

Enter a SERVANT *abruptly, and runs against* SIR LUKE.

Can't you see where you are running, [you rascal?

Serv. Sir, his Grace the Duke of——

Sir L. Grace! Where is he?—Where—

Serv. In his coach at the door.—If you an't better engaged, would be glad of your company to go into the city, and take a dinner at Delly's.

Sir L. In his own coach did you say?

Serv. Yes, Sir.

Sir L. With the coronets—or—

Serv. I believe so.

Sir L. There's no resisting of that.—Bid Joe run to Sir Gregory Goose's.

Serv. He is already gone to Alderman Inkle's.

Sir L. Then do you step to the knight—hey!—no—you must go to my lord's—hold, hold, no—I have it—step first to Sir Gregory's, then pop in at Lord Brentford's just as the company are going to dinner.

Serv. What shall I say to Sir Gregory?

Sir L. Any thing—what I told you before.

Serv. And what to my lord?

Sir L. What!—Why tell him that my uncle from Epsom—no—that wont do, for he knows I don't care a farthing for him—hey!—Why tell him—hold I have it—Tell him, that as I was going into my chair to obey his commands, I was arrested by a couple of bailiffs, forced into a hackney coach, and carried to the Py'd Bull in the Borough; I beg ten thousand pardons for making his grace wait, but his Grace knows my misfor—— [*Exit.*

Char. Well, Sir, what d'ye think of the proofs? I flatter myself I have pretty well established my case.

Ser. Why, hussy, you have hit upon points; but then they are but trifling flaws, they don't vitiate the title that stands unimpeach'd; and—but, Madam, your mother.

Enter MRS. CIRCUIT.

Mrs. C. What have you done with the knight?—Why, you have not let him depart?

Char. It was not in my power to keep him.

Mrs. C. I don't wonder at that; but what took him away?

Char. What will at any time take him away—a duke at the door.

Mrs. C. Are you certain of that?

Ser. Why truly, chuck, his retreat was rather precipitate for a man that is just going to be married.

Mrs. C. The prospect of marriage does not always prove the strongest attachment.

Ser. Pardon me, lovee; the law allows no higher consideration than marriage.

Mrs. C. Pshaw!

Ser. Insomuch, that if Duke A was to intermarry with chambermaid B, difference of condition would prove no bar to the settlement.

Mrs. C. Indeed!

Ser. Ay; and this was held to be law by Chief-baron Bind'em, on the famous case of the Marquis of Cully and Fanny Flip-flap the French dancer.

Mrs. C. The greater blockhead the baron: but don't pester me with your odious law-cases. Did not you tell me you was to go to Kingston to-day to try the crown causes?

Ser. I was begged to attend for fear his lordship should not be able to sit; but if it proves inconvenient to you—

Mrs. C. To me! Oh, by no means in the world; I am too good a subject to desire the least delay in the law's execution. And when d'ye set out?

Ser. Between one and two. I shall only just give a law lecture to Jack.

Mrs. C. Lord! I wonder Mr. Circuit you would breed that boy up to the bar.

Ser. Why not, chuck? He has fine steady parts, and for his time moots a point—

Mrs. C. Steady! stupid you mean: nothing sure could add to his heaviness but the being loaded with law. Why don't you put him into the army?

Ser. Nay, chuck, if you choose it, I believe I have interest to get Jack a commission.

Mrs. C. Why, Mr. Circuit, you know he is no son of mine; perhaps a cockade may animate the lad with some fire.

Ser. True, lovee; and a knowledge of the law mayn't be amiss to restrain his fire a little.

Mrs. C. I believe there is very little danger of his exceeding that way.

Ser. Charlotte, send hither your brother.

[*Exit* CHARLOTTE.

Mrs. C. I'll not interrupt you.

Ser. Far from it, lovee; I should be glad to have you a witness of Jacky's improvement.

Mrs. C. Of that I am no judge; besides I am full of business to-day—There is to be a ballot at one for the Ladies' Club lately established, and Lady Bab Basto has proposed me for a member.——Pray, my dear, when will you let me have that money to pay my Lord Loo?

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Ser. The three hundred you mean?

Mrs. C. And besides, there is my debt to Kitty Cribbidge. I protest I almost blush whenever I meet them.

Ser. Why really, lovee, 'tis a large sum of money.—Now, were I worthy to throw in a little advice, we might make a pretty good hand of this business.

Mrs. C. I don't understand you.

Ser. Bring an action against them on the statute in the name of my clerk; and so not only rescue the debt from their hands, but recover likewise considerable damages.

Mrs. C. A pretty conceit, Mr. Serjeant! but does it not occur to your wisdom, that as I have (by the help of Captain Cog) been oftener a winner than loser, the tables may be turned upon us?

Ser. No, no, chuck, that did not escape me; I have provided for that.—Do you know, by the law, both parties are equally culpable; so that, lovee, we shall be able to fleece your friends not only of what they have won of poor dearee, but likewise for what they have lost.

Mrs. C. Why, what a paltry, pettifogging puppy art thou!—And could you suppose that I would submit to the scandalous office?

Ser. Scandalous! I don't understand this strange perversion of words. The scandal lies in breaking the laws, not in bringing the offenders to justice.

Mrs. C. Mean-spirited wretch!—What, do you suppose that those laws could be levelled against people of their high rank and condition? Can it be thought that any set of men would submit to lay legal restraints on themselves?—Absurd and preposterous!

Ser. Why, by their public practice, my love, one would suspect that they thought themselves excepted by a particular clause.

Mrs. C. Oh, to be sure; not the least doubt can be made.

Ser. True, chuck—But then your great friends should never complain of highwaymen stopping their coaches, or thieves breaking into their houses.

Mrs. C. Why, what has that to do with the business?

Ser. Oh! the natural consequence, lovee; for whilst the superiors are throwing away their fortunes, and consequently their independence above—you can't think but their domestics are following their examples below.

Mrs. C. Well, and what then?

Ser. Then! the same distress that throws the master and mistress into the power of any who are willing to purchase them, by a regular gradation, seduces the servants to actions, though more criminal, perhaps not more atrocious.

Mrs. C. Pshaw! stuff!—I have no head to examine your dirty distinctions—Don't tease me with your jargon—I have told you the sums I shall want, so take care they are ready at your returning from Kingston.—Nay, don't hesitate; recollect your own state of the case, and remember my honour is in pawn, and must some way or other be redeemed by the end of the week. [*Exit.*

Ser. My honour is in pawn!——Good Lord! how a century will alter the meaning of words!—Formerly, chastity was the honour of women, and good faith and integrity the honour of men: but now, a lady who ruins her family by punctually paying her losses at play, and a gentleman who kills his best friend in some trifling frivolous quarrel, are your only tip-toe people of honour. Well, let them go on, it brings grist to our mill; for whilst both the sexes stick firm to their honour, we shall never want business either at Doctor's Commons or the Old Bailey. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter SERJEANT CIRCUIT *and* JACK.

Ser. Jack, let Will bring the chaise to the door.

Jack. Mr. Fairplay, Sir, the attorney, begs to speak a few words.

Ser. How often have I told you, that I will see none of these sort of folks but at chambers; you know how angry your mother is at their rapping, and littering the house.

Jack. He says, Sir, he will not detain you five minutes.

Ser. Well, bid him walk in.

Enter FAIRPLAY.

Well, Mr. Fairplay, what's your will?

Fair. I just called, Mr. Serjeant, to know your opinion upon the case of young Woodford, and if you like the proposal of being concerned.

Ser. If it turns out as you state it, and that the father of the lad was really a minor, the Essex estate may without doubt be recovered; and so may the lands in the North.

Fair. We have full proofs to that fact.

Ser. May be so; but really, Mr. Fairplay, you know the length of time that these kind of suits——

Fair. True, Sir, but then your experience will shorten, I appreh——

Ser. That's more than I know: and then not only my fees lying dormant, but perhaps an expectation of money advanced.

Fair. The property, Sir, is of very great value, and upon the recovery, any acknowledgment shall be readily made.

Ser. There again, any! do you know that in law, that word any has no meaning at all? besides, when people are in distress, they are lavish enough of their offers; but when their business is done, then we have nothing but grumbling and grudging.

Fair. You have only to dictate your terms.

Ser. Does the lad live in town?

Fair. He has been under my care since the death of his father. I have given him as good an education as my narrow fortune would let me. He is now studying the law in the Temple, in hopes, that should he fail of other assistance, he may be able one day to do himself justice.

Ser. In the Temple?

Fair. Yes, Sir, in those little chambers just over your head—I fancy the young gentleman knows him.

Jack. Who? Mr. Woodford! Lord as well as myself. He is a sweet sober youth, and will one day make a vast figure, I am sure.

Ser. Indeed!

Jack. I am positive, Sir, if you were to hear him speak at the Robinhood in the Butcher-row, you would say so yourself. Why, he is

now reckoned the third. Except the breeches-maker from Barbican, and Sawny Sinclair the snuffman, there is not a mortal can touch him.

Ser. Peace, puppy. Well, Mr. Fairplay, leave the papers a little longer with me, and —pray who is employed against you?

Fair. A city-attorney, one Sheepskin.

Ser. A cunning fellow; I know him. Well, Sir, if you will call at pump-court in a week.

Fair. I shall attend you.

Ser. Jack, open the door for Mr.—[*Exeunt* FAIRPLAY *and* JACK.] Something may be made of this matter. I'll see this Sheepskin myself. So much in future for carrying on the suit, or so much in hand to make it miscarry. A wise man should well weigh which party to take for.

Enter JACK.

So, Jack, any body at chambers to-day?

Jack. Fieri Facias from Fetter-lane, about the bill to be filed by Kit Crape against Will Vizard this term.

Ser. Praying for an equal partition of plunder.

Jack. Yes, Sir.

Ser. Strange world we live in, that even highwaymen can't be true to each other! [*Half aside to himself.*] But we shall make master Vizard refund; we'll show him what long hands the law has.

Jack. Facias says, that in all the books he can't hit on a precedent.

Ser. Then I'll make one myself; *aut inveniam, aut faciam*, has been always my motto. The charge must be made for partnership-profit, by bartering lead and gunpowder, against money, watches, and rings, on Epping-forest, Hounslow-heath, and other parts of the kingdom.

Jack. He says, if the court should get scent of the scheme, the parties would all stand committed.

Ser. Cowardly rascal! but, however, the caution mayn't prove amiss. [*Aside.*] I'll not put my own name to the bill.

Jack. The declaration too is delivered in the cause of Roger Rapp'em against Sir Solomon Simple.

Ser. What, the affair of the note?

Jack. Yes.

Ser. Why, he is clear that his client never gave such a note.

Jack. Defendent never saw plaintiff since the hour he was born; but, notwithstanding, they have three witnesses to prove a consideration and signing the note.

Ser. They have?

Jack. He is puzzled what plea to put in.

Ser. Three witnesses ready, you say?

Jack. Yes.

Ser. Tell him Simple must acknowledge the note, [JACK *starts.*] and bid him, against the trial comes on, to procure four persons at least to prove the payment at the Crown and Anchor, the 10th of December.

Jack. But then how comes the note to remain in plaintiff's possession?

Ser. Well put, Jack; but we have a *salvo* for that; plaintiff happened not to have the note in his pocket, but promised to deliver it up when called thereunto by defendant.

Jack. That will do rarely.

Ser. Let the defence be a secret; for I see we have able people to deal with. But come, child, not to lose time, have you carefully conned those instructions I gave you?

Jack. Yes, Sir.

Ser. Well, that we shall see. How many points are the great object of practice?

Jack. Two.

Ser. Which are they?

Jack. The first is to put a man into possession of what is his right.

Ser. The second?

Jack. Either to deprive a man of what is really his right, or to keep him as long as possible out of possession.

Ser. Good boy! To gain the last end, what are the best means to be used?

Jack. Various and many are the legal modes of delay.

Ser. Name them.

Jack. Injunctions, demurrers, sham-pleas, writs of error, rejoinders, sur-rejoinders, rebutters, sur-rebutters, replications, exceptions, essoigns, and imparlance.

Ser. (*To himself.*) Fine instruments in the hands of a man who knows how to use them. —But now, Jack, we come to the point: If an able advocate has his choice in a cause (which if he is in reputation he may readily have,) which side should he choose, the right or the wrong?

Jack. A great lawyer's business is always to make choice of the wrong.

Ser. And prithee, why so?

Jack. Because a good cause can speak for itself, whilst a bad one demands an able counsellor to give it a colour.

Ser. Very well. But in what respects will this answer to the lawyer himself?

Jack. In a twofold way. Firstly, his fees will be large in proportion to the dirty work he is to do.

Ser. Secondly?—

Jack. His reputation will rise, by obtaining the victory in a desperate cause.

Ser. Right, boy.—Are you ready in the case of the cow?

Jack. Pretty well, I believe.

Ser. Give it then.

Jack. First of April, anno seventeen hundred and blank, John a Nokes was indicted by blank, before blank, in the county of blank, for stealing a cow, *contra pacem, etcet.*—And against the statute in that case provided and made, to prevent stealing of cattle.

Ser. Go on.

Jack. Said Nokes was convicted upon the said statute.

Ser. What followed upon?——

Jack. Motion in arrest of judgment made by counsellor Puzzle. First, because the field from whence the cow was conveyed is laid in the indictment as round, but turned out upon proof to be square.

Ser. That's well: a valid objection.

Jack. Secondly, Because in said indictment the colour of the cow is called red, there being no such things in *rerum natura* as red cows, no more than black lions, spread eagles, flying griffins, or blue boars.

Ser. Well put.

Jack. Thirdly, Said Nokes has not offended against form of the statute; because stealing of cattle is there provided against: whereas we are only convicted of stealing a cow. Now, though cattle may be cows, yet it does by no means follow that cows must be cattle.

Ser. Bravo, bravo! buss me, you rogue; you are your father's own son! go on and

prosper.—I am sorry, dear Jack, I must leave thee. If providence but sends thee life and health, I prophesy thou wilt wrest as much land from the owners, and save as many thieves from the gallows, as any practitioner since the days of king Alfred.

Jack. I'll do my endeavour. [*Exit* SERJEANT.] So!—father is set off. Now if I can but lay eyes on our Charlotte just to deliver this letter, before Madam comes home. There she is. —Hist, sister Charlotte!

Enter CHARLOTTE.

Char. What have you got there, Jack!

Jack. Something for you, sister.

Char. For me! Prithee what is it?

Jack. A thing.

Char. What thing?

Jack. A thing that will please you I'm sure.

Char. Come, don't be a boy, let me have it. [JACK *gives the letter.*] How's this! a letter! from whom?

Jack. Can't you guess?

Char. Not I? I don't know the hand.

Jack. May be not; but you know the inditer.

Char. Then tell me his name.

Jack. Break open the seal and you'll find it.

Char. [*Opening the letter,*] "Charles Woodford!"—I am sure I know nothing of him.

Jack. Ay, but sister you do.

Char. How! when, and where?

Jack. Don't you remember about three weeks ago, when you drank tea at our chambers, there was a young gentleman in a blue satin waistcoat, who wore his own head of hair?

Char. Well?

Jack. That letter's from he.

Char. What can be his business with me?

Jack. Read that, and you'll know.

Char. [*Reads.*] "Want words to apologize—hum, hum—very first moment I saw you—hum, hum—smothered long in my breast —hum, hum—happiest, or else the most wretched of men."—So, Sir, you have undertaken a pretty commission! and what do you think my father will——

Jack. Why, I hope you wont go for to tell him.

Char. Indeed, Sir, but I shall.

Jack. No, sister, I'm sure you wont be so cross. Besides, what could I do? The poor young lad begged so hard; and there for this fortnight he has gone about sighing, and musing, and moping: I am satisfied it would melt you to see him. Do, sister, let me bring him this evening, now father is out.

Char. Upon my word!—The young man has made no bad choice of an agent; you are for pushing matters at once.—But, harkee, Sir, who is this spark you are so anxious about? and how long have you known him?

Jack. Oh! a prodigious long while: above a month I am certain. Don't you think him mighty genteel? I assure you he is vastly liked by the ladies.

Char. He is!

Jack. Yes, indeed. Mrs. Congo, at the Grecian coffeehouse, says he's the soberest youth that comes to the house; and all Mrs. Mitten's 'prentices throw down their work, and run to the window every time he goes by.

Char. Upon my word!

Jack. And moreover, besides that, he has several great estates in the country; but only, for the present, he is kept out of 'em all by the owners.

Char. Ah, Jack! that's the worst part of the story.

Jack. Pshaw! that's nothing at all. His guardian, Mr. Fairplay, has been with father to-day, and says he is certain that he can set all to rights in a trice.

Char. Well, Jack, when that point is determined, it will be time enough to——

Jack. Then, Lord of mercy! why, sister Charlotte it is my private opinion, that if you don't give him some crumbs of comfort, he wont live till midsummer term.

Char. I warrant you. Either Cupid's darts were always but poetical engines, or they have been lately deprived of their points. Love holds no place in the modern bills of mortality. However, Jack, you may tell your friend that I have observed his frequent walks in our street.

Jack. Walks! Why, one would think he was appointed to relieve the old watchman: for no sooner one is off but the other comes on.

Char. And that from his eyes being constantly fixed on my window (for the information of which, I presume, he is indebted to you)——

Jack. He, he, he!

Char. I had a pretty shrewd guess at his business; but tell him, that unless my fa—— Hush! our tyrant is returned. Don't leave the house till I see you.

Enter MRS. CIRCUIT *and* BETTY.

Mrs. C. So, Sir, what makes you loitering from chambers? I thought I told you, you should never be here but at meals? [*Exit* JACK.] One spy is enough in a family.—Miss, you may go to your room; and, d'ye hear—I shall have company, so you need not come down. [*Exit* CHARLOTTE.]—Betty, no message or letter?

Betty. None, Madam.

Mrs. C. That is amazing!—You know, I expect Colonel Secret and Mrs. Simper every instant.

Betty. Yes, Madam.

Mrs. C. Put the fruit and the wine on the table in the next room.

Betty. Very well, Madam.

Mrs. C. And, Betty, order the fellow to let nobody in but Sir Luke.

Betty. Madam, I shall take care. [*Exit.*

Mrs. C. [*Sits down.*] The ballot must be over by this time. Sure there is nothing so dreadful as a state of suspense: but should they black-ball me!—No, there's no danger of that; Miss Mattadore has insured me success. Well, this is certainly one of the most useful institutions; it positively supplies the only point of time one does not know how to employ. From twelve, the hour of one's rising, to dinner, is a most horrible chasm; for though teasing the mercers and milliners, by tumbling their wares, is now and then an entertaining amusement, yet, upon repetition, it palls. Bu every morning to be sure of a party, and then again at night, after a rout, to have a place to retire to; to be quite freed from all pain of providing; not to be pestered at table with the odious company of clients and country cousins; for I am determined to dine and sup at the

club every day. I can tell 'em they'll have but very few forfeits from me.

Enter BETTY, *in haste, with a letter.*

Betty. By a chairman, Madam, from the Thatched House.

Mrs. C. Give it me, Betty, this instant.—Ay—this is Mattadore's hand. [*Opens and reads the letter.*] "My dear Circuit—it is with the utmost concern and confusion I find myself obliged to acquaint you, that notwithstanding all the pains I have taken, the club have thought fit to reject"—Oh! [*She faints.*

Betty. Bless my soul! my lady is gone!—John! Will! Kitty! run hither this instant.

Enter two MAIDS *and a* MAN SERVANT.

All. What, what's the matter?

Betty. Quick! quick! some hartshorn and water. [*Pats her hand.*] Madam, Madam—

Serv. Here, here, here! [*Bringing water.*

Betty. John, go for the potter-carrier this instant—I believes to my soul she's dead—Kitty, fetch some feathers to burn under her nose. There, stand further off, and give her some air——

Enter SIR LUKE.

Sir L. Hey-day! what the dence is the matter? What's the meaning of all this, Mrs. Betty?

Betty. Oh, Sir! is it you—my poor lady!—[*Cries*] Clap the bottle hard to her nose.

Sir L. But how came it about?

Betty. Some of the continents of that cursed letter she has there in her hand.

Sir L. Here, here, take some of my *eau de luce*. [*Offering a bottle.*

Betty. There! she recovers a little—some water—I believe it is nothing but a satirical fit; I have had them myself—now she opens her eyes—so, so—bend her forward a little.

Sir L. My sweet Mrs. Circuit!

Mrs. C. Who is that?

Betty. Nobody at all, Madam, but only Sir Luke.

Mrs. C. Oh, Sir Luke, such a stroke, so fatal, so sudden! it is not in nature I should ever survive it.

Sir L. Marry, Heaven forbid! But what cause—what could—

Mrs. C. Leave the room. [*To the Servants, who go out.*] Only look over that letter.

Sir L. Hum, hum,—[*Reads.*] "Fit to reject you—this—

Mrs. C. There! there! there!

Sir L. I own this is the utmost malice of fortune—but let me finish the letter—"This calamity, dear Circuit, is of such a nature as baffles all advice or interposition of friends: I shall therefore leave you to time and your own good understanding." [*Pretty and sensible.*]—"Yours," &c.—But let us see, what says the postscript? [*Reads.*] "Perhaps it may give you some comfort to know that you had sixteen almonds, and but two raisins against you."

Mrs. C. But two!

Sir L. No more.

Mrs. C. This must be Kitty Cribbage's doing; she has been tattling about the paltry trifle I owe her.

Sir L. Not unlikely. but come, bear up, my dear Madam, and consider that two——

Mrs. C. Is as bad as two thousand.

Sir L. Granted; but perhaps it may not be too late to repair.—Gadso! I have thought of a scheme—I'll be elected myself, and then I warrant we manage—

Mrs. C. You, Sir Luke? that never can be.

Sir L. No, Madam; and why not?—Why you don't suppose that they would venture to——

Mrs. C. It would not only be against the spirit, but the very letter of their constitution, to choose you a member.

Sir L. Ay, Madam, how so?

Mrs. C. Their statutes are selected from all the codes that ever existed from the days of Lycurgus to the present Czarina.

Sir L. Well.

Mrs. C. The law that relates to your case they have borrowed from the Roman religion.

Sir L. As How?

Mrs. C. As no man can be admitted a monk who has the least corporeal spot or defect; so no candidate can be received as a member who is deprived of the use of any one of his limbs.

Sir L. Nay, then indeed I am clearly cut out; that incapacity can never be got over.

Mrs. C. Indeed, the Serjeant says, if the club could be induced to resolve in your favour, then the original law would signify nothing.

Sir L. Well, well, we'll see what can be done. [*A loud knocking.*] But hush! the company's come; collect yourself, sweet Mrs. Circuit; don't give your enemies the malicious pleasure of seeing how this disappointment affects you.

Mrs. C. Never fear; I know a little too much of the world not to turn this defeat to my credit.

Enter COLONEL SECRET *and* MRS. SIMPER.

Mrs. S. Your servant, Sir Luke. My dear Circuit, I am frightened to death—your people tell me you are but just recovered from a——

Mrs. C. Oh! nothing at all! a faintness, a kind of swimming—but those people are ever swelling molehills to mountains.

Mrs. S. I protest I was afraid that you had suffered your late disappointment to lay hold of your spirits.

Mrs. C. What disappointment, my dear?

Col. Mrs. Simper hints at the little mistake made this morning at the Thatched House.

Mrs. C. That! ridiculous! I could have told you that a fortnight ago, child—all my own doing.

Mrs. S. How!

Sir L. Entirely.

Mrs. C. Oh! I always detested the thoughts of the thing—They would put me up; let me say what I would, so I was reduced to the necessity of prevailing upon two of my friends to black-ball me.

Mrs. S. That, indeed, alters the case.

Col. I am vastly happy to hear it: your old acquaintances were afraid they should lose you.

Mrs. C. It is a sign they know but little of me—But come, my good folks, I have prepared a small collation in the next room, will you—— [*Exeunt.*

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Enter JACK *and* WOODFORD.

Jack. I'll watch sister, to see that nobody comes. Now, Woodford, make good use of your time. [*Exit* WOODFORD.] There, I have left them together; if I had staid, I don't believe they would have opened their mouths for a month: I never saw such an alteration in a lad since the day I was born.—Why, if I had not known him before, I should not have thought he had a word to throw to a dog; but I remember the old proverb,

True lovers are shy
When people are by.

I'll take a peep to see how they go on:—There they are, just in the same posture I left them; she folding her fingers, and he twirling his hat.—Why, they don't even look at each other. —Was there ever such a couple of—Stay, stay, now he opens his mouth—pshaw!—Lord! there he shuts it again—hush! I hear somebody coming—no—nothing at all: Mother is safe I am sure,—there is no danger from her ——Now let us take t'other——[*Peeps at the door.*] Hum!—gadso, matters are mightily mended—There, there! very well—there he lays down the law—Now he claps his hand on his heart—vastly pretty, I vow——There he swops with both his knees on the ground —Charming!—And squeezes his hat with both hands like one of the actors—Delightful!—She wants him to rise, and he wont —Prodigious! moving indeed!

Enter BETTY.

Betty. So, Sir, what are you doing there?

Jack. There! where?

Betty. With your eyes glewed close to the key-hole.

Jack. I wanted to speak a word to my sister.

Betty. Then why don't you open her door?

Jack. I did not know but she might be saying her prayers.

Betty. Prayers! a likely story! Who says their prayers at this time of the day?—No, no, that wont pass upon me.—Let me look—Very pretty! So, so, I see there's somebody else at his prayers too—fine doings!—As soon as the company goes, I shall take care to inform Madam your mother.

Jack. Nay, but Mrs. Betty, you wont be so——

Betty. Indeed, Mr. John, but I shall——I'll swallow none of your secrets, believe me.

Jack. What, perhaps your stomach is overloaded already.

Betty. No matter for that, I shall be even with Miss for telling Master about and concerning my drums.

Jack. Why, Mrs. Betty, surely sister could not——

Betty. When she very well knows that I have not sent cards but twice the whole season.

Jack. Lord! what signi——

Betty. What would she say, if she visited the great families I do? For though I am, as I may say, but a commoner, no private gentlewoman's gentlewoman has a more prettier set of acquaintance.

Jack. Well, but——

Betty. My routs indeed!——There is Mrs. Allspice, who lives with Lady Cicily Sequence, has six tables every Sunday, besides loocers, and braggers; and moreover proposes giving a masquerade in the beginning of June, and I intends being there.

Jack. Well, but to talk calmly.

Betty. And as Miss is so fond of fetching and carrying, you may tell her we are to have a private play among ourselves, as the quality have: the Distrustful Mother, 'tis called—Pylades, by Mr. Thomas, Lord Catastrophe's butler—Hermione, Mrs. Allspice; and I shall do Andromache myself.

Jack. A play! Lord, Mrs. Betty, will you give me a ticket?

Betty. All's one for that—and so you may tell Miss that. [*Bell rings.*] Coming, Madam, this minute——And that, Mr. John, is the long and the short on't. [*Bell rings again.*] Lord, I am coming—— [*Exit.*

Enter WOODFORD.

Wood. What's the matter?

Jack. Here, Betty, my mother's fac-totum, has just discovered your haunts, and is gone to lay an information against you—so, depend upon it, a search-warrant will issue directly.

Wood. Stay but a moment till I take leave of your sister.

Jack. Zooks! I tell you the constables will be here in a trice, so you have not a moment to lose.

Wood. How unlucky this is!

Jack. But I hope you have obtained a verdict, however.

Wood. No.

Jack. No!

Wood. It would not have been decent to have pressed the judge too soon for a sentence.

Jack. Soon!—You are a ninny, I tell you so:——Here you will suffer judgment to go by default.——You are a pretty practitioner indeed!

Wood. This, you may know, my dear Jack, is an equity case: I have but just filed my bill; one must give the parties time to put in an answer.

Jack. Time!—How you may come off in court, I can't tell, but you will turn out but a poor chamber-council I fear.——Well, come along, perhaps I may be able to procure another hearing before it is—But, Lord o' mercy! there is father crossing the hall—should he see us, all's over—we have nothing for't but taking shelter with sister. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

SIR LUKE LIMP, MRS. CIRCUIT, COLONEL SECRET, *and* MRS. SIMPER, *discovered at a Table, with a Collation before them.*

Mrs. C. Oh! by the by, Sir Luke—Take some of these sweetmeats, my dear [*To* MRS. SIMPER.]—Did not you promise to introduce to me that little agreeable piece of imperfection that belongs to the opera?—Colonel, wont you taste the champaign?

Sir L. Who, Signior Piano?—Let me assist Mrs. Simper.—Why, Madam, I made an attempt; but at present—sha'n't I send you a biscuit?—he is in the possession of a certain lady, who never suffers him out of her sight for a moment.

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Mrs. S. Oh! the curmudgeon!—I am vastly fond of these custards.

Sir L. Yes, they have a delicate flavour—but be promised, if possible, to escape for an hour—wont you? [*To* Mrs. Circuit.

Mrs. C. No, it gives me the heart-burn.—Then let us leave him a cover.

Col. By all means in the world.

Mrs. C. But there is, likewise, another party, for whom a place ought to be kept.

Mrs. S. Another? Who can that be I wonder?

Mrs. C. A small appendix of mine.

Sir L. How, Madam!

Mrs. C. You need not be jealous, Sir Luke—Taste that tart, Mrs. Simper.—It is only my husband the Serjeant.—Ha, ha, ha!—Betty makes them herself.

Mrs. S. Oh! you abominable creature! how could such a thought come into your head?

Sir L. Ma'am—

[*Offering sweetmeats to* Mrs. Simper.

Mrs. S. Not a bit more, I thank you.—I swear and vow I should swoon at the sight.

Mrs. C. And I should receive him with the polite indifference of an absolute stranger.

Sir L. Well said, my good Lady Intrepid! But, notwithstanding, I would venture a trifle that his appearance would give you such an electrical shock——

Mrs. C. You are vastly deceived.

Sir L. Dare you come to the proof? Will you give me leave to introduce Mr. Serjeant? He is not far off.

Mrs. C. What, my husband?

Sir L. Even he! I saw him as I entered the hall.

Mrs. C. Impossible!

Sir L. Nay, then I must fetch him. [*Exit.*

Col. I can't conceive what the knight would be at.

Mrs. S. Why, he is mad.

Mrs. C. Or turned fool.

Enter Sir Luke, *with the Serjeant's peruke on a Block.*

Sir L. Now, Madam, have I reason? Is this your husband or not?

Mrs. S. It is he; not the least doubt can be made.

Col. Yes, yes, it is the Serjeant himself.

Mrs. C. I own it; I acknowledge the lord of my wishes. [*Kisses the block.*

Mrs. S. All his features are there!

Col. The grave cast of his countenance!

Sir L. The vacant stare of his eye!

Mrs. C. The livid hue of his lips!

Mrs. S. The rubies with which his cheeks are enriched.

Col. The silent solemnity when he sits on the bench!

Mrs. C. We must have him at table; but pray, good folks, let my husband appear like himself. I'll run for the gown. [*Exit.*

Mrs. S. By all means in the world.

Sir. L. Despatch, I beseech you.

Mrs. Circuit *returns with a Gown and Band.*

Mrs. C. Sir Luke, lend your assistance.

Col. There, place him at the head of the table.

[*They fix the head at the back of a chair; and place it at table: then all sit.*

Mrs. S. Madam, you'll take care of your husband.

Mrs. C. I don't want to be put in mind of my duty.

Mrs. S. Oh, Madam! I know that very well.

Sir L. Come, Hob or Nob, Master Circuit—let us try if we can't fuddle the Serjeant.

Col. O, fy! have a proper respect for the coif.

Mrs. S. Don't be too facetious, Sir Luke: it is not quite so safe to sport with the heads of the law; you don't know how soon you may have a little business together.

Sir L. But come, the Serjeant is sulky.—I have thought of a way to divert him. You know he is never so happy as when he is hearing a cause: suppose we were to plead one before him: Mrs. Circuit and I to be counsel, the Colonel the clerk, and Mrs. Simper the crier.

Mrs. C. The finest thought in the world! And, stay, to conduct the trial with proper solemnity, let's rummage his wardrobe: we shall there be able to equip ourselves with suitable dresses.

Sir L. *Alons, alons!*

Mrs. S. There is no time to be lost.

[*All rise.*

Mrs. C. [*Stopping short as they are going out.*] But wont my husband be angry if we leave him alone? Bye, dearee——we shall soon return to thee again. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Serjeant Circuit, *not perceiving the Collation.*

Ser. So, my lord not being able to sit, there was no occasion for me.—I can't put that girl's nonsense out of my head—My wife is young to be sure, and loves pleasure I own; but as to the main article, I have not the least ground to suspect her in that—No, no!—And then Sir Luke! my *proxien ami*, the dearest friend I have in the—Heyday!—[*Seeing the collation.*] What the deuce have we here?—A collation! So, so—I see Madam knows how to divert herself during my absence. What's this?—[*Seeing the block.*]—Oh, ho! ha, ha, ha!—Well, that's pretty enough, I protest.—Poor girl, I see she could not be happy without having something at table that resembled me.—How pleased she will be to find me here in *propria persona*.—By your leave, Mrs. Circuit—[*Sits down and eats.*]—Delicate eating, in troth—and the wine—[*Drinks.*]—Champaign as I live—must have t'other glass—They little think how that gentleman there regales himself in their absence—Ha, ha, ha!—quite convenient, I vow—the heat of the weather has made me—Come, brother Coif, here's your health—[*Drinks.*]—I must pledge myself I believe—[*Drinks again.*]—devilish strong—pshut!—Somebody's coming—[*Gets up and goes towards the wings.*]—What do I see? Four lawyers!—What the devil can be the meaning of this? I should be glad to get at the bottom of—Hey! By your leave, brother Serjeant—I must crave the use of your robe—[*Sits down, and gets under the gown.*]—Between ourselves, this is not the first time this gown has covered a fraud.

Enter Sir Luke, Colonel, Mrs. Circuit, *and* Mrs. Simper, *dressed as Counsellors.*

Sir L. Come, come, gentlemen, despatch,

the court has been waiting some time.—Brother Circuit, you have looked over your brief.

Mrs. C. What, do you suppose, Sir, that, like some of our brethren, I defer that till I come into court? No, no.

Sir L. This cause contains the whole marrow and pith of all modern practice.

Mrs. C. One should think, Sir Luke, you had been bred to the bar.

Sir L. Child, I was some years in the Temple; but the death of my brother robbed the robe of my labours.

Mrs. S. What a loss to the public!

Sir. L. You are smart, Mrs. Simper. I can tell you, Serjeant Snuffle, whose manner I studied, pronounced me a promising youth.

Mrs. S. I don't doubt it.

Sir L. But let us to business. And, first, for the state of the case: The parties you know are Hobson and Nobson; the object of litigation is a small parcel of land, which is to decide the fate of a borough.

Mrs. C. True; called Turnberry mead.

Sir L. Very well. Then to bring matters to a short issue, it was agreed, that Nobson should on the premises cut down a tree, and Hobson bring his action of damage.

Mrs. C. True, true.

Sir L. The jury being sworn, and the counsellors feed, the court may proceed.—Take your seats—But hold—I hope no gentleman has been touched on both sides.

All. Oh! fy!

Sir L. Let silence be called.

Mrs. C. Silence in the court?

Sir. L. But stop. To be regular, and provide for fresh causes, we must take no notice of the borough and lands, the real objects in view, but stick fast to the tree, which is of no importance at all.

All. True, true.

Sir L. Brother Circuit, you may proceed.

Mrs. C. Gentlemen of the jury.—I am in this cause counsel for Hobson the plaintiff.—The action is brought against Nebuchadonezer Nobson, That he, the said Nobson, did cut down a tree, value two-pence, and to his own use said tree did convert.—Nobson justifies, and claims tree as his tree. We will, gentlemen, first state the probable evidence, and then come to the positive: and, first, as to the probable.—When was this tree here belonging to Hobson, and claimed by Nobson cut down? Was it cut down publicly in the day, in the face of the sun, men, women, and children, all the world looking on?—No; it was cut down privately in the night, in a dark night, nobody did see, nobody could see.—Hum—And then with respect and regard to this tree, I am instructed to say, gentlemen, it was a beautiful, an ornamental tree to the spot where it grew. Now can it be thought that any man would come for to go in the middle of the night, nobody seeing, nobody did see, nobody could see, and cut down a tree, which tree was an ornamental tree, if tree had been his tree? Certainly no.—And again, gentlemen, we moreover insist, that this tree was not only ornamental to the spot where it grew, but it was a useful tree to the owner: it was a plum-tree, and not only a plum-tree, but I am authorized to say the best of plum-trees, it was a damsin plum.—Now can it be thought, that any man would come for to go, in the middle of the night, nobody seeing, nobody did see, nobody could see, and cut down a tree: which tree was not only an ornamental tree, but a useful tree; and not only a useful tree, but a plum tree; and not only a plum-tree, but the best of plum-trees, a damsin plum? Most assuredly no.—If so be then that this be so, and so it most certainly is, I apprehend no doubt will remain with the court, but my client a verdict will have, with full costs of suits, in such a manner, and so forth, as may nevertheless appear notwithstanding.

Sir L. Have you done, Mr. Serjeant?

Mrs. C. You may proceed.

Sir L. Gentlemen of the jury—I am in this cause counsel for Hob—Zouns! I think the head moves.

All. Hey!

Col. No, no, Mrs. Simper jogged the chair with her foot, that was all.

Sir L. For Hercules Hobson—(I could have sworn it had stirred)—I sha'n't, gentlemen, upon this occasion, attempt to move your passions, by flowing periods and rhetorical flowers, as Mr. Serjeant has done; no, gentlemen, if I get at your hearts, I will make my way through your heads, however thick they may be.—In order to which, I will pursue the learned gentleman through what he calls his probable proofs: and, first, as to this tree's being cut down in the night; in part we will grant him that point, but, under favour, not a dark night, Mr. Serjeant; no, quite the reverse, we can prove that the moon shone bright, with uncommon lustre that night—So that if so be as how people did not see, that was none—[*Serjeant sneezes.*] Nay, Mrs. Circuit, if you break the thread of my—

Mrs. C. Me break!—I said nothing I'm sure.

Sir L. That's true, but you sneezed.

Mrs. C. Not I.

Sir L. I am sure somebody did; it could not be the head—consider the least interruption puts one out of one's—None of our faults, they might have looked on and seen if they would. And then as to this beautiful tree, with which Mr. Serjeant has ornamented his spot. No, gentlemen, no such matter at all; I am instructed to say quite the reverse: a stunted tree, a blighted, blasted tree; a tree not only limbless, and leafless, but very near lifeless; that was the true state of the tree: and then as to its use, we own it was a plum-tree indeed, but not of the kind Mr. Serjeant sets forth, a damsin plum; our proof says loudly a bull plum; but if so be and it had been a damsin plum, will any man go for to say, that a damsin plum is the best kind of plum? not a whit. I take it upon me to say it is not a noun substantive plum—with plenty of sugar it does pretty well indeed in a tart; but to eat it by itself, will Mr. Serjeant go to compare it with the queen mother, the padrigons—

Ser. [*Appearing suddenly from under the gown.*] The green gages, or the orlines.

Mrs. C. As I live 'tis my husband!

[*All but* SIR LUKE *run out.*

Ser. Nay, Sir Luke, don't you run away too—give me a buss—since I was born, I never heard a finer reply; I am sorry I did not hear your argument out—but I could not resist.

Sir L. This I own was a little surprise—Had you been long here, Mr. Serjeant?

Ser. But the instant you entered.

Sir L. So, then all is safe. [*Aside.*

Ser. But come, wont you refresh you, Sir Luke—you have had hard duty to-day.

Sir L. I drank very freely at table.

Ser. Nay, for the matter of that, I ha'n't been idle; [*Both drink.*] But come, throw off your gown, and let us finish the bottle: I ha'n't had such a mind to be merry I can't tell the day when.

Sir L. Nay then, Mr. Serjeant, have at you—Come, here's long life and health to the law. [*Drinks.*

Ser. I'll pledge that toast in a bumper.—[*Drinks.*]—I'll take Charlotte's hint, and see if I can't draw the truth out of the knight by a bottle. [*Aside.*

Sir L. I'll try if I can't fuddle the fool, and get rid of him that way. [*Aside.*

Ser. I could not have thought it: why, where the deuce did you pick up all this? But by the by, pray who was the cryer?

Sir L. Did not you know her! Mrs. Simper, your neighbour.

Ser. A pestilent jade! she's a good one, I warrant.

Sir L. She is thought very pretty: what say you to a glass in her favour?

Ser. By all means in the world! [*They drink.*] And that spark the clerk?

Sir L. Colonel Secret, a friend to the lady you toasted.

Ser. A friend! oh, ay—I understand you—Come, let us join them together.

Sir L. Alone. [*Drink.*] Egad, I shall be caught in my own trap, I begin to feel myself flattered already. [*Aside.*

Ser. Delicate white wine, indeed! I like it better every glass. [*Sings.*]

Drink and drive care away.
Drink and be merry.

Sir L. True, my dear Serjeant—this is the searcher of secrets—the only key to the heart.

Ser. Right boy, in *veritas vino.*

Sir L. No deceit in a bumper. [*Sings.*]
Drink and be merry.

Ser. Merry! dammee, what a sweet fellow you are, what would I give to be half so jolly and gay.

Sir L. [*Appearing very drunk.*] Would you? and yet do you know, Serjeant, that at this very juncture of time, there is a thing has popped into my head, that distresses me very much.

Ser. Then drive it out with a bumper. [*Drink.*] Well, how is it now?

Sir L. Now!—the matter is not mended at all.

Ser. What the deuce is the business that so sticks in your stomach!

Sir L. You know, my dear Serjeant, I am your friend, your real, your affectionate friend.

Ser. I believe it, Sir Luke.

Sir L. And yet, for these six months I have concealed a secret, that touches you near, very near——

Ser. Me near? That was wrong, very wrong; friends should have all things in common.

Sir L. That's what I said to myself; Sir Luke, says I, open your heart to your friend. But to tell you the truth, what sealed up my lips, was the fear that this secret should make you sulky and sad.

Ser. Me sulky and sad! ha! ha! how little you know of me.

Sir L. Swear then thou wont be uneasy.

Ser. Well, I do.

Sir Luke. [*Rising.*] Soft! let us see that all's safe.—Well, Mr. Serjeant, do you know that you are—a fine honest fellow?

Ser. Is that such a secret?

Sir L. Be quiet; a damned honest fellow—but as to your wife—

Ser. Well?

Sir L. She is an infamous strum—

Ser. How! it is a falsehood, Sir Luke, my wife is as virtuous a wom—

Sir L. Oh! if you are angry, your servant—I thought that the news would have pleased you—for after all, what is the business to me? What do I get by the bargain?

Ser. That's true; but then would it not vex any man to hear his wife abused in such a—

Sir L. Not if it's true, you old fool.

Ser. I say it is false: prove it; give me that satisfaction, Sir Luke.

Sir L. Oh! you shall have that pleasure directly; and to come at once to the point—you remember last New-year's day how severely it froze.

Ser. I do recollect.

Sir L. Very well; we are all invited to dine at Alderman Inkle's.

Ser. Very right.

Sir L. Well, and I did not go: Mrs. Circuit made me dine here in this house—Was it my fault?

Ser. No, no, Sir Luke, no.

Sir L. At table says she—she said, I was the picture of you—Was it my fault?

Ser. Well, and suppose you are; where's the mischief in that?

Sir L. Be quiet, I tell you.—Then throwing her arms round my neck,—it is my husband himself I embrace, it is my little old man that I kiss!—for she has a prodigious affection for you at bottom—Was it my fault!

Ser. But what is there serious in this; do'st think I mind such trifles?

Sir L. Hold your tongue, you fool, for a moment—Then throwing her teresa aside—upon my soul she is prodigious fine every where here——Was it my fault?

Ser. My fault! my fault! I see no fault in all this.

Sir Luke. [*Hatching a cry.*] No! why then, my dear friend, do you know that I was so unworthy, so profligate, so abandoned—as to—[*Rises.*] say no more, the business is done.

Ser. Ay, indeed!

Sir L. Oh! fact! there is not the least doubt of the matter; there is no hear-say, dy'e see, I was by all the while.

Ser. Very pretty! very fine upon my word.

Sir L. Was it my fault? what could I do; put yourself in my place, I must have been more or less than man to resist.

Ser. Your fault, Sir Luke, no, no—you did but your duty—But as to my wife—

Sir L. She's a diabolical fiend; I shall hate her as long as I live.

Ser. And I too.

Sir L. Only think of her forcing me, as it were with a sword at my breast, to play such a trick; you, my dear Serjeant, the best truest friend I have in the world. [*Weeps.*

Ser. [*Weeping.*] Dry your tears, dear Sir Luke; I shall ever gratefully acknowledge your confidence in trusting me with the secret—[*Taking him forward.*] But I think it might be as well kept from the rest of the world.

Sir L. My dear soul, do you think I would tell it to any mortal but you? No, no, not to my brother himself—You are the only man upon earth I would trust.

Ser. Ten thousand thanks, my dear friend! sure there is no comfort, no balsam in life like a friend—but I shall make Madam Circuit remember—

Sir L. We neither of us ought to forgive her ——Were I you, I'd get a divorce.

Ser. So I will—provided you will promise not to marry her after.

Sir L. Me! I'll sooner be torn to pieces by wild horses—No, my dear friend, we will retire to my house in the country together, and there, in innocence and simplicity, feeding our pigs and pigeons, like Pyramus and Thisbe, we will live the paragons of the age.

Ser. Agreed; we will be the whole earth to each other; for, as Mr. Shakspeare says,

The friend thou hast, and his adoption tried,
Clasp to thy soul, and quit the world beside.—

Sir L. Zouns, here comes Madam Serjeant herself.

Enter MRS. CIRCUIT.

Mrs. C. So, Gentlemen! a sweet *tete-a-tete* you have been holding—but I know it all, not a syllable you have said has been lost.

Sir L. Then, I hope you have been well entertained, Mrs. Circuit?

Mrs. C. And you, you mean spirited, dastardly wretch, to lend a patient ear to his infamous, improbable tales, equally shameful both to you and me.

Ser. How, Madam? have you the assurance—

Mrs. C. Yes, Sir, the assurance that innocence gives. There is not a soul, I thank Heaven, that can lay the least soil, the least spot, on my virtue; nor is there a man on earth but yourself would have sat and silently listened to the fictions and fables of this intemperate sot.

Ser. Why to be sure the knight is overtaken a little; very near drunk.

Sir L. I hope he believes it is a lie. [*Aside.*

Mrs. C. Do me instant justice on this defamer, this liar, or never more expect to see me in your house.

Ser. I begin to find out the fraud; this is all a flam of the knight's.

Mrs. C. I'll drive this instant to a friend of mine in the Commons, and see if no satisfaction can be had, for blasting the reputation of a woman like me—And, hark you, Sir, what inducement, what devil could prompt?—

Ser. Ay; what devil could prompt——

Sir L. Hey-day!

Mrs. C. But I guess at your motive; you flattered yourself, that by marrying Charlotte, and discarding of me, you should engross all his affection and——

Ser. True, true——Stop, my life, let me come at him a little: Hark you, Mr. Knight, I begin to discover that you are a very sad dog.

Sir L. *Et tu brute!*

Ser. Brute!—you'll find I am not the brute you would have me believe——I have considered both sides of the question.

Sir L. Both sides of the question?

Ser. Both. If your story is true, you are a scoundrel to debauch the wife of your friend; and if it is false, you are an infamous liar.

Sir L. Well argued.

Ser. So in both cases, get out of my house.

Sir L. Nay, but Serjeant——

Ser. Troop I tell you, and never again enter these walls——you have libelled my wife, and I will see you no more.

Sir L. Was there ever such a——

Ser. March! And as to my daughter, I would as soon marry her to a *forma pauper* client. [*Exit* SIR LUKE.

Mrs. C. Do you consider, Mr. Circuit, where you are pushing the fellow?——That chamber is Charlotte's.

Enter SIR LUKE, WOODFORD, CHARLOTTE, *and* JACK.

Sir L. Heyday! who the deuce have we here?—Pray walk in, my good folks—Your servant, Miss Charlotte; your servant, Mr. What-d'ye-call-um.—Mr. Serjeant, you need not trouble yourself to cater for Miss; your family you see can provide for themselves.

Ser. Heyday! What the deuce is all this? Who are you Sir, and how came you here? [*To* WOODFORD.

Jack. It was I, father, that brought him.

Ser. How, sirrah!

Sir L. Well said, my young limb of the law.

Jack. Come, let us have none o' your—though I brought Mr. Woodford, you could not persuade me to do the same office for you—Father, never stir if he did not make me the proffer, if I would let him into the house the night you was at Kingston, of a new pair of silk stockings, and to learn me a minuet.

Sir L. Me! I should never have got you to turn out your toes.

Jack. Ay, and moreover you made me push out my chest, and do so with my fingers, as if I was taking two pinches of snuff.

Sir L. You see, Mr. Serjeant, what a fondness I have for every twig of your family.

Ser. I shall thank you hereafter—But from you, Charlotte, I expected other guess——

Char. When, Sir, you hear this whole matter explained, you will acquit I am sure.

Wood. Indeed, Sir, I am wholly to blame; my being here was as much a surprise upon Miss Charlotte as——

Ser. But now you are here, pray what's your business?

Jack. O! father, I can acquaint you with that—he wanted me to bring a love-letter to Charlotte, so I told him he might bring it himself, for that I would not do any such thing for never so much, for fear of offending you.

Ser. You mended the matter indeed—But, after all, who, and what are you?

Jack. Its the young gentleman that lives over our heads, to whom Mr. Fairplay is guardian.

Ser. Who, Woodford?

Jack. The same.

Ser. And are you, young man, in a situation to think of a wife?

Wood. I am flattered, Sir, that as justice is with me, I shall one day have no contemptible fortune to throw at her feet.

Ser. Justice is! What signifies justice?—Is the law with you, you fool?

Wood. With your help, Sir, I should hope for their union, upon this occasion at least.

Ser. Well, Sir, I shall re-consider your papers; and if there are probable grounds, I may be induced to hear your proposals.

Wood. Nay then, Sir, the recovering my paternal possessions makes me anxious indeed. ——Could I hope that the young lady's good wish would attend me?

Char. I have a father, and can have no will of my own.

Sir L. So then it seems poor Pil Garlick here is discarded at once.

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Ser. Why, could you have the impudence, after what has happened, to hope that——

Mrs. C. He has given wonderful proofs of his modesty.

Sir L. Be quiet, Mrs. Circuit,—Come, good folks, I will set all matters to rights in a minute; and first, Mr. Serjeant, it becomes me to tell you, that I never intended to marry your daughter.

Ser. How? never!

Sir L. Never. She is a fine girl I allow; but would it now, Mr. Serjeant, have been honest in me, to have robbed the whole sex of my person, and confined my favours to her.

Ser. How!

Sir L. No! I was struck with the immorality of the thing; and therefore to make it impossible that you should ever give me your daughter, I invented the story I told you concerning Mrs. Circuit and me.

Ser. How!

Sir L. Truth, upon my honour.—Your wife there will tell you the whole was a lie.

Ser. Nay, then indeed.—But with what face can I look up to my dear? I have injured her beyond the hopes of forgiveness.—Would you, lovee, but pass an act of oblivion—

Sir L. See me here prostrate to implore your clemency in behalf of my friend.

Mrs. C. Of that I can't determine directly. But as you seem to have some sense of your guilt, I shall grant you a reprieve for the present, which contrition and amendment may, perhaps, in time swell into a pardon:

But if again offending you are caught—

Ser. Then let me suffer, dearee, as I ought.

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THE EARL OF ESSEX:

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY MR. HENRY JONES.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	COVENT GARDEN.		COVENT GARDEN.
EARL OF ESSEX, ...	*Mr. Clinch.*	QUEEN ELIZABETH, . . .	*Mrs. Melmoth.*
EARL OF SOUTHAMPTON, .	*Mr. Wroughton.*	COUNTESS OF RUTLAND, . .	*Mrs. Hartley.*
LORD BURLEIGH, . . .	*Mr. Hull.*	COUNTESS OF NOTTINGHAM,	*Mrs. Sherman.*
SIR WALTER RALEIGH, . .	*Mr. L'Estrange.*		
LIEUTENANT OF THE TOWER,	*Mr. Thompson.*		

Lords, Ladies, and Attendants.

PROLOGUE.

OUR desperate bard a bold excursion tries,
Though danger damp'd his wings, he dared to rise:
From hope, high raised, all glorious actions spring;
'Tis hence that heroes conquer, poets sing.
Even he may feel the soul exalting fire,
Fame prompts the humblest bosom to aspire.
Without a guide this rash attempt he made,
Without a clue from art, or learning's aid.
He takes a theme where tenderest passions glow,
A theme your grandsires felt with pleasing woe.
Essex' sad tale he strives to clothe anew,
And hopes to place it in a stronger view.
Poets, like painters, may, by equal law,
The labour'd piece from different masters draw;
Perhaps improve the plan, add fire and grace,
And strike th' impassion'd soul through all the face.
How far our author has secured a claim
To this exalted palm, this wish'd-for fame,
Your generous sentiments will soon declare:
Humanity is ever prone to spare.
'Twere baseness then your conduct to distrust;
A British audience will, at least, be just.
A flattering truth he fearful must confess,
His sanguine friends made promise of success;
But that, he fears, their ardent wishes wrought,
Since partial favour seldom sees a fault,
Then hear, like patient friends, this first essay,
His next shall thank you in a nobler way.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—An Antichamber in the Palace.

Enter BURLEIGH *and* RALEIGH.

Bur. The bill, at length, has pass'd opposing numbers,
Whilst crowds seditious clamour'd round the senate,
And headlong faction urged its force within.
Ral. It has, my lord.—The wish'd-for day is come,
When this proud idol of the people's hearts
Shall now no more be worshipp'd—Essex falls.
My lord the minute's near that shall unravel
The mystic schemes of this aspiring man.
Now Fortune, with officious hand invites us
To her, and opens wide the gates of greatness,
The way to power. My heart exults: I see,
I see my lord, our utmost wish accomplish'd!

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I see great Cecil shine without a rival,
And England bless him as her guardian saint.
Such potent instruments I have prepared,
As shall, with speed, o'erturn this hated man,
And dash him down, by proof invincible.
Bur. His day of glory now is set in night,
And all my anxious hopes, at last are crown'd.
Those proofs against him, Raleigh—
Ral. All arrived.
Bur. Arrived! how? when?
Ral. This very hour, my lord:
Nay more, a person comes of high distinction,
To prove some secret treaties made by Essex,
With Scotland's monarch, and the proud Tyrone.
Bur. How say'st? to prove them?
Ral. Ay, my lord, and back'd
With circumstances of a stronger nature.
It now appears, his secretary Cuff,
With Blunt and Lee, were deep concern'd in this [lord,
Destructive scheme, contrived to raise this
And ruin Cecil. Oh, it is a subtile,
A deep laid mischief, by the earl contrived,
In hour malignant to o'erturn the state,
And (horror to conceive!) dethrone the queen.
Bur. These gladsome tidings fly beyond my hopes!
The queen will listen now, will now believe,
And trust the counsel of her faithful Burleigh.
Let this most lucky circumstance be kept
A secret still from public observation——
Dispose them well till kind occasion calls
Their office forth, lest prying craft mean while
May tamper with their thoughts, and change their minds:
Let them, like batteries conceal'd appear,
At once both to surprize and to destroy.
Ral. This sudden shock, my lord, this weighty stroke,
Must press him, headlong, down to deep destruction:
Indignant fate marks out this dreaded man,
And fortune now has left him.
Bur. Thank the changeling;
His servile faction soon will stand aghast
And sink, at distance, from his threatening fall.
Ral. His headstrong friend, the bold Southampton too,
Now finds his rash endeavours all defeated;
And storms at thee, and the impeaching Commons.
Bur. Let him rave on, and rage.—The lion in [roars
The toils entangled, wastes his strength, and
In vain; his efforts but amuse me now——
Ral. What triumphs in my soul shall reign to see [down
This sanguine and o'erbearing man brought
Beneath my envy; nay, below my scorn.
How young ambition swells my rising hopes!
'Tis Heaven, O Cecil, calls through England's voice;
And justice, bending from above, invites us.

Enter GENTLEMAN.

Gent. My lord, the lady Nottingham desires,
With much impatience, to attend your lordship.
Bur. What may the purport of her business be?
Her tender wishes are to Essex tied
In love's soft fetters, and endearing bands;
For him, each melting thought awakes desire
And all her soul is lavish'd on that lord—
This unexpected visit much surprizes me!
What can it mean? She would come to pry
And pick out tales for Essex' ear!—Why, let her;
I'm arm'd secure against her arts and cunning.
Besides, her errand comes too late, for now
Her minion's doom'd to fall.—Conduct her in.
[*Exit* GENT.
And you, my Raleigh, watch Southampton's steps;
With care observe each movement of his friend;
That no advantage on that side be lost.
[*Exit* RAL.
Southampton's Essex' second self; he shares
His headlong councils and adopts his schemes:
His daring heart, and bold ungovern'd tongue,
Are both enlisted in the rash designs
Of this proud lord, nor knows a will but his:
A limb so fix'd must with the body fall.

Enter LADY NOTTINGHAM.

Not. Thrice hail to rescued England's guiding genius! [fence,
His country's guardian, and his queen's de-
Great Burleigh, thou whose patriot bosom beats
With Albion's glory and Eliza's fame;
Who shield'st her person, and support'st her throne; [vows;
For thee, what fervent thanks, what proffer'd
Do prostrate millions pay!
Bur. Bright excellence,
This fair applause too highly over-rates,
Too much extols the low deserts of Cecil.
Not. What praises are too high for patriot-worth?
Or what applause exceeds the price of virtue?
My lord, conviction has at last subdued me,
And I am honour's proselyte:—too long
My erring heart pursued the ways of faction;
I own myself t' have been your bitterest foe,
And join'd with Essex in each foul attempt
To blast your honour, and traduce your fame.
Bur. Though ne'er my wishing heart could call you friend,
Yet honour and esteem I always bore you;
And never meant, but with respect to serve you.
It grieves me, Madam, to have thus offended,
Where most my wishes labour'd to oblige.
Not. I know your honour and your virtues well; [good,
Your public plans, design'd for England's
And all your private merit's weight. But, Oh,
How blind is reason in the maze of passion!
I sought your ruin, labour'd for your fall.
But, if repentance may atone for guilt,
Or self-reproach for sharpest penance pass,
No mortal breast e'er felt more wo than mine,
And Burleigh now may rank me for his friend.
Bur. That such a worth of soul should be abused!
Could I accuse my heart but of a thought
To do you wrong; if any purpose ever
Against your welfare in my soul arose,
That look'd with malice on your shining merit, [tues,
Your matchless beauty, or your brighter vir-
Then let me live despised, a proverb made
To every passing slave: nay more, the scorn
And trampled footstool of the man I hate.
Not. It is enough, my lord, I know it well,
And feel rekindling virtue warm my breast!

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Honour and gratitude their force resume
Within my heart, and every wish is yours.
O Cecil, Cecil, what a foe hast thou,
A deadly foe, whilst hated Essex lives!
Bur. I know it well, but can assign no cause.
Not. Ambition's restless hand has wound his thoughts [queen
Too high for England's welfare; nay, the
Scarce sits in safety on her throne, while he,
Th' audacious Essex, freely treads at large,
And breathes the common air. Ambition is
The only god he serves, to whom he'd sacrifice
His honour, country, friends, and every tie
Of truth, and bond of nature; nay, his love.
Bur. I find this business work as I would have it. [*Aside.*
That man that in this public duty fails,
On private virtue will disdainful tread,
As steps to raise him to some higher purpose:
In vain each softer wish would plead with him,
No tender movement in his soul prevails,
And mighty love, who rules all nature else,
Must follow her in proud ambition's train.
Not. Pronounce it not, my soul abhors the sound,
Like death.——O Cecil, will you kindly lend
Some pity to a wretch like me?
Bur. Command,
Madam: my power and will are yours. I feel
Your wrongs, I feel the base return you've met
From this ungrateful and disloyal man,
Though oft your goodness screen'd him from reproof.
Believe me worthy to partake your grievance,
Accept my service, and employ my power.
Not. Will Cecil's friendly ear vouchsafe to bend
Its great attention to a woman's wrongs,
Whose pride and shame, resentment and despair,
Rise up in raging anarchy at once,
To tear with ceaseless pangs my tortured soul?
Words are unequal to the woes I feel,
And language lessens what my heart endures.
Passion repulsed with scorn, and proud disdain,
Recoils indignant on my shrinking soul,
Beats back my vital springs, and crushes life.
Bur. Madam, your wrongs, I must confess are great;
Yet still, I fear ye know not half his falsehood.
Who that had eyes to look on beauty; who,
That had a heart to feel that beauty's power;
Who, but the false perfidious Essex, could
Prefer to Nottingham a Rutland's charms?
Start not—by Heaven I tell you nought but truth,
What I can prove past doubt; that he received
The lady Rutland's hand, in sacred wedlock,
The very night before his setting out
For Ireland.
Not. Oh, may quick destruction seize them!
May furies blast, and hell destroy their peace!
May all their nights——
Bur. I pray, have patience, Madam.
Restrain a while your rage; curses are in vain.
But there's a surer method to destroy him;
And if you'll join with me, 'tis done: he falls.
Not. Ha! say'st thou, Burleigh! Speak my genius, speak;
Be quick as vengeance' self to tell me how.
Bur. You must have heard the commons have impeach'd him,
And we have proofs sufficient for his ruin:
But the queen—you know how fair he stands
In her esteem: and Rutland too, his wife,
Hath full possession of the royal ear.
What then avail impeachments, or the law's
Severest condemnation, while the queen
May snatch him from th' uplifted hand of justice?
Here then, my Nottingham, begins thy task:
Try every art t' incense the queen against him,
Then step between her and the lady Rutland,
Let not her fondness find the least access
To the queen's heart, to counterwork our purpose.
Observe Southampton, too, with jealous eye;
Prevent, as much as possible, his suit:
For well I know he will not fail to try
His eloquence on the behalf of Essex,
Not. It shall be done? his doom is fix'd; he dies.
Oh, 'twas a precious thought! I never knew
Such heart-felt satisfaction! Essex dies,
And Rutland, in her turn, shall learn to weep.
The time is precious; I'll about it straight.
Come, vengeance, come assist me now to breathe
Thy venom'd spirit in the royal ear.
[*Exit* Not.
Bur. There spoke the very genius of the sex;
And disappointed woman sets no bounds
To her revenge. Her temper's form'd to serve me.

Enter Raleigh.

Ral. The lord Southampton, with ungovern'd rage,
Resents aloud his disappointed measures.
I met him in the outward court; he seeks
In haste your lordship, and, forgetting forms,
Pursues me hither, and demands to see you.
Bur. Raleigh, 'tis well—Withdraw—Attend the queen,
Leave me to deal with this o'erbearing man.
[*Exit* Ral.

Enter Southampton.

South. Where is the man, whom virtue calls his friend? [fury
I give you joy, my lord!—Your quenchless
At length prevails—and now your malice triumphs.
You've hunted honour to the toil of faction,
And view his struggles with malicious joy.
Bur. What means my lord?
South. O fraud! shall valiant Essex
Be made a sacrifice to your ambition!
Oh, it smells foul indeed, of rankest malice,
And the vile statesman's craft. You dare not sure
Thus bid defiance to each show of worth,
Each claim of honour: dare not injure thus
Your suffering country in her bravest son!
Bur. But why should stern reproach her angry brow
Let fall on me? Am I alone the cause

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That gives this working humour strength? Do I
Instruct the public voice to warp his actions?
Justice untaught shall poise the impartial scales,
And every curious eye may mark the beam.
South. The specious shield, which private malice bears,
Is ever blazon'd with some public good;
Behind that artful fence, skulk low, conceal'd,
The bloody purpose, and the poison'd shaft;
From thence they take their fatal aim unseen,
And honest merit is the destined mark.
Bur. Your warm distemper'd zeal puts rashly by
The cool directing hand of wholesome reason.
No imputation foul shall rest on me;
My honest purposes defy aloud
The slander-spreading tongue of busy faction,
To cast its venom on my fair report,
Or tell posterity, thus Cecil did.
My country's welfare, and my queen's command,
Have ever been my guiding stars through life,
My sure direction still—To these I now
Appeal;—from these, no doubt, this lord's misconduct
Hath widely stray'd; and reason, not reviling,
Must now befriend his cause.
South. How ill had providence
Disposed the suffering world's oppressed affairs.
Had sacred right's eternal rule been left
To crafty politicians' partial sway!
Then power and pride would stretch th' enormous grasp,
And call their arbitrary portion justice:
Ambition's arms, by avarice urged, would pluck
The core of honesty from virtue's heart,
And plant deceit and rancour in its stead:
Falsehood would trample then on truth and honour,
And envy poison sweet benevolence.
Oh, 'tis a goodly group of attributes,
And well befits some statesman's righteous rule!
Out upon such base and bloody doings!
The term of being is not worth the sin;
No human bosom can endure its dart.
Then put this cruel purpose from thee far,
Nor let the blood of Essex whelm thy soul.
Bur. 'Tis well, my lord! your words no comment need;
No doubt, they've well explain'd your honest meaning;
'Tis clear and full—To parts, like yours, discretion
Would be a clog, and caution but incumbrance.
Yet mark me well, my lord, the clinging ivy
With the oak may rise, but with it too must fall.
South. Thy empty threats, ambitious man, hurt not [faith,
The breast of truth. Fair innocence, and
Those strangers to thy practised heart, shall shield
My honour and preserve my friend.—In vain
Thy malice, with unequal arm shall strive
To tear th' applauded wreath from Essex' brow;
His honest laurel, held aloft by fame,
Above thy reach shall safely flourish,
Shall bloom immortal to the latest times:
Whilst thou amidst thy tangling snares involved,
Shalt sink confounded, and unpitied fall.
Bur. Rail on, proud lord, and give thy choler vent:
It wastes itself in vain; the queen shall judge
Between us in this warm debate. To her
I now repair; and in her royal presence
You may approve your innocence and faith.
Perhaps you'll meet me there—Till then farewell.
South. Confusion wait thy steps, thou cruel monster!
My noble and illustrious friend betray'd,
By crafty faction and tyrannic power,
His sinking trophies, and his falling fame,
Oppress my very soul. I'll to the queen,
Lay all their envy open to her view,
Confront their malice, and preserve my friend.
[*Exit.*

The QUEEN *discovered sitting on her throne.*

RALEIGH, *Lords, and Attendants.*

Queen. Without consulting me! presumptuous man! [queen?
Who governs here!—What! am not I your
You dared not, were he present, take this step.
Ral. Dread sovereign, your ever faithful commons
Have, in their gratitude and love for you,
Preferr'd this salutary bill against him.

Enter BURLEIGH.

Queen. You, my lord Burleigh, must have known of this
The commons here impeach the Earl of Essex
Of practising against the state and me.
Methinks I might be trusted with the secret.
Speak, for I know it well, 'twas thy contrivance.
Ha! was it not? You dare not say it was not.
Bur. I own my judgment did concur with theirs.
His crimes, I fear, will justify the charge,
And vindicate their loyalty and mine.
Queen. Ha! tell not me your smooth deceitful story!
I know your projects and your close cabals.
You'd turn my favour into party feuds,
And use my sceptre as the rod of faction:
But Henry's daughter claims a nobler soul.
I'll nurse no party, but will reign o'er all,
And my sole rule shall be to bless my people;
Who serves them best has still my highest favour;
This Essex ever did.

Enter SOUTHAMPTON.

Behold, Southampton,
What a base portrait's here! the faithful Essex
Here drawn at large associating with rebels,
To spoil his country and dethrone his queen.
South. It is not like.—By Heaven, the hand of envy
Drew these false lines, distorted far from truth
And honour, and unlike my noble friend,
As light to shade, or hell to highest heaven.
Then suffer not, thou best of queens, this lord,
This valiant lord, to fall a sacrifice
To treachery and base designs; who now
Engages death in all his horrid shapes,
Amidst a hardy race, inured to danger;
But let him face to face, this charge encounter,
And every falsehood like his foes shall fly.

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Queen. To me you seem to recommend strict justice,
In all her pomp of power. But are you sure
No subtile vice conceal'd assumes her garb?
Take heed, that malice does not wear the mask,
Nor envy deck her in the borrow'd guise.
Rancour has often darken'd reason's eye,
And judgment winks, when passion holds the scale.
Impeach the very man to whom I owe
My brightest rays of glory! Look to it, lords,
Take care, be cautious on what ground you tread;
Let honest means alone secure your footing.
Raleigh and you withdraw, and wait our leisure. [*Exeunt* RAL. *and* SOUTH.
Lord Burleigh, stay; we must with you have farther
Conference.—I see this base contrivance plain.
Your jealousy and pride, your envy of
His shining merit, brought this bill to light.
But mark me, as you prize our high regard
And favour, I command you to suppress it:
Let not our name and power be embarrass'd
In your perplexing schemes. 'Twas you began,
And therefore you must end it.
Bur. I obey.
Yet humbly would intreat you to consider
How new, unpopular, this step must be,
To stand between your parliament's inquiry
And this offending lord.—We have such proofs—
Queen. Reserve your proofs to a more proper season,
And let them then appear. But once again
We charge you, on your duty and allegiance,
To stop this vile proceeding; and to wait
Till Essex can defend himself in person.
If then your accusations are of force,
The laws, and my consent, no doubt are open.
He has my strict command, with menace mix'd,
To end effectually this hated war,
Ere he presume to quit the Irish coast.
Bur. Madam, my duty now compels me to—
Queen. No more! see that my orders be obey'd. [*Exit* BUR.
Essex a traitor!—that can never be—
His grateful and his honest soul disdains it.—
I know him hot, ambitious, rash, impatient;
But then he's firmly anchor'd in his duty:
Though stormy passions toss him to and fro.
Can he prove false? so high advanced, so honour'd,
So near my favour—and—I fear, so near
My heart!—Impossible.—This Burleigh hates him;
And, his rival, therefore would destroy him,
But he shall find his narrow schemes defeated.
In vain their fraudful efforts shall combine
To shake my settled soul, my firm design;
Resolved to lift bright virtue's palm on high,
Support her grandeur, and her foes defy.
[*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter BURLEIGH *and* RALEIGH.

Bur. Essex arrived! Confusión to my hopes!
His presence will destroy me with the queen.
I much suspect he had some private notice,
Perhaps a punctual order to return.
He lurks too near her heart—What's to be done?
Prepare the witnesses with speed; apprize
The Lady Nottingham—Southampton's pride,
And Rutland's too, will lift the crest again.
But fly, my Raleigh, send me Nottingham. [*Exit* RAL.
We must alarm the queen with new commotions
In many parts of her dominions raised:
All this, and more must now be pass'd for truth.
This sudden blow has struck me to the soul;
'Tis gone too far, he dies—proud Essex now,
Or Cecil falls. Now is th' important crisis—
Keep up thy usual strength; my better genius,
Direct my steps to crush my mortal foe.

Enter QUEEN *and* RALEIGH.

Queen. It cannot be! Return'd without my leave!
Against my strict command!—Impossible!
Ral. Madam, the earl is now at court, and begs
An audience of your majesty.
Queen. Amazing!
What! break his trust! desert his high command!
Forsake his post, and disobey his queen!
'Tis false—invented all.—You wish it so.
Bur. Madam, I wish some other rumours false:
Reports, I fear, of great concern to you.
Queen. What rumours? what reports? Your frown would much
Denote: your preface seems important—Speak.
Bur. Some new commotions are of late sprung up
In Ireland, where the west is all in arms,
And moves with hasty march to join Tyrone,
And all his northern clans. A dreadful power!
Nay more, we have advices from the borders
Of sudden risings, near the banks of Tweed!
'Tis thought to favour an attempt from Scotland.
Mean while, Tyrone embarks six thousand men
To land at Milford, and march where Essex
Shall join them with his friends.
Queen. In league with James!
And plotting with Tyrone! It cannot be.
His very pride disdains such perfidy.
But is not Essex here without my leave!
Against my strict command! that, that's rebellion,
The rest, if true, or false, it matters not.
What's to be done?—admit him to my presence?
No, no—my dignity; my pride forbid it.
Ungrateful man, approach me not; rise, rise,
Resentment, and support my soul! Disdain,
Do thou assist me—Yes, it shall be so.
Bur. I see she muses deep, her mind works upwards,
And paints its struggling efforts in her face.
Tyrone's invasion wakes her fear and anger,
And all her soul is one continued storm.
Queen. For once my pride shall stoop; and I will see
This rash, audacious, this once favour'd man;
But treat him as his daring crimes deserve.

Enter SOUTHAMPTON.

South. [*Kneeling.*] Permit me, Madam, to approach you thus;
Thus lowly to present the humble suit
Of the much injured, faithful, earl of Essex,

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Who dares not, unpermitted, meet your presence.
He begs, most gracious queen, to fall before
Your royal feet, to clear him to his sovereign,
Whom, next to Heaven, he wishes most to please.
Let faction load him with her labouring hand,
His innocence shall rise against the weight,
If but his gracious mistress deign to smile.
Queen. Let him appear. [*Exit* SOUTH.
Now to thy trying task,
My soul! Put forth, exert thy utmost strength,
Nor let an injured queen be tame—Lie still,
My heart! I cannot listen to thee now.

Enter ESSEX *and* SOUTHAMPTON.

Essex. Forgive, thou injured majesty, thou best
Of queens, this seeming disobedience. See,
I bend submissive in your royal presence,
With soul as penitent as if before
Th' all-searching eye of Heaven, But O, that spirit,
frown!
My queen's resentment wounds my inmost
Strikes me like death, and pierces through my heart.
Queen. You have obey'd, my lord! you've served me well!
My deadly foes are quell'd! and you come home
A conqueror? Your country bids you welcome!
And I, your queen applaud!——Triumphant man!
What? is it thus that Essex gains his laurels?
What? is it thus you've borne my high commission!
How durst you disregard your trusted duty,
Desert your province, and betray your queen?
Essex. I came to clear my injured name from guilt,
Imputed guilt, and slanderous accusations,
My shame was wafted in each passing gale,
Each swelling tide came loaded with my wrongs;
And echo sounded forth from faction's voice,
The traitor Essex——Was't not hard my queen,
That while I stood in danger's dreadful front,
Encountering death in every shape of terror,
And bleeding for my country?—Was't not hard,
My mortal enemies at home, like cowards,
Should in my absence basely blast my fame?
Queen. It is the godlike attribute of kings
To raise the virtuous and protect the brave.
I was the guardian of your reputation,
What malice, or what faction then could reach you?
My honour was exposed, engaged for yours;
But you found reason to dislike my care,
And to yourself assumed the wrested office.
Essex. If ought disloyal in this bosom dwells,
If ought of treason lodges in this heart,
May I to guilt and lasting shame be wedded,
The sport of faction, and the mark of scorn,
The world's derision, and my queen's abhorrence.
Stand forth the villain, whose envenom'd tongue
Would taint my honour and traduce my name,
Or stamp my conduct with a rebel's brand!
Lives there a monster in the haunts of men,
Dares tear my trophies from their pillar'd base,
Eclipse my glory and disgrace my deeds?
Queen. This ardent language, and this glow of soul,
Were nobly graceful in a better cause;
Where virtue warrants, and where truth inspires:
But injured truth, with brow invincible,
Frowns stern reproof upon the false assertion,
And contradicts it with the force of facts.
From me you have appeal'd, ungrateful man;
The laws, not I, must listen to your plea.
Go, stand the test severe, abide the trial,
And mourn too late the bounty you abused.
[*Exeunt* QUEEN, SOUTH. &c.
Essex. Is this the just requital, then, of all
My patriot-toils and oft-encounter'd perils,
Amidst th' inclemencies of camps and climes!
Then be it so,——Unmoved and dauntless, let me
This shock of adverse fortune firmly stand.
But yet, methinks, 'tis somewhat sudden too!
My greatness, now deprived of each support,
Which bore so long its envied weight aloft,
Must quick to ruin fall, and crush my hopes.

Enter SOUTHAMPTON.

South. Alas, my lord! the queen's displeasure kindles
With warmth increasing; whilst lord Burleigh labours
T' inflame her wrath, and make it burn still fiercer.
Essex. I scorn the blaze of courts, the pomp of kings;
I give them to the winds, and lighter vanity;
Too long they've robb'd me of substantial bliss,
Of solid happiness, and true enjoyments.
But lead me to my mourning love; alas!
She sinks beneath oppressing ills; she fades,
She dies for my afflicting pangs, and seeks
Me, sorrowing, in the walks of wo.—Distraction!
Oh, lead me to her, to my soul's desire.
South. Let caution guide you in this dangerous step.
Consider well, my lord, the consequence——
For should the queen (forbid it Heaven) discover
Your private loves, your plighted hands, no power
On earth could step between you and destruction.
Lock up this secret from the prying world.

Enter BURLEIGH.

Bur. My lord of Essex, 'tis the queen's command,
That you forthwith resign your staff of office;
And further, she confines you to your palace.
Essex. Welcome, my fate. Let fortune do her utmost;
I know the worst, and will confront her malice,
And bravely bear the unexpected blow.
Bur. The queen my lord demands your quick compliance.
Essex. Go, then, thou gladsome messenger of ill,
And, joyful, feast thy fierce rapacious soul
With Essex' sudden and accomplish'd fall.
The trampled corse of all his envied greatness,
Lies prostrate now beneath thy savage feet;
But still th' exalted spirit mounts above thee.
Go, tell the queen thy own detested story:
Full in her sight disclose the snaky labyrinths
And lurking snares you plant in virtue's path,
To catch integrity's unguarded step.
Bur. How ill repaid are public toils and cares,

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Where active honesty, with station join'd,
Incurs but calumny, and foul reproach!
Your country has impeach'd, your queen accused you,
To these address your best defence, and clear
Your question'd conduct from disloyal guilt.
What answer to the queen shall I return?
Essex. My staff of office I from her received,
And will to her, and her alone, resign it.
Bur. This bold refusal will incense the queen.
This arrogance will make your guilt the stronger. [*Exit.*
South. Sustain, my noble friend, thy wonted greatness;
Collect thy fortitude, and summon all
Thy soul, to bear with strength this crushing weight,
Which falls severe upon thee; whilst my friendship [den.
Shall lend a helping hand, and share the bur-
I'll hence with speed and to the queen repair,
And all the power of warmest words employ, [bring
To gain you yet one audience more, and
Her majesty to milder thoughts. Farewell. [*Exit.*
Essex. As newly waked from all my dreams of glory,
Those gilded visions of deceitful joys,
I stand confounded at th' unlook'd-for change,
And scarcely feel this thunder-bolt of fate.
The painted clouds which bore my hopes aloft,
Alas, are now vanish'd to yielding air,
And I am fallen indeed!——
How weak is reason when affection pleads!
How hard to turn the deluded heart
From flattering toys, which soothed its vanity!
The laurell'd trophy, and the loud applause,
The victor's triumph, and the people's gaze;
The high-hung banner, and recording gold,
Subdue me still, still cling around my heart,
And pull my reason down.

Enter RUTLAND.

Rut. Oh, let me fly
To clasp the lord of my desires!
My soul's delight, my utmost joy, my husband!
I feel once more his panting bosom beat;
Once more I hold him in my eager arms,
Behold his face, and lose my soul in rapture.
Essex. Transporting bliss! my richest, dearest treasure!
My mourning turtle, my long absent peace,
Oh, come yet nearer, nearer to my heart!
My raptured soul springs forward to receive thee:
Thou heaven on earth, thou balm of all my wo!
Rut. Oh, shall I credit then each ravish'd sense;
Has pitying Heaven consented to my prayer?
It has, it has; my Essex is return'd!
But language poorly speaks the joys I feel;
Let passion paint, and looks express my soul.
Essex. With thee, my sweetest comfort, I'll retire
From splendid palaces, and glittering throngs,
To live embosom'd in the shades of joy,
Where sweet content extends her friendly arms,
And gives increasing love a lasting welcome.
With thee I'll timely fly from proud oppression,
Forget our sorrows, and be bless'd for ever.
Rut. Oh, let us hence, beyond the reach of power; [more.
Where Fortune's hand shall never part us
In this calm state of innocence and joy,
I'll press thee to my throbbing bosom.
Ambition's voice shall call in vain; the world,
The thankless world shall never claim thee more,
And all thy business shall be love and me.
Essex. The queen, incensed at my return, abandons me
To Cecil's malice, and the rage of faction.
I'm now no more the favourite child of fortune;
My enemies have caught me in the toil,
And life has nothing worth my wish but thee.
Rut. Delusive dream of fancied happiness,
And has my fatal fondness them destroy'd thee?
Oh, have I lured thee to the deadly snare
Thy cruel foes have laid? Oh, have I put
Thy life in peril? My officious tears
Would needs inform thee of their wicked schemes.
I dreaded Cecil's malice; and my heart,
Longing to see thee, with impatience listen'd
To its own alarms; and prudence sunk be-
The force of love. [neath
Essex. Forbear, my only comfort;
Oh tell me not of danger, death, and Burleigh;
Let every star shed down its mortal bane
On my unshelter'd head: while thus I fold
Thee in my raptured arms; I'll brave them all,
Defy my fate, and meet its utmost rigour.
Rut. Alas, my lord! consider where we are.
Oh! 'tis the queen's apartment; death is here. [path,
I came to thee through peril's ambush'd
And every danger risqued for thy embrace.
Each precious moment is by fate beset,
And time stands trembling whilst we thus confer.
Essex. Then, let us hence from this detested place; [ness,
My rescued soul disdains the house of great-
Where humble honesty can find no shelter.
From hence we'll fly, where love and virtue call;
Where happiness invites——that wish of all:
With sweet content enjoy each blissful hour.
Beyond the smiles of fraud, or frowns of power.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Enter BURLEIGH *and* NOTTINGHAM.

Not. My lord, I've sought you out, with much impatience.
You've had an audience of the queen: what follow'd?
Bur. Soon as I told her Essex had refused
To yield his dignities, and staff of office,
Against her high command, pronounced by me,
She seem'd deprived of reason for a moment;
Her working mind betray'd contending passions,
Which, in her alter'd face, appear'd by turns.

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She paused, like thunder in some kindling cloud,
The instant burst with dreadful fury forth:
And has th' ungrateful wretch defied my mandate? [power?
The proud, audacious traitor scorn'd my
He dares not sure.—He dies—the villain dies!
Then sudden soften'd into milder sounds,
And call'd him rash, unhappy, gallant Essex.
On me her fury fell; my crafty plans
Against his reputation, fame and life,
Had driven him to extremes—my malice did it—
My envy was his bane; with all that passion
Or fury could suggest.—I begg'd to know
Her royal will concerning Essex; urged
Again his insolence—Amazed awhile
She stood, and wist not what to do—At length,
Collecting all her mind, these words she utter'd:—
Let him to the Tower.—I instantly withdrew,
But soon was countermanded, and desired
To bring the Earl of Essex to her presence.
I like it not, and much I fear she'll stand
Between this high offender and the laws.
Not. Is Essex then secured?
Bur. Madam, he is;
And now comes guarded to the court.

Enter GENTLEMAN.

Gent. Madam, the queen
In her closet desires to see you.
Not. I attend her.
Bur. She wants, no doubt to be advised by you.
Improve this fair occasion, urge it home;
She must be quicken'd by repeated strokes
Of fresh indignities, by Essex offer'd
T' her royal person and prerogative.
Be circumspect and cautious! mark her well.
Not. I know her foible. Essex long has had
An interest in her heart, which nothing can
O'erturn, except his own ungovern'd spirit.
It is, indeed, the instrument by which
We work, and cannot fail if rightly used.
Bur. Madam, the queen expects you instantly.
I must withdraw, and wait the Earl's arrival.
[*Exeunt.*

QUEEN *discovered.*

Queen. Ill fated, wretched man! perverse and obstinate;
He counterworks my grace, and courts destruction.
He gives his deadly foes the dagger to
Destroy him, and defeats my friendly purpose, [him,
Which would, by seeming to abandon, save
Nor will he keep the mask of prudence on
A moment's space.—What! must I bear this scorn?
No: let me all the monarch re-assume:
Exert my power, and be myself again.—
Oh, ill-performing, disobedient heart!—
Why shrink'st thou from thy own resolve?

Enter NOTTINGHAM.

Thou comest in time; I'm much disturb'd, abused,
My Nottingham, and would complain to thee
Of insolence, neglect and high contempt.
Essex presumed to dictate laws within
My palace gates. How say'st thou Nottingham?
Not. Surely, my gracious queen, it cannot be!
His heart and passion never could impel him,
To take so bold a step, to such rash guilt:
Methinks his very honour should prevent it.
Queen. Thy open, honest mind untutor'd seems
In life's ungrateful and degenerate school;
Where stubborn vice in every form appears,
Mocking correction's ineffectual rod.
It is, indeed, an evil hard to bear;
This haughty man has wanton'd with my grace,
Abused my bounty, and despised my favours,
That giving goodness should profusely flow
T' enrich the surly glebe, where only thorns
And noxious weeds will spring!
Resentment, then, shall in her turn prevail!
To angry laws I'll give this victim up.
Not. His conduct has, I fear, been too unguarded:
His hasty temper knows not where to stop.
Ambition is the spur of all his actions,
Which often drives him o'er his duty's limits;
(At least his enemies would have it so.)
But malice, Madam, seldom judges right.
Queen. O Nottingham! his pride is past enduring;
This insolent, audacious man, forgets
His honour and allegiance;—and refused
To render up his staff of office, here,
Beneath my very eye.
Not. Presumptuous man!
Your faithful subjects will resent this pride,
This insolence, this treason to their queen;
They must my gracious sovereign—'Tis not safe [ment.
To shield him longer from their just resent-
Then give him up to justice and the laws.
Queen. You seem well pleased to urge severity.——
Offended majesty but seldom wants
Such sharp advisers.—Yet no attribute
So well befits th' exalted seat supreme,
And power's disposing hand, as clemency.
Each crime must from its quality be judged:
And pity there should interpose, where malice
Is not the aggressor. Hence! I'll hear no more.
Not. Madam, my sentiments were well intended;
Justice, not malice, moved my honest zeal.
My words were echoes of the public voice,
Which daily rises, with repeated cries
Of high complaint, against this haughty lord.
I pity, from my heart his rash attempts,
And much esteem the man.
Queen. Go, Nottingham.
My mind's disturb'd, and send me Rutland hither. [*Exit* NOT.
O vain distinction of exalted state!
No rank ascends above the reach of care.
No dignity can shield a queen from wo.
Despotic nature's stronger sceptre rules.
And pain and passion in her right prevail.
Oh, the unpitied lot, severe condition,
Of solitary, sad, dejected grandeur!
Alone condemn'd to bear the unsocial throb
Of heart-felt anguish, and corroding grief;
Deprived of what, within his homely shed,
The poorest peasant in affliction finds,

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The kind, condoling comfort of a dear,
Partaking friend.——

Enter COUNTESS *of* RUTLAND.

Rutland, I want thy timely
Counsel. I'm importuned, and urged to punish——
But justice, sometimes, has a cruel sound,
Where mercy may with prudence meet, and both
Agree to soften rigour.—Essex has,
No doubt, provoked my anger, and the laws,
His haughty conduct calls for sharp reproof,
And just correction. Yet I think him guiltless
Of studied treason, or design'd rebellion.
Then tell me, Rutland, what the world reports,
What censure says of his unruly deeds.
Rut. The world, with envy's eye beholds his merit:
Madam, 'tis malice all and false report.
I know his noble heart, 'tis fill'd with honour:
No traitorous taint has touch'd his generous soul;
His grateful mind still glows with pure affection;
And all his thoughts are loyalty and you.
Queen. I grant you, Rutland, all you say and think,
The earl possess'd of many splendid virtues.
What pity 'tis, he should afford his foes
Such frequent sad occasions to undo him!
Rut. What human heart can, unafflicted, bear
Such manly merit in distress: such worth
Betray'd; such valour in the toil, beset
By cruel foes, and faction's savage cry?
My good, my gracious mistress, stretch, betimes,
Your saving arm, and snatch him from destruction,
From deadly malice, treachery, and Cecil.
Oh let him live, to clear his conduct up!
My gracious queen, he'll nobly earn your bounty,
And with his dearest blood deserve your mercy.
Queen. Her words betray a warm, unusual fervour;
Mere friendship never could inspire this transport.
I never doubted but the earl was brave;
His life, and valiant actions all declare it:
I think him honest too, but rash and headstrong.
I gladly would preserve him from his foes,
And therefore am resolved once more to see him.
Rut. Oh, 'tis a godlike thought, and Heaven itself
Inspires it. Sure some angel moves your heart,
Your royal heart, to pity and forgiveness.
This gracious deed shall shine in future story,
And deck your annals with the brightest virtue;
Posterity shall praise the princely act,
And ages yet to come record your goodness.
Queen. I'll hear no more—Must I then learn from you
To know my province, and be taught to move,
As each designing mind directs? Leave me.
Rut. Her frowns are dreadful, and her eye looks terror.
I tremble for my Essex. Save him, Heaven! [*Exit.*
Queen. Her warmth has touch'd me home.—My jealous heart,
My fearful and suspicious soul's alarm'd.

Enter BURLEIGH, RALEIGH, *and others.*

Bur. The Earl of Essex waits your royal will.
Queen. Let him approach.—And now, once more, support
Thy dignity, my soul; nor yield thy greatness
To strong usurping passion—But he comes.

Enter ESSEX, SOUTHAMPTON, *and Guards.*

Essex. Permitted thus to bend, with prostrate heart [*Kneels.*
Before your sacred majesty; I come,
With every grateful sense of royal favour
Deeply engraved within my conscious soul.
Queen. I sent my orders for your staff of office.
Essex. Madam, my envied dignities and honours,
I first from your own royal hand received;
And therefore justly held it far beneath me
To yield my trophies, and exalted power,
So dearly purchased in the field of glory,
To hands unworthy. No, my gracious queen,
I meant to lay them at your royal feet;
Where life itself a willing victim falls,
If you command.
Queen. High swelling words, my lord, but ill supply
The place of deeds, and duty's just demand.
In danger's onset, and the day of trial,
Conviction still on acting worth attends;
Whilst mere professions are by doubts encumber'd.
Essex. My deeds have oft declared, in danger's front,
How far my duty and my valour lead me.
Allegiance still my thirst of glory fired,
And all my bravely gather'd, envied laurels,
Were purchased only to adorn my queen!
Queen. Yet fact o'er fallacy must still prevail,
And eloquence to simple truth give way.
Your guilty scorn of my intrusted power,
When with my mortal foes you tamely dallied,
By hardy rebels braved, you poorly sought
A servile pause, and begg'd a shameful truce.
Should Essex thus, so meanly compromise,
And lose the harvest of a plenteous glory,
In idle treaties, and suspicious parly?
Essex. O deadly stroke! my life's the destined mark.
The poison'd shaft has drunk my spirits deep.
Is't come to this? Conspire with rebels! ha!
I've served you, Madam, with the utmost peril,
And ever gloried in th' illustrious danger;
Where famine faced me with her meagre mien,
And pestilence and death brought up her train.
I've fought your battles, in despite of nature,
Where seasons sicken'd, and the clime was fate.
My power to parly, or to fight, I had
From you; the time and circumstance did call
Aloud for mutual treaty and condition;
For that I stand a guarded felon here.—A traitor,
Hemm'd in by villains, and by slaves surrounded.
Queen. Shall added insolence, with crest audacious,
Her front uplift against the face of power.
Think not that injured majesty will bear
Such arrogance uncheck'd, or unchastised.
No public trust becomes the man who treads,
With scornful steps, in honour's sacred path,
And stands at bold defiance with his duty.
Essex. Away with dignities and hated trust,

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With flattering honours, and deceitful power!
Invert th' eternal rules of right and justice;
Let villains thrive and out-cast virtue perish;
Let slaves be raised, and cowards have command.
Take, take your gaudy trifles back, those baits
Of vice, and virtue's bane.—'Tis clear my queen,
My royal mistress, casts me of; nay, joins
With Cecil to destroy my life and fame.

Queen. Presuming wretch! audacious traitor!

Essex. Traitor!

Queen. Hence from my sight, ungrateful slave, and learn
At distance to revere your queen.

Essex. Yes; let
Me fly beyond the limits of the world,
And nature's verge, from proud oppression far,
From malice, tyranny, from courts, from you.

Queen. Traitor! villain! [*Strikes him.*

Essex. Confusion! what! a blow!
Restrain, good Heaven! down, down, thou rebel passion,
And, judgment, take the reins. Madam, 'tis well—
Your soldier falls degraded.
His glory's tarnish'd, and his fame undone.
O, bounteous recompence from royal hands!
But you, ye implements, beware, beware,
What honour wrong'd, and honest wrath can act.

Queen. What would th' imperious traitor do? My life,
Beyond thy wretched purpose stands secure.
Go, learn at leisure what your deeds deserve,
And tremble at the vengeance you provoke.
[*Exeunt all but* ESSEX *and* SOUTH.

Essex. Disgraced and struck! Damnation! Death were glorious.
Revenge! Revenge!

South. Alas, my friend! what would
Thy rage attempt? Consider well the great
Advantage now your rash, ungovern'd temper
Affords your foes. The queen, incensed, will let
Their fury loose—I dread the dire event.

Essex. Has honest pride no just resentment left?
Nor injured honour feeling not revenge?
High Heaven shall hear, and earth regret my wrongs.
Hot indignation burns within my soul.
I'll do some dreadful thing—I know not what;
Some deed as horrid as the shame I feel,
Shall startle nature, and alarm the world.
Then hence, like lightning, let me furious fly,
To hurl destruction at my foes on high;
Pull down oppression from its tyrant seat,
Redeem my glory, or embrace my fate.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

Enter QUEEN *and* NOTTINGHAM.

Queen. Not taken yet!

Not. No, Madam; for the Earl
Of Essex, leagued with desperate friends, made strong
And obstinate resistance; till at length,
O'erpower'd by numbers, and increasing force,
He fled for shelter to a small retreat,
A summer-house upon the Thames; resolved
To perish, rather than submit to power.

Queen. O wretch detested! O unheard-of treason!
Conspire against my life, within my view!
My reach! so near my very palace gates!
Perfidious monster!—What can prudence do,
Or human wisdom, more than judge from outside, [ther,
And flattering likeness? Kings can see no far-
High Heaven alone can read the heart in all
Its utmost frauds, and mystic characters.
On where shall majesty bestow its favours,
Since Essex has a traitor proved to me,
Whose arm hath raised him up to power and greatness,
Whose heart hath shared in all his splendid triumphs,
And feels, even now, his traiterous deeds with pity?
But hence with pity, and the woman's pangs;
Resentment governs, and the queen shall punish.

Enter BURLEIGH.

Bur. Illustrious queen, the traitors all are seized.
Th' intelligence was true. Their black debates
Were held at Drury-house. The dire result
Was this: that Essex should alarm the citizens
To open mutiny, and bold rebellion.
On this pernicious errand went the earl,
Joined by his desperate and seditious friends.
Their purpose was to seize your royal palace,
And sacred person; but your faithful people,
As by one mind inform'd, one zeal inspired,
Rose up at once, and with their virtue quell'd them.

Queen. Thanks to their honest, to their loyal hearts.
But say, were any persons else concern'd,
Of high distinction, or of noted rank?

Bur. Yes, Madam, many more, seduced of late,
'Mong whom the bold Southampton foremost stands, [great,
Precipitate and rash, whose power, though
Lags far behind his will to do you hurt.
They're now our prisoners, and are safe secured;
But Essex, with Southampton, and the rest
Of greater note I would not dare dispose of
Without your royal mandate; and they now
Attend without, to know your final pleasure.

Queen. Is this the just return of all my care,
My anxious toilsome days and watchful nights?
Have I sent forth a wish that went not freighted
With all my people's good? Or, have I life,
Or length of days desired, but for their sake?
The public good is all my private care.
Have I not ever thought the meanest subject,
Oppress'd by power, was, in his just complaint,
Above a king! What British bosom has
By foreign tyranny been grieved, whose wrongs
I have not felt as mine, as mine redressed?
Or have I, justly, made a single man
My foe? Then could I think this grateful isle
Contain'd one traitor's heart? But, least of all
That Essex' breast should lodge it? Call the monster,

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And let me meet this rebel, face to face.
Do you withdraw, and wait within our call.
[*Exit* BURLEIGH, &c.

Enter ESSEX.

You see we dare abide your dangerous presence,
The treason sits within your heart enthroned,
And on that brow rebellion lowers, where once
Such boasted loyalty was said to flourish.
How low the traitor can degrade the soldier?
Guilt glares in conscious dye upon thy cheek,
And inward horror trembles in thine eye.
How mean is fraud! How base ingratitude!
Essex. Forbear reproach, thou injured majesty,
Nor wound, with piercing looks a heart already
With anguish torn, and bleeding with remorse.
Your awful looks are arm'd with death,
And justice gives them terror.
Queen. Hapless man!
What cause could prompt, what fiend could urge thee on
To this detested deed? Could I from thee
Expect to meet this base return? from thee,
To whom I ought to fly, with all the confidence
That giving bounty ever could inspire,
Or seeming gratitude and worth could promise?
Essex. Alas! I own my crimes, and feel my treasons;
They press me down beneath the reach of pity.
Despair alone can shield me from myself.
Oh let the little space I live be cursed
With countless woes: let death, unpitied come;
My name be mention'd with the utmost scorn,
If all my life can feel, or fame can suffer,
Can serve to mitigate my queen's displeasure.
Queen. My pride forbids me to reproach thee more;
My pity, rather, would relieve thy sorrow.
I see conviction, and severe remorse,
Within thy mind at work. But much I fear,
That death alone can calm the raging conflict.
The people's clamours, and my special safety,
Call loud for justice, and demand your life.
But if forgiveness from an injured queen
Can make the few short hours you live more easy
I give it freely from my pitying heart;
And wish my willing power could grant thee more.
Essex. O sounds angelic! goodness undeserved!
My swelling heart can keep no bounds, my soul
Flows o'er.—And will my gracious queen forgive me?
Oh let me prostrate thus before you fall,
My better angel, and my guardian genius!
Permit me, royal mistress, to announce
My faithful sentiments, my soul's true dictates;
Vouchsafe your Essex but this one request,
This only boon, he'll thank you with his last,
His dying breath, and bless you in his passage.
Queen. Rise, my lord,
If ought you have to offer can allay
Your woes, and reconcile you to your fate,
Proceed;—and I with patient ear will listen.
Essex. My real errors, and my seeming crimes
Would weary mercy, and make goodness poor;
And yet the source of all my greatest faults
Was loyalty misled, and duty in extreme.
So jealous was my sanguine heart, so warm
Affection's zeal, I could not bear the least
Suspicion of my duty to my queen.
This drove me from my high command in Ireland;
This, too, impell'd me to that rude behaviour
Which justly urged the shameful blow I felt;
And this (O fatal rashness,) made me think
My queen had given her Essex up a victim
To statesmen's schemes, and wicked policy.
Stung by that piercing thought, my madness flew
Beyond all bounds, and now, alas! has brought me
To this most shameful fall; and, what's still worse,
My own reproaches, and my queen's displeasure.
Queen. Unhappy man! my yielding soul is touch'd,
And pity pleads thy cause within my breast.
Essex. Say but, my gracious sovereign, ere I go
For ever from your presence, that you think me
Guiltless of all attempts against your throne,
And sacred life. Your faithful Essex ne'er
Could harbour in his breast so foul a thought.
Believe it not my queen. By Heaven I swear,
When in my highest pitch of glory raised,
The splendid noon of fortune's brightest sunshine,
Not ages of renown could yield me half
The joy, nor make my life so greatly bless'd,
As saving yours, though for a single hour.
Queen. My lord, I think you honest. Nay, I own,
Whatever coldness I put on was meant
To save you from the malice of your foes.
I judged your crimes, what you yourself pronounced them,
The rash effect of an intemperate zeal.
Essex. Was ever wretch like Essex thus undone
By goodness in excess, and lavish'd grace!
Oh, I could tear my erring heart, with these
Revenging hands?—What blessings have I lost!
What clemency abused!—Now could I wish
For lengthen'd life,—indeed for endless years:
A whole eternity's too short, to show
My pious sorrows, and atone my folly.
Queen. Too well the passage to my heart he finds;
And pity's hand lets in the dangerous guest.
How weak is reason when opposed to nature.
[*Aside.*
My lord, I would convince you that I still
Regard your life, and labour to preserve it;
But cannot screen you from a public trial.
With prudence make your best defence: but should
Severity her iron jurisdiction
Extend too far, and give thee up condemn'd
To angry laws, thy queen will not forget thee.
Yet, lest you then should want a faithful friend,
(For friends will fly you in the time of need)
Here, from my finger, take this ring, a pledge
Of mercy; having this, you ne'er shall need
An advocate with me; for whensoe'er
You give, or send it back, by Heaven I swear,
As I hope for mercy on my soul,
That I will grant whatever boon you ask.
Essex. O grace surprising! most amazing goodness!
Words cannot paint the transports of my soul.

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Let me receive it on my grateful knees,
At once to thank and bless the hand that gives it.
Queen. Depend, my lord, on this; 'twixt you and me
This ring shall be a private mark of faith [*Gives the ring.*
Inviolate. Be confident, cheer up,
Dispel each melancholy fear, and trust
Your sovereign's promise; she will ne'er forsake you.
Essex. Let providence dispose my lot as 'twill,
May watchful angels ever guard my queen;
May healing wisdom in her counsels reign,
And firm fidelity surround her throne;
May victory her dreaded banners bear,
And joyful conquests crown her soldiers' brow;
Let every bliss be mingled in her cup,
And Heaven, at last, become her great reward. [*Exit.*
Queen. 'Tis done;
And yet foreboding tremors shake my heart.
Something sits heavy here, and presses down
My spirits with its weight. What can it mean?
Suppose he is condemn'd; my royal word
Is plighted for his life; his enemies,
No doubt, will censure much.—No matter, let them.
I know him honest, and despise their malice.
Unhappy state, where mercy and compassion
Too often meet with clamour and reproach!
But princes must endure, for public good,
The narrow censures of misguided crowds.

Enter COUNTESS *of* RUTLAND.

Rut. Where is the queen? I'll fall before her feet
Prostrate, implore, besiege her royal heart,
And force her to forgive.
Queen. What means this frenzy?
Rut. O gracious queen, if ever pity touch'd
Your generous breast, let not the cruel axe
Destroy his precious life; preserve my Essex,
Preserve, from shameful death, the noble, loyal,
Oh save the brave the best of subjects—Save
My life, my hope, my joy, my all, my husband.
Queen. Husband! what sudden, deadly blow is this? [wound.
Hold up, my soul, nor sink beneath this
You beg a traitor's life!
Rut. O gracious queen!
He ever loved—was ever faithful, brave——
If nature dwell's about your heart, oh, spurn
Me not! my lord! my love! my husband bleeds!
Queen. Take her away.
Rut. I cannot let you go—
Hold off your hands.—Here, on this spot, I'll fix; [arms,
Here lose all sense. Still let me stretch these
Inexorable queen, he yet may live.
Oh give him to my poor afflicted heart!
One pitying look, to save me from distraction.
Queen. I'll hear no more. I'm tortured, take her hence.
Rut. Nay, force me not away—Inhuman wretches!
O mercy, mercy! then to thee, good Heaven,
(My queen, my cruel queen, denies to hear me.)
To thee I call, to thee for mercy bend;
Melt down her bosom's frozen sense to feel
Some portion of my deadly grief, my fell
Distraction. Turn, O turn, and see a wife,
A tortured wife——
Queen. Why am I not obey'd?
Rut. Nay do not thus
Abandon me to fell despair. Just Heaven,
That sees my sorrows, will avenge the wrong,
This cruel wrong, this barbarous tyranny. [*Forced off.*
Queen. Wedded to Rutland! Most unhappy pair!
And, O ill-fated queen! never till now
Did sorrow settle in my heart its throne.
Now black despair its cloudy curtain draws
Around thy setting peace, where joy, alas!
No more shall dawn, nor smiling hope return.
Recal my pledge of safety from his hands,
And give him up to death!—But life or death
To me is equal now. Distraction dwells
Within my tortured soul, and furies rend it.
Unhappy state where peace shall never come!
One fatal moment has confirm'd my doom,
Turn'd all my comfort to intestine strife,
And fill'd with mortal pangs my future life. [*Exit*

ACT V.

SCENE I.

Enter RALEIGH, *and* LIEUTENANT *of the* TOWER.

Ral. Their peers, with much indulgence, heard their plea,
And gave them ample scope for their defence;
But nought avail'd, their crimes were too notorious,
They bore their sentence with becoming spirit;
And here's the royal mandate for their deaths.
The lady Nottingham!—What brings her hither?

Enter LADY NOTTINGHAM.

Not. Lieutenant, lead me to the Earl of Essex,
I bring a message to him from the queen.
Lieu. He's with his friend, the brave Southampton, Madam,
Preparing now for his expected fate,
But I'll acquaint his lordship with your pleasure. [*Exit.*
Ral. What means this message? Does the queen relent?
Not. I fear she does: for such a war of passions,
Such varying tumults never strove within
Her breast till now. Sometimes she rails at Essex,
And calls him villain, traitor, dooms him dead;
Yet in a moment, turns again to pity.
At length she sent me to th' ungrateful earl,
To learn if he could offer aught that might
Induce her royal mercy to forgiveness.
Go you to court, for Cecil there expects you.
I've promised to acquaint him with what passes
'Twixt me and Essex e'er I see the queen.
Ral. Madam, I go. [*Exit.*
Not. Now vengeance, steel my heart!
Offended woman, whilst her pride remains,
To malice only and revenge will bow;
And every virtue at that altar sacrifice.
But see, he comes, with manly sorrow clad.

There was a time that presence could subdue
My pride, and melt my heart to gentle pity.
I then could find no joy but in his smiles;
And thought him lovely as the summer bloom:
But all his beauties are now hateful grown.

Enter ESSEX.

Essex. Whether you bring me death or life I know not.
But, if strict friendship and remembrance past
May aught presage to my afflicted heart,
Sure mercy only from those lips should flow,
And grace be utter'd from that friendly tongue.
Not. My lord, I'm glad you think me still your friend.
I come not to upbraid but serve you now;
And pleased I am to be the messenger
Of such glad tidings, in the day of trouble,
As now I bring you. When the queen had heard
That by the lords you were condemn'd to die,
She sent me in her mercy, here to know
If you had aught to offer that might move
Her royal clemency to spare your life.
Essex. Could any circumstance new lustre add
To my dread sovereign's goodness, 'tis the making [senger.
The kind, the generous Nottingham its mes-
O Madam! could my glowing heart express
Its grateful sentiments, 'twould speak such language
As angels utter, when they praise their Maker.
Not. 'Tis well, my lord; but there's no time to spare,
The queen impatient waits for my return.
Essex. My heart was wishing for some faithful friend, [hopes.
And bounteous Heaven hath sent thee to my
Know then, kind Nottingham, for now I'll trust
Thee with the dearest secret of my life,
'Tis not long since the queen (who well foresaw
To what the malice of my foes would drive me)
Gave me this ring, this sacred pledge of mercy;
And with it, made a solemn vow to Heaven,
That whensoever I should give or send
It back again, she'd freely grant whate'er
Request I then should make.
Not. Give, give it me,
My lord, and let me fly on friendship's wings,
To bear it to the queen, and to it add
My prayers and influence to preserve thy life.
Essex. O take it then—it is the pledge of life,
The precious spring that drives my vital stream
Around, and keeps my heart still warm: it is
The door of breath, the hope of joy, the shield
Of friendship—Oh, it is my dear Southampton's
Last, last remaining stay, his thread of being,
Which more than worlds I prize—O take it then,
Take it, thou guardian angel of my life,
And offer up the incense of my prayer!
Oh beg, intreat, implore her majesty,
From public shame, and ignominious death,
And from th' obdurate axe, to save my friend.
Not. My lord, with all the powers that nature gave, [queen
And friendship—can inspire, I'll urge the
To grant you your request.
Essex. Kind Nottingham,
Your pious offices shall ever be
My fervent theme: and if my doubtful span
Relenting Heaven should stretch to years remote, [thoughts,
Each passing hour shall still remind my
And tell me that I owe my all to thee.
My friend shall thank you too for lengthen'd life.
And now I fly with comfort to his arms,
To let him know the mercy that you bring.
[*Exit.*
Not. Yes, you shall feel my friendship's weight fall heavy
Upon your guilty soul, ungrateful man!
Your false disdainful heart shall pay the fine
Of love neglected, and of beauty scorn'd.
[*Exit.*

SCENE II.—The Court.

Enter QUEEN *and* BURLEIGH.

Queen. Ha! is not Nottingham returned?
Bur. No, Madam.
Queen. Despatch a speedy messenger to haste her. [*Exit* Bur.
My agitated heart can find no rest,
So near the brink of fate—unhappy man!

Enter NOTTINGHAM.

How now, my Nottingham, what news from
What says the earl? [Essex?
Not. I wish with all my soul,
Th' ungrateful task had been another's lot.
I dread to tell it—Lost, ill-fated man!
Queen. What means this mystery, this strange behaviour? [earl?
Pronounce—declare at once, what said the
Not. Alas, my queen, I fear to say; his mind
Is in the strangest mood that ever pride
Or blackest thoughts begot. He scarce would speak;
And when he did, it was with sullenness,
With hasty tone, and down-cast look.
Queen. Amazing!
Not feel the terrors of approaching death!
Nor yet the joyful dawn of promised life!
Not. He rather seem'd insensible to both,
And with a cold indifference heard your offer;
Till warming up, by slow degrees, resentment
Began to swell his restless, haughty mind,
And proud disdain provoked him to exclaim
Aloud, against the partial power of fortune,
And faction's rage. I begg'd him to consider
His sad condition, nor repulse with scorn
The only hand that could preserve him.
Queen. Ha!
What! said he nothing of a private import,
No circumstance—no pledge—no ring?
Not. None, Madam, [once
But with contemptuous front disclaim'd at
Your proffer'd grace; and scorn'd, he said, a
Upon such terms bestow'd. [life
Queen. Impossible!
Could Essex treat me thus! You basely wrong him, [point.
And wrest his meaning from the purposed
Recal betimes the horrid words you've utter'd;
Confess and own the whole you've said was false.
Not. Madam, by truth, and duty both compell'd,
Against the pleadings of my pitying soul,
I must declare (Heaven knows with what reluctance)

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That never pride insulted mercy more.
He ran o'er all the dangers he had pass'd;
His mighty deeds; his service to the state;
Accused your majesty of partial leaning
To favourite lords, to whom he falls a sacrifice;
Appeals to justice, and to future times,
How much he feels from proud oppression's arm;
Nay, something too he darkly hinted at
Of jealous disappointment and revenge.
Queen. Eternal silence seal thy venom'd lips!
What hast thou utter'd, wretch, to rouze at once
A whirlwind in my soul, which roots up pity,
And destroys my peace:
Ha! he defies me then! audacious traitor!
Let him this instant to the block be led.
[*Exit* NOT.
Upbraid me with my fatal fondness for him!
Ungrateful, and barbarous ruffian! O Elizabeth:
Remember now thy long establish'd fame,
Thy envy'd glory, and thy father's spirit,
Accuse me of injustic too, and cruelty!
Yes, I'll this instant to the tower, forget
My regal state, and to his face confront him;
Confound th' audacious villain with my presence,
And add new terrors to th' uplifted axe.
[*Exit.*

SCENE III.—The Tower.

ESSEX *and* SOUTHAMPTON, *discovered.*

Essex. Oh name it not! my friend shall live, he shall;
I know her royal mercy, and her goodness,
Will give you back to life, to length of days,
And me to honour, loyalty and truth.
Death is still distant far.
South. In life's first spring
Our green affections grew apace and prosper'd;
The genial summer swell'd our joyful hearts,
To meet and mix each growing fruitful wish.
We're now embark'd upon that stormy flood
Where all the wise and brave are gone before us,
Ere since the birth of time, to meet eternity.
And what is death did we consider right?
Shall we astonish'd shrink, like frighted infants,
And start at scaffolds, and their gloomy trappings?
Essex. Still I trust long years remain of friendship.
Let smiling hope drive doubt and fear away,
And death be banish'd far, where creeping age,
Disease and care, invite him to their dwelling.
I feel assurance rise within my breast,
That all will yet be well.
South. Count not on hope—
We never can take leave, my friend, of life,
On nobler terms. Life! what is life? A shadow!
Its date is but th' immediate breath we draw;
Nor have we surety for a second gale;
Ten thousand accidents in ambush lie
For the embodied dream.
A frail and fickle tenement it is,
Which, like the brittle glass that measures time,
Is often broke, ere half its sands are run.
Essex. Such cold philosophy the heart disdains,
And friendship shudders at the moral tale.
My friend, the fearful precipice is past,
And danger dare not meet us more. Fly swift
Ye better angels, waft the welcome tidings
Of pardon to my friend; of life and joy.

Enter LIEUTENANT.

Lieu. I grieve to be the messenger of wo,
But must, my lords, intreat you to prepare
For instant death. Here is the royal mandate
That orders your immediate execution.
Essex. Immediate execution!—What, so sudden!
No message from the queen, or Nottingham?
Lieu. None, Sir.
Essex. Deluded hopes! Oh, worse than death!
Perfidious queen, to make a mock of life!
My friend, my friend destroy'd! O piercing thought!
O dismal chance—In my destruction ruin'd!
In my sad fall undone! Why could not mine,
My life atone for both, my blood appease?
Can you my friend forgive me?
South. Yes, O yes,
My bosom's better half, I can. With thee
I'll gladly seek the coast unknown, and leave
The lessening mark of irksome life behind.
With thee, my friend, 'tis joy to die! 'tis glory;
For who would wait the tardy stroke of time,
Or cling, like reptiles, to the verge of being,
When we can bravely leap from life at once,
And spring triumphant in a friend's embrace!

Enter RALEIGH.

Ral. To you, my lord Southampton, from the queen
A pardon comes: your life her mercy spares.
[*Exit.*
Essex. For ever bless'd be that indulgent power
Which saves my friend. This weight ta'en off, my soul
Shall upward spring and mingle with the bless'd.
South. All-ruling Heavens, can this, can this be just?
Support me; hold, ye straining heart-strings,
And keep my sinking frame from dissolution.
Oh 'tis too much for mortal strength to bear,
Or thought to suffer! No, I'll die with thee.
They shall not part us, Essex.
Essex. Live, O live,
Thou noblest, bravest, best of men and friends,
Whilst life is worth thy wish, till time and thou
Agree to part, and nature send thee to me;
Thou generous soul, farewell;—live, and be happy;
And, oh! may life make largely up to thee
Whatever blessing fate has thus cut off
From thy departing friend.
Lieu. My lord, my warrant
Strictly forbids to grant a moment's time.
South. Oh, must we part for ever?—Cruel fortune!
Wilt thou then tear him hence?—Severe divorce!
Let me cling round thy sacred person still,
Still clasp thee to my bosom close, and keep
Stern fate at distance.

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Essex. Oh my friend, we'll meet
Again where virtue finds a just reward,
Where factious malice never more can reach us.
Recal thy reason, be thyself once more.—
I fear it not.—This hideous monster, death,
When seen at distance, shocks weak nature's eye; [it——
But reason, as it draws more near, defies
I thank thy sorrows, but could spare them now.
I need not bid thee guard thy fame from wrongs;
And, oh! a dearer treasure to thy care
I trust, than either life or fame—my wife.
Her bitter sorrows pierce my soul; for her
My heart drops blood!—Oh, she will want a friend.
Then take her to thy care; do thou pour balm
On her deep-wounded spirit, and let her find
My tender helps in thee.—I must be gone,
My ever faithful, and my gallant friend.——
I pr'ythee leave this woman's work—farewell—
Take this last, dear embrace.—Farewell for ever!
South. My bursting breast!——I fain would speak, but words
Are poor——Farewell!——
But we shall meet again, embrace in one
Eternal band which never shall be loosed.
[*Exit.*
Essex. To death's concluding stroke, lead on lieutenant.
My wife!—Now reason, fortitude support me;
For now, indeed, comes on my sorest trial.

Enter COUNTESS *of* RUTLAND.

O thou last, dear reserve of fortune's malice!
For fate can add no more—O comest thou then
In this dread hour when all my straining thoughts
Are struggling in the tenderest ties of nature!
O comest thou now t' arrest my parting soul,
And force it back to life!
Rut. Thou sole delight,
Thou only joy which life could ever give,
Or death deprive me of; my wedded lord;
I come, with thee determined to endure
The utmost rigour of our angry stars;
To join thee fearless in the grasp of death,
And seek some dwelling in a world beyond it.
Essex. Too much, thou partner of this dismal hour,
Thy generous soul would prompt thee to endure;
Nor can thy tender, trembling heart sustain it.
Long years of bliss remain in store for thee;
And smiling Time his treasures shall unfold
To bribe thy stay.
Rut. Thou cruel comforter!
Alas! what's life, what's hated life to me!
Can aught beneath this starry hemisphere,
Which earth's extent, and nature's wealth can yield,
Which proud ambition stretches to enjoy,
Or passion pants for, recompense thy loss?
Alas! this universe, this goodly frame,
Shall as one continued curse appear,
And every object blast, when thou art gone.
Essex. O strain not thus the little strength I've left,
The weak support that holds up life, to bear
A few short moments more, its weight of wo,
Its loss of thee. Oh, turn away those eyes,
Nor, with that look melt down my fix'd resolve;
And yet a little longer let me gaze
On that loved form. Alas! I feel my sight
Grows dim, and reason from her throne retires;
For pity's sake, let go my breaking heart,
And leave me to my fate.
Rut. Why wilt thou still
Of parting talk, since life its thousand gates
Unbars to let us through together? Death
Is but a step that reaches to eternity.
Oh that the friendly hand of Heaven would snatch
Us both at once above the distant stars,
Where fortune's venom'd shafts can never pierce, [so.
Nor cruel queens destroy!—Nay, look not
Essex. The awful searcher whose impartial eye
Explores the secrets of each human heart,
And every thought surveys, can witness for me,
How close thy image clings around my soul:
Retards each rising wish, and draws me back
To life, entangled by that loved idea.
When fell necessity those ties shall break,
For quickly break they must——when I from earth [soar,
On faith's white angel wings to heaven shall
Thy lasting form shall still my mind possess,
Where bliss supreme each faculty o'erwhelms,
And raptured angels glow.
Lieu. My lord, the time
Too far is stretched; it now grows late.
Essex. Lead on.
Rut. Stay, stay, my love! my dearest dying lord!
Ah, whither wouldst thou go? Ah, do not leave me!
Alas! I'll hasten to attend your flight;
And nature gives consent we should not part.
I feel each faculty for fate prepared,
And my quick soul would fain set out before you.
O precious pangs!—Oh, dear distress!—still closer
To thy quick throbbing bosom breathe my last. [*Faints.*
Essex. Thou sinking excellence! thou matchless woman!
Shall fortune rob me of thy dear embrace,
Or earth's whole power, or death divide us now! [take——
Stay, stay, thou spotless, injured saint, and
Lieu. My lord, already you have been indulged
Beyond what I can warrant by my orders.
Essex. Oh let me on her dying bosom fall,
Embrace her spotless form—One moment more
Afford me to my sorrows,——Oh, look there!
Could bitter anguish pierce your heart, like mine,
You'd pity now the mortal pangs I feel,
The throbs that tear my vital strings away,
And rend my agonizing soul.
Lieu. My lord!——
Essex. But one short moment, and I will attend.
Ye sacred ministers that virtue guard,
And shield the righteous in the paths of peril,
Restore her back to life, and lengthen'd years
Of joy; dry up her bleeding sorrows all:
Oh, cancel from her thoughts this dismal hour,

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And blot my image from her sad remembrance.
'Tis done——
And now, ye trembling cords of life, give way:
Nature and time, let go your hold; eternity
Demands me.
[*Exeunt* ESSEX *and* LIEUTENANT.
Wom. She returns to life, see! help!
Rut. Whence has my lost, benighted soul been wandering?
What means this mist that hangs about my mind?
Through which reflection's painful eye discerns
Imperfect forms, and horrid shapes of wo,
The cloud dispels, the shades withdraw, and all
My dreadful fate appears.—Oh, where's my lord,
My life! my Essex! Oh, whither have they ta'en him.

Enter QUEEN *and Attendants.*

Queen. To execution! Fly with lightning's wing,
And save him. Ha! by whose command was this?
Stop, stop the fatal blow—My fears were true.
[*Exit one of the Attendants.*
Rut. Thou saving angel, sent from Heaven! my queen,
My gracious queen, be quick!—the bloody Burleigh!
A moment may destroy him. Stretch thy arm,
Defend, defend, O snatch him from the blow!
Preserve my husband! O Elizabeth!
Look down upon me. Angels move her heart
To pity; save him, save him, gracious queen.
Queen. Be calm, he shall not die. Rise up. I came
To save his life.
Rut. 'Tis mercy's voice that speaks.
My Essex shall again be mine. My queen,
My bounteous, gracious queen, has said the word.
May troops of angels guard thy sacred life,
And, in thy latest moments, waft thy soul
To meet that mercy, in the realms of joy,
Which now thy royal goodness grants to me.

Enter BURLEIGH.

Bur. Madam your orders came, alas! too late,
Ere they arrived the axe had fallen on Essex.
Rut. Ha! dead! What hell is this that opens round me?
What fiend art thou that draws the horrid scene?
Ah, Burleigh! bloody murderer, where's my husband?
Oh, where's my lord, my Essex?
Destruction seize and madness rend my brain.
See, see, they bend him to the fatal block;
Now, now the horrid axe is lifted high,
It falls, it falls; he bleeds, he bleeds; he dies!
Queen. Alas, her sorrows pierce my suffering heart.
Rut. Eternal discord tear the social world.
And nature's laws dissolve! expunge, erase
The hated marks of time's engraving hand,
And every trace destroy! Arise despair,
Assert thy rightful claim, possess me all!
Bear, bear me to my murder'd lord, to clasp
His bleeding body in my dying arms
And in the tomb embrace his dear remains,
And mingle with his dust for ever.
Queen. Hapless woman!
She shall henceforth be partner of my sorrows;
And we'll contend who most shall weep for Essex,
Oh, quick to kill, and ready to destroy,
[*To* BURLEIGH.
Could no pretext be found, no cause appear,
To lengthen mercy out a moment more,
And stretch the span of grace? O cruel Burleigh!
This, this was thy dark work, unpitying man!
Bur. My gracious mistress, blame not thus my duty,
My firm obedience to your high command.
The laws condemn'd him first to die; nor think
I stood between your mercy and his life.
It was the lady Nottingham, not I,
Herself confess'd it all in wild despair,
That from your majesty to Essex sent,
With terms of proffer'd grace, she then received
From his own hand a fatal ring, a pledge
It seems of much importance, which the earl
With earnest suit, and warm intreaty, begg'd her,
As she would prize his life, to give your majesty.
In this she fail'd—In this she murder'd Essex!
Queen. O barbarous woman!
Surrounded still by treachery and fraud!
What bloody deed is this? Thou injured Essex!
My fame is sold to all succeeding times:
But Heaven alone can view my breaking heart;
Then let its will be done——
From hence let proud, resisting mortals know
The arm parental, and th' indulgent blow,
To Heaven's corrective rod, submissive bend;
Adore its wisdom on its power depend;
Whilst ruling justice guides eternal sway,
Let nature tremble, and let man obey.

EPILOGUE.

NEWS, news! good folks, rare news, and you shall know it,
I've got intelligence about our poet:
Who do you think he is?—You'll never guess;
An Irish Bricklayer, neither more nor less.
And now the secret's out, you cannot wonder,
That in commencing bard he make a blunder.
Has he not left the better for the worse,
In quitting solid brick for empty verse?
Can he believe th' example of Old Ben,
Who changed, like him, the trowel for the pen,
Will in his favour move your critic blows?
You rather wish most poets' pens were trowels.
Our man is honest, sensible, and plain,
Nor has the poet made him pert or vain:
No beau, no courtier, nor conceited youth;
But then so rude, he always speaks the truth;

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I told him he must flatter, learn address,
And gain the heart of some rich patroness;
'Tis she, said I, your labours will reward,
If you but join the bricklayer's with the bard;
As thus——Should she be old and worse for wear,
You must new-case her front, and her repair:
If crack'd in fame, as scarce to bear a touch,
You cannot use your trowel then too much;
In short, whate'er her morals, age, or station,
Plaister and white-wash in your dedication.
Thus I advised—but he detests the plan:
What can be done with such a simple man?
A poet's nothing worth, and nought availing,
Unless he'll furnish where there is a failing.
Authors in these good times are made and used,
To grant these favours nature has refused.
If he wont fib, what bounty can he crave?
We pay for what we want, not what we have——
Nay, though of every blessing we have store,
Our sex will always wish—a little more.——
If he'll not bend his heart to this his duty,
And sell, to who will buy, wit, honour, beauty;
The bricklayer still for him the proper trade is,
Too rough to deal with gentlemen and ladies——
In short—they'll all avoid him, and neglect him,
Unless that you, his patrons, will protect him.

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THE BROTHERS:

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY RICHARD CUMBERLAND, ESQ.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SIR BENJAMIN DOVE.
BELFIELD Senior.
BELFIELD Junior.
CAPTAIN IRONSIDES.
SKIFF, Master of the Privateer.
PATERSON.
OLD GOODWIN, a Fisherman.
PHILIP, his Son.

FRANCIS, Servant to Belfield Junior.
JONATHAN, Servant to Sir Benjamin.

LADY DOVE.
SOPHIA, Sir Benjamin's Daughter.
VIOLETTA, Wife to Belfield Senior.
LUCY WATERS.
FANNY GOODWIN.

Sailors, &c. &c.

SCENE.—The Sea-Coast of Cornwall.

PROLOGUE.

VARIOUS the shifts of authors now-a-days,
For Operas, Farces, Pantomimes and Plays;
Some scour each alley of the town for wit,
Begging from door to door the offal bit;
Plunge in each cellar, tumble every stall,
And scud, like tailors, to each house of call;
Gut every novel, strip each monthly muse,
And pillage Poet's Corner of its news:
That done, they melt the stale farrago down,
And set their dish of scraps before the town;
Boldly invite you to their pilfer'd store,
Cram you, then wonder you can eat no more.

Some, in our English classics deeply read,
Ransack the tombs of the illustrious dead;
Hackney the muse of Shakspeare o'er and o'er,
From shoulder to the flank, all drench'd in gore.

Others, to foreign climes and kingdoms roam,
To search for what is better found at home:
The recreant Bard, oh! scandal to the age!
Gleans the vile refuse of the Gallic Stage.

Not so our Bard—To-night, he bids me say,
You shall receive and judge an English play.
From no man's jest he draws felonious praise,
Nor from his neighbour's garden crops his bays;
From his own breast the filial story flows;
And the free scene no foreign master knows:
Nor only tenders he his work as new;
He hopes 'tis good, or would not give it you:
True homely ware, and made of homely stuff,
Right British drugget, honest, warm, and rough;
No station'd friends he seeks, no hired applause,
But constitutes you jurors in his cause.
For fame he writes——Should folly be his doom,
Weigh well your verdict, and then give it home:
Should you applaud, let that applause be true;
For, undeserved, it shames both him and you.

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ACT I.

SCENE I.—A rocky shore, with a Fisherman's Cabin in the Cliff: a violent Tempest, with Thunder and Lightning: a Ship discovered stranded on the Coast. The Characters enter, after having looked out of their Cabin, as if waiting for the Abatement of the Storm.

GOODWIN, PHILIP, *and* FANNY.

Phil. It blows a rank storm; 'tis well, father, we hawled the boat ashore before the weather came on; she's safe bestowed, however, let what will happen.

Good. Ay, Philip, we had need be provident: except that poor skill, my child, what have we left in this world that we can call our own?

Phil. To my thoughts now we live as happily in this poor hut, as we did yonder in the great house, when you was 'Squire Belfield's principal tenant, and as topping a farmer as any in the whole county of Cornwall.

Good. Ah, child!

Phil. Nay, never droop: to be sure, father, the 'squire has dealt hardly with you, and a mighty point truly he has gained: the ruin of an honest man. If those are to be the uses of a great estate, Heaven continue me what I am.

Fanny. Ay, ay, brother, a good conscience in a coarse drugget is better than an aching heart in a silken gown.

Good. Well, children, well, if you can bear misfortunes patiently, 'twere an ill office for me to repine: we have long tilled the earth for a subsistence; now, Philip, we must plough the ocean; in those waves lies our harvest; there, my brave lad, we have an equal inheritance with the best.

Phil. True, father; the sea, that feeds us, provides us an habitation here in the hollow of the cliff; I trust, the 'squire will exact no rent for this dwelling——Alas! that ever two brothers should have been so opposite as our merciless landlord, and the poor young gentleman who they say is now dead.

Good. Sirrah, I charge you, name not that unhappy youth to me any more. I was endeavouring to forget him and his misfortunes, when the sight of that vessel in distress brought him afresh to my remembrance; for, it seems, he perished by sea; the more shame upon him, whose cruelty and injustice drove him thither. But come—the wind lulls apace: let us launch the boat, and make a trip to yonder vessel: if we can assist in lightening her, perhaps she may ride it out.

Phil. 'Tis to no purpose, the crew are coming ashore in their boat I saw them enter the creek.

Good. Did you so! Then do you and your sister step into the cabin; make a good fire, and provide such fish and other stores as you have within: I will go down and meet them: whoever they may be, that have suffered this misfortune on our coasts, let us remember, children, never to regard any man as an enemy, who stands in need of our protection. [*Exit.*

Phil. I am strongly tempted to go down to the creek too; if father should light on any mischief—Well, for once in my life, I'll disobey him: sister, you can look to matters within doors, I'll go round by the point, and be there as soon as he.

Fanny. Do so, Philip; 'twill be best. [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.

Re-enter GOODWIN, *followed by* FRANCIS, *and several* SAILORS, *carrying Goods and Chests from the Wreck.*

Good. This way my friends, this way; there's stowage enough within for all your goods.

Fran. Come, bear a hand, my brave lads; there's no time to lose: follow that honest man, and set down your chests where he directs you.

Sail. Troth, I care not how soon I'm quit of mine; 'tis plaguy heavy. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

Enter other SAILORS.

1st Sail. Here's a pretty spot of work! plague on't, what a night has this been! I thought this damned lea-shore would catch us at last.

2d Sail. Why, 'twas impossible to claw her off, well, there's an end of her—The Charming Sally privateer!—Poor soul!—A better sea-boat never swam upon the salt sea.

3d Sail. I knew we should have no luck after we took up that woman there from the packet that sunk along-side us.

1st Sail. What, Madam Violetta, as they call her? Why, 'tis like enough—But hush, here comes our captain's nephew; he's a brave lad, and a seaman's friend, and, between you and me—[*Boatswain's whistle.*]—But hark, we are called—Come along. [*Exeunt* SAILORS.

SCENE IV.

Enter BELFIELD *Junior, and* FRANCIS.

Bel. jun. That ever fortune should cast us upon this coast! Francis.

Fran. Sir.

Bel. jun. Have the people landed those chests we brought off with us in the boat?

Fran. They have, Sir: an old fisherman, whom we met, has shown us here to a cavern in the cliff, where we have stowed them all in safety.

Bel. jun. That's well. Where's my uncle?

Fran. On board. No persuasions can prevail on him to quit the ship, which he swears will lift with the tide: his old crony, the master, is with him; and they ply the casks so briskly, that it seems a moot point which fills the fastest, they or the wreck.

Bel. jun. Strange insensibility! but you must bring him off by force then, if there is no other way of saving him: I think, o' my conscience, he is as indifferent to danger as the plank he treads on. We are now thrown upon my unnatural brother's estate; that house, Francis, which you see to the left, is his; and what may be the consequence if he and my uncle should meet, I know not; for such has been Captain Ironsides' resentment on my account, that he has declared war against the very name of Belfield; and in one of his whim-

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sical passions, you know, insisted on my laying it aside for ever: so that hitherto I have been known on board by no other name than that of Lewson.

Fran. 'Tis true, Sir; and I think 'twill be advisable to continue the disguise as long as you can. As for the old captain, from the life he always leads on shore, and his impatience to get on board again, I think 'tis very possible an interview between him and your brother may be prevented.

Bel. jun. I think so too. Go then, Francis, and conduct the old gentleman hither; I see Violetta coming. [*Exit* FRANCIS.] Sure there is something in that woman's story uncommonly mysterious——Of English parents—born in Lisbon—her family and fortune buried in the earthquake——so much she freely tells: but more, I am convinced, remains untold, and of a melancholy sort: she has once or twice, as I thought, seemed disposed to unbosom herself to me; but it is so painful to be told of sorrows one hasn't power to relieve, that I have hitherto avoided the discourse.

SCENE V.

Enter VIOLETTA.

Bel. jun. Well, Madam, melancholy still? still that face of sorrow and despair? twice shipwrecked, and twice rescued from the jaws of death, do you regret your preservation? and have I incurred your displeasure by prolonging your existence?

Vio. Not so, Mr. Lewson; such ingratitude be far from me. Can I forget when the vessel, in which I had sailed from Portgual, foundered by your side, with what noble, what benevolent ardour you flew to my assistance? Regardful only of my safety, your own seemed no part of your care.

Bel. jun. Oh, no more of this; the preservation of a fellow-creature is as natural as self-defence: you now, for the first time in your life, breathe the air of England—A rough reception it has given you; but be not therefore discouraged: our hearts, Violetta, are more accessible than our shores; nor can you find inhospitality in Britain, save in our climate only.

Vio. These characteristics of the English may be just; I take my estimate from a less favourable example.

Bel. jun. Villany, Madam, is the growth of every soil; nor can I, while yonder habitation is in my view, forget that England has given birth to monsters that disgrace humanity; but this I will say for my countrymen, that where you can point out one rascal with a heart to wrong you, I will produce fifty honest fellows ready and resolute to redress you.

Vio. Ah!—But on what part of the English coast is it that we are now landed?

Bel. jun. On the coast of Cornwall.

Vio. Of Cornwall, is it? You seem to know the owner of that house: are you well acquainted with the country hereabouts?

Bel. jun. Intimately; it has been the cradle of my infancy, and, with little interruption, my residence ever since.

Vio. You are amongst your friends, then, no doubt; how fortunate is it, that you will have their consolation and assistance in your distress.

Bel. jun. Madam——

Vio. Every moment will bring them down to the very shores; this brave, humane, this hospitable people will flock, in crowds, to your relief; your friends, Mr. Lewson——

Bel. jun. My friends, Violetta! must I confess it to you, I have no friends—Those rocks, that have thus scattered my treasure; those waves, that have devoured them, to me are not so fatal as hath been that man whom Nature meant to be my nearest friend.

Vio. What, and are you a fellow-sufferer then? Is this the way you reconcile me to your nation? Are these the friends of human kind! Why don't we fly from this ungenerous, this ungrateful country?

Bel. jun. Hold, Madam; one villain, however base, can no more involve a whole nation in his crimes, than one example, however dignified, can inspire it with his virtues: thank Heaven, the worthless owner of that mansion is yet without a rival.

Vio. You have twice directed my attention to that house; 'tis a lovely spot: what pity that so delicious a retirement should be made the residence of so undeserving a being.

Bel. jun. It is indeed a charming place, and was once the seat of hospitality and honour; but its present possessor, Andrew Belfield——Madam, for Heaven's sake, what ails you? you seem suddenly disordered—Have I said—

Vio. No, 'tis nothing; don't regard me, Mr. Lewson; I am weak, and subject to these surprises; I shall be glad, however, to retire.

Bel. jun. A little repose I hope will relieve you; within this hut some accommodation may be found; lean on my arm.

[*Leads her to the door of the cabin.*

SCENE VI.

Enter GOODWIN.

Good. Heaven defend me! do my eyes deceive me? 'tis wondrous like his shape, his air, his look——

Bel. jun. What is your astonishment, friend? Do you know me? If it was not for that habit, I should say your name is Goodwin.

Good. 'Tis he; he is alive! my dear young master, Mr. Belfield! Yes, Sir, my name is Goodwin: however changed my appearance, my heart is still the same, and overflows with joy at this unexpected meeting.

Bel. jun. Give me thy hand, my old, my honest friend; and is this sorry hole thy habitation?

Good. It is.

Bel. jun. The world I see has frowned on thee since we parted.

Good. Yes, Sir: but what are my misfortunes? you must have undergone innumerable hardships, and now, at last, shipwrecked on your own coast! Well, but your vessel is not totally lost, and we will work night and day in saving your effects.

Bel. jun. Oh, as for that, the sea gave all, let it take back a part; I have enough on shore not to envy my brother his fortune. But there is one blessing, master Goodwin, I own I should grudge him the possession of——There was a young lady——

Good. What, Sir, haven't you forgot Miss Sophia?

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Bel. jun. Forgot her! my heart trembles while I ask you, if she is indeed, as you call her, Miss Sophia.

Good. She is yet unmarried, though every day we expect——

Bel. jun. 'Tis enough: Fortune, I acquit thee!—Happy be the winds that threw me on this coast, and blessed the rocks that receive me! Let my vessel go to pieces; she has done her part in bearing me hither, while I can cast myself at the feet of my Sophia, recount to her my unabating passion, and have one fair struggle for her heart. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII.

Enter VIOLETTA.

Vio. Once more I am alone. How my heart sunk when Lewson pronounced the name of Belfield! It must be he, it must be my false, cruel, yet (spite of all my wrongs) beloved husband: yes, there he lives: each circumstance confirms it: Cornwall the county; here the sea-coast, and these white, craggy cliffs; there the disposition of his seat; the grove, lake, lawn; every feature of the landscape tallies with the descriptions he has given me of it. What shall I do, and to whom shall I complain? When Lewson spoke of him, it was with a bitterness that shocked me; I will not disclose myself to him: by what fell from him, I suspect he is related to Mr. Belfield—But hush, I talk to these rocks, and forget that they have ears.

Enter FANNY.

Fanny. Are you any better Madam? Is the air of any service to you?

Vio. I am much relieved by it: the beauty of that place attracted my attention, and, if you please, we will walk further up the hill to take a nearer view of it. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VIII.

Part of the Crew enter, with IRONSIDES *and* SKIFF *in the midst of them.*

Omnes. Huzza, huzza, huzza!

1*st Sail.* Long life to your honour! welcome ashore, noble captain.

2*d Sail.* Avast there, Jack; stand clear and let his old honour pass; bless his heart, he looks cheerly, howsomever; let the world wag as it will, he'll never flinch.

3*d Sail.* Not he; he's true English oak to the heart of him; and a fine old seaman-like figure he is.

Iron. Ah, messmates, we're all aground; I have been taking a parting cup with the Charming Sally—She's gone; but the stoutest bark must have an end; master here and I did all we could to lighten her; we took leave of her in an officer-like manner.

1*st Sail.* Hang sorrow; we know the worse on't; 'tis only taking a fresh cruize; and, for my part, I'll sail with Captain Ironsides as far as there's water to carry me.

Omnes. So we will all.

Iron. Say ye so, my hearts; if the wind sits that way, hoist sail, say I; old George will make one amongst you, if that be all; I hate an idle life—So, so: away to your work: tomorrow we'll make a day on't.

[*Exeunt Sailors.*

SCENE IX.

Enter IRONSIDES *and* SKIFF.

Iron. Skiff!

Skiff. Here, your honour.

Iron. I told you, Skiff, how 'twould be; if you had luffed up in time, as I would have had you, and not made so free with the land, this mishap had never come to pass.

Skiff. Lord love you, Captain Ironsides, 'twas a barrel of beef to a biscuit, the wind had not shifted so direct contrary as it did; who could have thought it?

Iron. Why, I could have thought it: every body could have thought it: do you consider whereabouts you are, mun? Upon the coast of England, as I take it. Every thing goes contrary both by sea and land——Every thing whips, and chops, and changes about like mad in this country; and the people, I think, are as full of vagaries as the climate.

Skiff. Well, I could have swore——

Iron. Ay, so you could, Skiff, and so you did, pretty roundly too: but for the good you did by it, you might as well have puffed a whiff of tobacco in the wind's face.

Skiff. Well, captain, though we have lost our ship, we hav'n't lost our all: thank the fates, we've saved treasure enough to make all our fortunes notwithstanding.

Iron. Fortunes, quotha? What have two such old weather-beaten fellows, as thee and I are, to do with fortune: or, indeed, what has fortune to do with us? Flip and tobacco is the only luxury we have any relish for: had we fine houses could we live in 'em? a greasy hammock has been our birth for these fifty years: fine horses, could we ride 'em? and as for the fair sex there, that my nephew makes such a pother about, I don't know what thou may'st think of the matter, Skiff, but for my own part, I should not care if there were no such animals in the creation.

SCENE X.

Enter IRONSIDES, SKIFF, *and* BELFIELD, *junior.*

Bel. jun. Uncle; what cheer, man?

Iron. Oh, Bob, is it thee? whither bound now, my dear boy?

Bel. jun. Why, how can you ask such a question? We have landed our treasure, saved all our friends, and set foot upon English ground, and what business think you can a young fellow like me have, but one?

Iron. Pshaw, you're a fool, Bob; these wenches will be the undoing of you; a plague of 'em altogether, say I; what are they good for, but to spoil company, and keep brave fellows from their duty? O' my conscience, they do more mischief to the king's navy in one twelvemonth, than the French have done in ten; a pack of—but I ha' done with 'em; thank the stars, I ha' fairly washed my hands of 'em, I ha' nothing to say to none of 'em.

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Skiff. Mercy be good unto us! that my wife could but hear your worship talk.

Bel. jun. Oh, my dear uncle——

Iron. But I'll veer away no more good advice after you, so even drive as you will under your petticoat-sails;—black, brown, fair, or tawney; 'tis all fish that comes in your net: why, where's your reason, Bob, all this here while? Where's your religion, and be damned to you?

Bel. jun. Come, come, my dear uncle, a truce to your philosophy. Go, throw your dollars into yonder ocean, and bribe the tempest to be still; you shall as soon reverse the operations of nature, as ween my heart from my Sophia.

Iron. Hold, hold, take me right; if by Sophia, you mean the daughter of Sir Benjamin Dove, I don't care if I make one with you; what say'st thou, boy, shall it be so?

Bel. jun. So then you think there may be one good woman, however?

Iron. Just as I think there may be one honest Dutchman, one sober German, or one righteous Methodist. Look'e, Bob, so I do but keep single, I have no objection to other people's marrying; but, on these occasions, I would manage myself as I would my ship; not by running her into every odd creek and cranny, in the smuggling fashion, as if I had no good credentials to produce; but play fairly, and in sight, d'ye see; and whenever a safe harbour opens, stand boldly in, boy, and lay her up snug, in a good birth, once for all.

Bel. jun. Come then, uncle, let us about it; and you may greatly favour my enterprize, since you can keep the father and mother in play, while I——

Iron. Avast, young man, avast; the father, if you please, without the mother; Sir Benjamin's a passable good companion, for a landman; but for my lady——I'll have nothing to say to my lady; she's his wife, thank the stars, and not mine.

Bel. jun. Be it as you will; I shall be glad of your company on any terms.

Iron. Say no more then. About ship; if you are bound for that port, I'm your mate:—master, look to the wreck, I'm for a fresh cruize. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—The outside of Sir Benjamin Dove's *House.*

Enter Belfield, *senior, and* Lucy Waters.

Lucy. What, don't I know you, hav'n't you been to me of all mankind the basest?

Bel. sen. Not yet, Lucy.

Lucy. Sure, Mr. Belfield, you wont pretend to deny it to my face.

Bel. sen. To thy face, child, I will not pretend that I can deny any thing; you are much too handsome to be contradicted.

Lucy. Pish!

Bel. sen. So! so!

Lucy. Hav'n't you, faithless as you are, promised me marriage over and over again?

Bel. sen. Repeatedly.

Lucy. And you have now engaged yourself to the daughter of Sir Benjamin Dove, have you not?

Bel. sen. Assuredly.

Lucy. Let me demand of you then, Mr. Belfield, since you had no honourable designs towards me yourself, why you prevented those of an humbler lover, young Philip, the son of your late tenant, poor Goodwin?

Bel. sen. For the very reason you state in your question; because I had no honourable designs, and he had; you disappointed my hopes, and I was resolved to defeat his.

Lucy. And this you thought reason sufficient to expel his father from your farm; to persecute him and his innocent family till you had accomplished their ruin, and driven them to the very brink of the ocean for their habitation and subsistence?

Bel. sen. Your questions, Miss Lucy, begin to be impertinent.

Lucy. Oh, do they touch you, Sir! but I'll waste no more time with you; my business is with your Sophia; here, in the very spot which you hope to make the scene of your guilty triumphs, will I expose you to her; set forth your inhuman conduct to your unhappy brother; and detect the mean artifices you have been driven to, in order to displace him in her affections.

Bel. sen. You will?

Lucy. I will, be assured; so let them pass.

Bel. sen. Stay, Lucy, understand yourself a little better; didn't you pretend to Sophia that my brother paid his addresses to you; that he had pledged himself to marry you; nay, that he had——

Lucy. Hold, Mr. Belfield, nor further explain a transaction, which, though it reflects shame enough upon me, that was your instrument, ought to cover you, who was principal in the crime, with treble confusion and remorse.

Bel. sen. True, child, it was rather a disreputable transaction; and 'tis therefore fit no part of it should rest with me: I shall disavow it altogether.

Lucy. Incredible confidence!

Bel. sen. We shall see who will meet most belief in the world, you or I; choose therefore your part: if you keep my secret, you make me your friend; if you betray it, you have me for your enemy; and a fatal one you shall find me. Now enter, if you think fit; there lies your way to Sophia. [*She goes into the house.*] So! how am I to parry this blow?—what plea shall I use with Sophia?—'twas the ardour of my love——any thing will find pardon with a woman, that conveys flattery to her charms.—After all, if the worst should happen, and I be defeated in this match, so shall I be saved from doing that, which, when done, 'tis probable I may repent of; and I have some intimations from within, which tell me that it will be so: I perceive that, in this life, he who is checked by the rubs of compunction, can never arrive at the summit of prosperity.

SCENE II.

Enter Belfield *senior, and* Paterson.

Pat. What, melancholy, Mr. Belfield? So near your happiness, and so full of thought?

Bel. sen. Happiness, what's that?

Pat. I'll tell you, Sir: the possession of a lovely girl, with fifty thousand pounds in her

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lap, and twice fifty thousand virtues in her mind; this I call happiness, as much as mortal man can merit; and this, as I take it, you are destined to enjoy.

Bel. sen. That is not so certain, Mr. Paterson; would you believe it, that perverse hussy, Lucy Waters, who left me but this minute, threatens to transverse all my hopes, and is gone this instant to Sophia with that resolution?

Pat. Impossible! how is Miss Waters provided or provoked to do this?

Bel. sen. Why, 'tis a foolish story, and scarce worth relating to you: but you know, when your letters called me home from Portugal, I found my younger brother in close attendance on Miss Dove; and, indeed, such good use had the fellow made of his time in my absence, that I found it impossible to counterwork his operations by fair and open approaches; so, to make short of the story, I took this girl, Lucy Waters, into patnership; and, by a happy device, ruined him with Sophia.

Pat. This, Mr. Belfield, I neither know, nor wish to know.

Bel. sen. Let it pass, then: defeated in these views, my brother, as you know, betook himself to the desperate course of privateering, with that old tar-barrel, my uncle; what may have been his fate, I know not, but I have found it convenient to propagate a report of his death.

Pat. I am sorry for it, Mr. Belfield; I wish nothing was convenient that can be thought dishonourable.

Bel. sen. Nature, Mr. Paterson, never put into a human composition more candour and credulity than she did into mine; but acquaintance with life has shown me how impracticable these principles are; to live with mankind, we must live like mankind: was it a world of honesty, I should blush to be a man of art.

Pat. And do you dream of ever reaching your journey's end by such crooked paths as these are?

Bel. sen. And yet, my most sage moralist, wonderful as it may seem to thee, true it is notwithstanding, that after having threaded all these by-ways and crooked alleys, which thy right-lined apprehension knows nothing of; after having driven my rival from the field, and being almost in possession of the spoil, still I feel a repugnance in me that almost tempts me to renounce my good fortune, and abandon a victory I have struggled so hard to obtain.

Pat. I guessed as much; 'tis your Violetta; 'tis your fair Portuguese that counterworks your good fortune; and, I most own to you, it was principally to save you from that improvident attachment, that I wrote so pressingly for your return; but though I have got your body in safe holding, your heart is still at Lisbon; and if you marry Miss Dove, 'tis because Violetta's fortune was demolished by the earthquake, and Sir Benjamin's stands safe upon *terra firma*.

Bel. sen. Pr'ythee Paterson, don't be too hard upon me: sure you don't suspect that I am married to Violetta.

Pat. Married to Violetta? Now you grow much too serious, and 'tis time to put an end to the discourse. [*Exit.*

Bel. sen. And you grow much too quick-sighted, Mr. Paterson, for my acquaintance. I think he does not quite suspect me of double dealing in this business; and yet I have my doubts; his reply to my question was equivocal, and his departure abrupt—I know not what to think——This I know, that love is a deity, and avarice a devil; that Violetta is my lawful wife, and that Andrew Belfield is a villain. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

PATERSON *passes over the Stage.*

Pat. All abroad this fine day—not a creature within doors.

Enter KITTY.

Kitty. Mr. Paterson! hist, Mr. Paterson, a word in your ear, sweet Sir.

Pat. Curse on't, she has caught me—Well, Mrs. Kitty.

Kitty. Why, I have been hunting you all the house over; my lady's impatient to see you.

Pat. Oh, I'm my Lady Dove's most obedient servant—And what are her ladyship's commands, pray?

Kitty. Fy, Mr. Paterson; how should I know what her ladyship wants with you; but a secret it is, no doubt, for she desires you to come to her immediately in the garden, at the bottom of the yew-tree walk, next the warren.

Pat. The devil she does!——What a pity it is, Mrs. Kitty, we can't cure your lady of this turn for solitude; I wish you would go with me; your company, probably, will divert her from her contemplations; besides, I shall certainly mistake the place.

Kitty. I go with you, Mr, Paterson! a fine thing truly: I'd have you to know that my character is not to be trusted with young fellows in yew-tree walks, whatever my lady may think of the matter——Besides, I've an assignation in another place. [*Exit.*

Pat. What a devilish dilemma am I in!—Why, this is a peremptory assignation—Certain it is, there are some ladies that no wise man should be commonly civil to——Here have I been flattering myself that I was stroaking a termagant into humour, and all the while have been betraying a tender victim into love—Love, love did I say? her ladyship's passion is a disgrace to the name—But what shall I do?—tis a pitiful thing to run away from a victory; but 'tis frequently the case in precipitate successes; we conquer more than we have wit to keep, or ability to enjoy. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.—*Changes to the Yew-tree Walk.*

Enter BELFIELD, *Junior.*

Bel. jun. Now could I but meet my Sophia—Where can she have hid herself?—Hush; Lady Dove, as I live.

Lady D. So, Mr. Paterson, you're a pretty gentleman to keep a lady waiting here: why, how you stand?—Come, come, I shall expect a

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handsome atonement for this indecorum—Why, what, let me look—Ah! who have we here!

Bel. jun. A man, Madam; and though not your man, yet one as honest and as secret: come, come, my lady, I'm no tell-tale; be you but grateful, this goes no further.

Lady D. Lost and undone: young Belfield!

Bel. jun. The same: but be not alarmed; we both have our secrets; I am, like you, a votary to love; favour but my virtuous passion for Miss Dove, and take you your Paterson; I shall be silent as the grave.

Lady D. Humph!

Bel. jun. Nay, never hesitate; my brother, I know, had your wishes: but wherein has Nature favoured him more than me? And, since Fortune has now made my scale as heavy as his, why should you partially direct the beam?

Lady D. Well, if it is so, and that you promise not to betray me——But this accident has so discomposed me, (plague on't, say I) don't press me any further at present; I must leave you; remember the condition of our agreement, and expect my friendship——Oh, I could tear your eyes out. [*Exit.*

Bel. jun. Well, Sir Benjamin, keep your own counsel, if you are wise; I'll do as I would be done by; had I such a wife as Lady Dove, I should be very happy to have such a friend as Mr. Paterson. [*Exit.*

SCENE V.

Enter SOPHIA DOVE *and* LUCY WATERS.

Lucy. If there is faith in woman, I have seen young Belfield; I have beheld his apparition; for what else could it be?

Soph. How? when? where? I shall faint with surprise.

Lucy. As I crossed the yew-tree walk, I saw him pass by the head of the canal towards the house. Alas! poor youth, the injuries I have done him have called him from his grave.

Soph. Injuries, Miss Waters! what injuries have you done him? Tell me; for therein, perhaps, I may be concerned.

Lucy. Deeply concerned you are; with the most penitent remorse I confess it to you, that his affections to you were pure, honest, and sincere. Yes, amiable Sophia, you was unrivalled in his esteem; and I, who persuaded you to the contrary, am the basest, the falsest of woman kind; every syllable I told you of his engagements to me was a malicious invention: how could you be so blind to your own superiority, to give credit to the imposition, and suffer him to depart without an explanation? Oh, that villain, that villain, his brother, has undone us all.

Soph. Villain, do you call him! Whither would you transport my imagination? You hurry me with such rapidity from one surprise to another, that I know not where to fix, how to act, or what to believe.

Lucy. Oh, Madam, he is a villain, a most accomplished one; and, if I can but snatch you from the snare he has spread for you, I hope it will in some measure atone for the injuries I have done to you and to that unhappy youth, who now——O Heavens! I see him again; he comes this way; I cannot endure his sight; alive or dead I must avoid him. [*Runs out.*

SCENE VI.

Enter BELFIELD *Junior.*

Bel. jun. Adorable Sophia! this transport overpays my labours.

Soph. Sir, Mr. Belfield, is it you? Oh, support me!——

Bel. jun. With my life, thou loveliest of women! Behold your poor adventurer is returned; happy past compute, if his fate is not indifferent to you; rich beyond measure if his safety is worthy your concern:

Soph. Release me, I beseech you: what have I done! Sure you are too generous to take advantage of my confusion.

Bel. jun. Pardon me, my Sophia; the advantages I take from your confusion are not to be purchased by the riches of the East; I would not forego the transport of holding you one minute in my arms for all that wealth and greatness have to give.

SCENE VII.

Enter LADY DOVE, *while* BELFIELD *Junior is kneeling and embracing* SOPHIA.

Lady D. Hey-day! what's here to do with you both?

Soph. Ha!—— [*Shrieks.*

Bel. jun. Confusion! Lady Dove here.

Lady D. Yes, Sir, Lady Dove is here, and will take care you shall have no more garden dialogues. On your knees too!——(The fellow was not half so civil to me.) Ridiculous! a poor beggarly swabber truly——As for you, Mrs.——

Bel. jun. Hold, Madam; as much of your fury and foul language as you please upon me; but not one hard word against that lady, or by Heavens!—

Lady D. Come, Sir, none of your reprobate swearing, none of your sea-noises here; I would my first husband was alive, I would he was, for your sake. I am surprised, Miss Dove, you have no more regard for your reputation; a delicate swain truly you have chosen, just thrown ashore from the pitchy bowels of a shipwrecked privateer. Go, go, get you in, for shame; your father shall know of these goings on, depend on't: as for you, Sir—— [*Exit* SOPHIA.

SCENE VIII.

As LADY DOVE *is going out,* BELFIELD *Jun. stops her.*

Bel. jun. A word with you, Madam; is this fair dealing? What would you have said, if I had broke in thus upon you and Mr. Paterson?

Lady D. Mr. Paterson! why, you rave; what is it you mean?

Bel. jun. Come, come, this is too ridiculous; you know your reputation is in my keeping; call to mind what passed between us awhile ago, and the engagement you are under on that account.

Lady D. Ha, ha, ha!

Bel. jun. Very well, truly; and you think to brave this matter out do you?

Lady D. Most assuredly; and shall make

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Sir Benjamin call you to account, if you dare to breathe a word against my reputation: incorrigible coxcomb! to think I would keep any terms with you after such an event. Take my word for it, Belfield, you are come home no wiser than you went out: you missed the only advantage you might have taken of that rencounter, and now I set you at defiance: take heed to what you say, or look to hear from Sir Benjamin.

Bel. jun. Oh, no doubt on't: how can Sir Benjamin avoid fighting for your sake, when your ladyship has so liberally equipped him with weapons? [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE IX.—*A Hall.*

Enter JONATHAN *and* FRANCIS.

Jon. And so, Sir, 'tis just as I tell you; every thing in this family goes according to the will of the lady: for my own part, I am one of those that hate trouble; I swim with the stream, and make my place as easy as I can.

Fran. Your looks, Mr. Jonathan, convince me that you live at your ease.

Jon. I do so; and therefore, (in spite of the old proverb, 'Like master, like man') you never saw two people more different than I and Sir Benjamin Dove. He, Lord help him, is a little peaking, puling thing; I am a jolly, portable man, as you see. It so happened that we both became widowers at the same time; I knew when I was well, and have continued single ever since. He fell into the clutches of——Hark, sure I hear my lady——

Fran. No, it was nothing. When did the poor gentleman light upon this termagant?

Jon. Lackaday, 'twas here at the borough of Knavestown, when master had the great contest with 'Squire Belfield, about three years ago: her first husband, Mr. Searcher, was a king's messenger, as they call it, and came down express from a great man about court during the poll; he caught a surfeit, as ill luck would have it, at the election dinner: and, before he died, his wife, that's now my lady, came down to see him; then it was, master fell in love with her: egad, 'twas the unluckiest job of all his life.

Sir B. [*Calls without.*] Jonathan! why Jonathan!

Fran. Hark, you are called.

Jon. Ay, ay, 'tis only my master; my lady tells the servants not to mind what Sir Benjamin says, and I love to do as I'm bid.

Fran. Well, honest Jonathan, if you wont move I must; by this time I hope my young master is happy with your young mistress.

[*Exit.*

SCENE X.

Enter SIR BENJAMIN DOVE.

Sir B. Why, Jonathan, I say. Oh, are you here. Why couldn't you come when I called you?

Jon. Lackaday, Sir, you don't consider how much easier it is for you to call than me to come.

Sir B. I think, honest Jonathan, when I first knew you, you was a parish orphan; I 'prenticed you out; you ran away from your master; I took you into my family; you married; I set you up in a farm of my own, stocked it; you paid me no rent: I received you again into my service, or rather, I should say, my lady's. Are these things so, or does my memory fail me, Jonathan?

Jon. Why, to be sure, I partly remember somewhat of what your worship mentions.

Sir B. If you partly remember something of all this, Jonathan, don't entirely forget to come when I call.

Iron. [*Without.*] Hoy there! within! what nobody stirring! all hands asleep! all under the hatches!

Sir B. Hey-day, who the dickens have we got here?—Old Captain Ironsides as I'm a sinner, who could have thought of this?—Run to the door, good Jonathan—nay, hold, there's no escaping now:——What will become of me?—he'll ruin every thing; and throw the whole house into confusion.

Enter CAPTAIN IRONSIDES.

Iron. What, Sir Ben! my little knight of Malta! give me a buss, my boy. Hold, hold, sure I'm out of my reckoning: let me look a little nearer; why, what mishap has befallen you, that you heave out these signals of distress.

Sir B. I'm heartily glad to see thee, my old friend; but a truce to your sea-phrases, for I don't understand them. What signals of distress have I about me?

Iron. Why, that white flag there at your main top-mast head: in plain English, what dost do with that clout about thy pate?

Sir B. Clout do you call it? 'Tis a little *en dishabille*, indeed: but there's nothing extraordinary, I take it, in a man's wearing his gown and cap in a morning; 'tis the dress I usually choose to study in.

Iron. And this hall is your library, is it? Ah! my old friend, my old friend. But, come, I want to have a little chat with you, and thought to have dropped in at pudding-time, as they say; for though it may be morning with thee, Sir Ben, 'tis mid-day with the rest of the world.

Sir B. Indeed, is it so late?——But I was fallen upon an agreeable *tête à tête* with Lady Dove, and hardly knew how the time passed.

Iron. Come, come, 'tis very clear how your time has passed; but what occasion is there for this fellow's being privy to our conversation—Why don't the lubber stir? What does the fat lazy oaf stand staring at?

Sir B. What shall I say now?——Was ever any thing so distressing?——Why, that's Jonathan, captain; don't you remember your old friend Jonathan?

Jon. I hope your honour's in good health; I'm glad to see your honour come home again.

Iron. Honest Jonathan, I came to visit your master, and not you; if you'll go and hasten dinner, and bring Sir Benjamin his periwig and clothes, you'll do me a very acceptable piece of service; for to tell you the truth, my friend, I hav'n't had a comfortable meal of fresh provision this many a day.

[*Exit* JONATHAN.

Sir B. 'Foregad, you're come to the wrong house to find one. [*Aside.*

Iron. And so, Sir Knight, knowing I was welcome, and having met with a mishap here, upon your coast, I am come to taste your good

cheer, and pass an evening with you over a tiff of punch.

Sir B. The devil you are! [*Aside*]—This is very kind of you: there is no man in England, Captain Ironsides, better pleased to see his friends about him than I am.

Iron. Ay, ay, if I didn't think I was welcome, I shouldn't ha' come.

Sir B. You may be assured you are welcome.

Iron. I am assured.

Sir B. You are, by my soul: take my word for it, you are.

Iron. Well, well, what need of all this ceremony about a meal's meat? Who doubts you?

Sir B. You need not doubt me, believe it: I'll only step out, and ask my lady what time she has ordered dinner; or whether she has made any engagement I'm not apprized of.

Iron. No, no; engagement!——How can that be, and you in this pickle?——Come, come, sit down; dinner wont come the quicker for your enquiry: and now tell me how does my god-daughter Sophia?

Sir B. Thank you, heartily, captain, my daughter's well in health.

Iron. That's well, and how fares your fine new wife?——How goes on matrimony?——Fond as ever, my little amorous Dove; always billing, always cooing?

Sir B. No, captain, no; we are totally altered in that respect: we show no fondness now before company; my lady is so delicate in that particular, that, from the little notice she takes of me in public, you would scarce believe we were man and wife.

Iron. Ha, ha, ha! why, 'tis the very circumstance that would confirm it; but I'm glad to hear it; for of all things under the sun, I most nauseate your nuptial familiarities: and though you remember I was fool enough to dissuade you from this match, I'm rejoiced to hear that you manage so well and so wisely.

Sir B. No man happier in this life, captain, no man happier; one thing is only wanting; had the kind stars but crowned our endearments——

Iron. What, my lady don't breed then?

Sir B. Hush, hush! for Heaven's sake, don't speak so loud; should my lady overhear you, it might put strange things into her head;—oh! she is a lady of delicate spirits; tender nerves, quite weak and tender nerves; a small matter throws her down; gentle as a lamb; starts at a straw; speak loud, and it destroys her: oh! my friend, you are not used to deal with women's constitutions; these hypochondriac cases require a deal of management: 'tis but charity to humour them, and you cannot think what pains it requires to keep them always quiet and in temper.

Iron. Ay, like enough, but here comes my lady, and in excellent temper, if her looks don't belie her.

SCENE XI.

Enter LADY DOVE.

Lady D. What's to do now, Sir Benjamin?—What's the matter that you send for your clothes in such a hurry? Can't you be contented to remain as you are? Your present dress is well enough to stay at home in, and I don't know that you have any call out of doors.

Iron. Gentle as a lamb, Sir Benjamin.

Sir B. This attention of yours, my dear, is beyond measure flattering! I am infinitely beholden to you; but you are so taken up with your concern on my account, that you overlook our old friend and neighbour, Captain Ironsides.

Lady D. Sir Benjamin, you make yourself quite ridiculous: this folly is not to be endured: you are enough to tire the patience of any woman living.

Sir B. She's quite discomposed, all in a flutter for fear I should take cold by changing my dress.

Iron. Yes, I perceive she has exceeding weak nerves. You are much in the right to humour her.

Lady D. Sir Benjamin Dove, if you mean that I should stay a minute longer in this house, I insist upon your turning that old porpoise out of it: is it not enough to bring your nauseous sea companions within these doors, but must I be compelled to entertain 'em? Foh! I shan't get the scent of his tar-jacket out of my nostrils this fortnight.

Sir B. Hush, my dear lady Dove, for Heaven's sake, don't shame and expose me in this manner; how can I possibly turn an honest gentleman out of my doors, who has given me no offence in life?

Lady D. Marry, but he has though, and great offence too; I tell you, Sir Benjamin, you are made a fool of.

Sir B. Nay; now, my dear sweet love, be composed.

Lady D. Yes, forsooth, and let a young rambling raking prodigal run away with your daughter.

Sir B. How! what?

Lady D. A fine thing, truly, to be composed——

Iron. Who is it your ladyship suspects of such a design?

Lady D. Who, Sir? why, who but your nephew Robert. You flattered us with a false hope he was dead; but, to our sorrow, we find him alive, and returned; and now you are cajoling this poor simple, unthinking man, while your wild Indian, your savage there, is making off with his daughter.

Sir B. Mercy on us! what am I to think of all this?

Iron. What are you to think! Why, that it's a lie; that you're an ass; and that your wife is a termagant. My nephew is a lad of honour, and scorns to run away with any man's daughter, or wife either, though, I think, there's little danger of that here—As for me, sooner than mess with such a vixen, I'd starve: and, so, Sir Benjamin, I wish you a good stomach to your dinner. [*Exit.*

SCENE XII.

SIR BENJAMIN DOVE, *and* LADY DOVE.

Lady D. Insolent, unmannerly Brute, was ever the like heard? And you to stand tamely by: I declare I've a great mind to raise the servants upon him, since I have no other defenders. Thus am I for ever treated by your scurvy companions.

Sir B. Be pacified, my dear; am I in fault

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But for Heaven's sake, what is become of my daughter?

Lady D. Yes, you can think of your daughter; but she is safe enough for this turn; I have taken care of her for one while, and thus I am rewarded for it. Am I a vixen, am I a termagant? Oh, had my first husband, had my poor, dear, dead Mr. Searcher heard such a word, he would have rattled him——But he—What do I talk of? he was a man: yes, yes, he was, indeed, a man——As for you——

Sir B. Strain the comparison no farther, Lady Dove; there are particulars, I dare say, in which I fall short of Mr. Searcher.

Lady D. Short of him! I'll tell you what, Sir Benjamin, I valued the dear greyhound that hung at his button-hole more than I do all the foolish trinkets your vanity has lavished on me.

Sir B. Your ladyship, doubtless, was the paragon of wives: I well remember, when the poor man laid ill at my borough of Knavestown, how you came flying on the wings of love, by the Exeter waggon, to visit him before he died.

Lady D. I understand your sneer, Sir, and I despise it: there is one condition only upon which you may regain my forfeited opinion; young Belfield, who, with this old fellow, has designs in hand of a dangerous nature, has treated me with an indignity still greater than what you have now been a witness to. Show yourself a man upon this occasion, Sir Benjamin.

Sir B. Any thing, dearest, for peace sake.

Lady D. Peace sake! It is war, and not peace, which I require——But come, if you will walk this way, I'll lay the matter open to you. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—The Sea-Shore before GOODWIN'S *Cabin.*

Enter VIOLETTA *and* FANNY.

Vio. And when is this great match of Mr. Belfield's to be?

Fanny. Alas! Madam, we look to hear of it every day.

Vio. You seem to consider this event, child, as a mifortune to yourself: however others may be affected by Mr. Belfield's marrying Miss Dove, to you I conceive it must be matter of indifference.

Fanny. I have been taught, Madam, to consider no event as matter of indifference to me, by which good people are made unhappy. Miss Sophy is the best young lady living; Mr. Belfield is——

Vio. Hold, Fanny; do step into the house; in my writing-box you will find a letter sealed, but without a direction; bring it to me. [*Exit* FANNY.] I have been writing to this base man, for I want fortitude to support an interview. What, if I unbosomed myself to this girl, and intrusted the letter to her conveyance? She seems exceedingly honest, and, for one of so mean a condition, uncommonly sensible; I think I may safely confide in her.——Well, Fanny.

Enter FANNY.

Fanny. Here is your letter, Madam.

Vio. I thank you; I trouble you too much; but thou art a good-natured girl, and your attention to me shall not go unrewarded.

Fanny. I am happy to wait upon you; I wish I could do or say any thing to divert you; but my discourse can't be very amusing to a lady of your sort; and talking of this wedding seems to have made you more melancholy than you was before.

Vio. Come hither, child; you have remarked my disquietude, I will now disclose to you the occasion of it: you seem interested for Miss Dove; I too am touched with her situation: you tell me she is the best young lady living.

Fanny. Oh! Madam, if it were possible for an angel to take a human shape, she must be one.

Vio. 'Tis very well; I commend your zeal; you are speaking now of the qualities of her mind.

Fanny. Not of them alone; she has not only the virtues, but the beauties of an angel.

Vio. Indeed? Pray tell me, is she so very handsome?

Fanny. As fine a person as you could wish to see.

Vio. Tall?

Fanny. About your size, or rather taller.

Vio. Fair, or dark complexion?

Fanny. Of a most lovely complexion, 'tis her greatest beauty, and all pure nature, I'll be answerable; then her eyes are so soft, and so smiling; and, as for her hair——

Vio. Hey-day! why, where are you rambling, child? I am satisfied; I make no doubt she is a consummate beauty, and that Mr. Belfield loves her to distraction. [*Aside.*] I don't like this girl so well as I did; she is a great talker; I am glad I did not disclose my mind to her; I'll go in and determine on some expedient. [*Exit.*

Fanny. Alas! poor lady! as sure as can be she has been crossed in love: nothing in this world besides could make her so miserable; but sure I see Mr. Francis; if falling in love leads to such misfortunes, 'tis fit I should get out of his way. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

Enter FRANCIS *and* PHILIP.

Fran. Wasn't that your sister, Philip, that ran into the cabin.

Phil. I think it was.

Fran. You've made a good day's work on't: the weather coming about so fair, I think we've scarce lost any thing of value but the ship. Didn't you meet the old captain as you came down to the creek?

Phil. I did; he has been at Sir Benjamin Dove's here, at Cropley Castle, and is come back in a curious humour.

Fran. So! so! I attended my young master thither at the same time; how came they not to return together?

Phil. That I can't tell.—Come, let's go in and refresh ourselves. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

Enter SOPHIA DOVE *and* LUCY WATERS.

Soph. Indeed, and indeed, Miss Lucy Waters, these are strong facts which you tell

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me; and I do believe, no prudent woman would engage with a man of Mr. Andrew Belfield's disposition: but what course am I to follow; and how am I to extricate myself from the embarrassments of my situation?

Lucy. Truly, Madam, you have but one refuge that I know of.

Soph. And that lies in the arms of a young adventurer. O Lucy, Lucy, this is a flattering prescription; calculated rather to humour the patient, than to remove the disease.

Lucy. Nay, but if there is a necessity for your taking this step——

Soph. Ay, necessity is grown strangely commodious of late, and always compels us to do the very thing we have most a mind to.

Lucy. Well, Madam, but common humanity to young Mr. Belfield——You must allow he has been hardly treated.

Soph. By me, Lucy?

Lucy. Madam!—No, Madam, not by you; but 'tis charity to heal the wounded, though you have not been a party in the fray.

Soph. I grant you!—You are a true female philosopher; you would let charity recommend you a husband, and a husband recommend you to charity—But I wont reason upon the matter; at least, not in the humour I am in now; nor at this particular time: no, Lucy, nor in this particular spot; for here it was, at this very hour yesterday evening, young Belfield surprised me.

Lucy. And see, Madam, punctual to the same lucky moment he comes again; let him plead his own cause; you need fear no interruption; my lady has too agreeable an engagement of her own, to endeavour at disturbing those of other people. [*Exit* Lucy.

SCENE IV.

Enter Belfield *Junior*.

Bel. jun. Have I then found thee, loveliest of women? O! Sophia, report has struck me to the heart; if, as I am told, to-morrow gives you to my brother, this is the last time I am ever to behold you.

Soph. Why so, Mr. Belfield! Why should our separation be a necessary consequence of our alliance?

Bel. jun. Because I have been ambitious, and cannot survive the pangs of dissappointments.

Soph. Alas, poor man! but you know where to bury your disappointments; the sea is still open to you; and take my word for it, Mr. Belfield, the man who can live three years, ay, or three months, in separation from the woman of his heart, need be under no apprehensions for his life, let what will befall her.

Bel. jun. Cruel, insulting Sophia! when I last parted from you, I flattered myself I had left some impression on your heart——But in every event of my life, I meet a base, injurious brother; the everlasting bar to my happiness—I can support it no longer; and Mr. Belfield, Madam, never can, never shall be yours.

Soph. How, Sir! never shall be mine? What do you tell me? There is but that man on earth with whom I can be happy; and if my fate is such, that he is never to be mine, the world, and all that it contains, will for ever after be indifferent to me.

Bel. jun. I have heard enough; farewell.

Soph. Farewell, sagacious Mr. Belfield; the next fond female, who thus openly declares herself to you, will I hope, meet with a more gallant reception than I have done.

Bel. jun. How, what! is't possible? O Heavens!

Soph. What, you've discovered it at last? Oh, fy upon you!

Bel. jun. Thus, thus, let me embrace my unexpected blessing: come to my heart, my fond, o'erflowing heart, and tell me once again that my Sophia will be only mine.

Soph. O man, man! all despondency one moment, all rapture the next. No question now, but you conceive every difficulty surmounted, and that we have nothing to do but to run into each other's arms, make a fashionable elopement, and be happy for life: and I must own to you, Belfield, was there no other condition of our union, even this project should not deter me; but I have better hopes, provided you will be pilotted by me; for believe me, my good friend, I am better acquainted with this coast than you are.

Bel. jun. I doubt not your discretion, and shall implicitly surrender myself to your guidance.

Soph. Give me a proof of it then, by retreating from this place immediately: 'tis my father's hour for walking, and I would not have you meet! besides, your brother is expected.

Bel. jun. Ay, that brother, my Sophia, that brother, brings vexation and regret whenever he is named; but I hope I need not dread a second injury in your esteem; and yet, I know not how it is, but if I were addicted to superstition——

Soph. And if I were addicted to anger, I should quarrel with you for not obeying my injunctions with more readiness.

Bel. jun. I will obey thee, and yet 'tis difficult—Those lips which have thus blest me, cannot dismiss me without——

Soph. Nay, Mr. Belfield, don't you——well then——Mercy upon us! who's coming here?

Bel. jun. How—oh, yes! never fear; 'tis a friend; 'tis Violetta; 'tis a lady that I——

Soph. That you what, Mr. Belfield?—What lady is it? I never saw her in my life before.

Bel. jun. No, she is a foreigner, born in Portugal, though of an English family; the packet in which she was coming to England, foundered along-side of our ship, and I was the instrument of saving her life: I interest myself much in her happiness, and I beseech you, for my sake to be kind to her. [*Exit*.

Soph. He interests himself much in her happiness; he beseeches me, for his sake, to be kind to her——What am I to judge of all this?

SCENE V.

Enter Violetta.

Vio. Madam, I ask pardon for this intrusion; but I have business with you of a nature that——I presume I'm not mistaken; you are the young lady I have been directed to, the daughter of Sir Benjamin Dove?

Soph. I am, Madam; but wont you please to repose yourself in the house? I understand you are a stranger in this country. May I beg to know what commands you have for me? Mr. Belfield has made me acquainted with

some circumstances relative to your story: and, for his sake, Madam, I shall be proud to render you any service in my power.

Vio. For Mr. Belfield's sake, did you say, Madam? Has Mr. Belfield named me to you, Madam?

Soph. Is there any wonder in that, pray?

Vio. No, none at all. In any man else such confidence would surprise me; but in Mr. Belfield 'tis natural; there is no wondering at what he does.

Soph. You must pardon me: I find we think differently of Mr. Belfield. He left me but this minute, and in the kindest terms recommended you to my friendship.

Vio. 'Twas he then that parted from you as I came up—I thought so; but I was too much agitated to observe him—and I am confident he is too guilty to dare to look upon me.

Soph. Why so, Madam? For Heaven's sake, inform me what injuries you have received from Mr. Belfield; I must own to you I am much interested in finding him to be a man of honour.

Vio. I know your situation, Madam, and I pity it. Providence has sent me here, in time, to save you, and to tell you——

Soph. What? To tell me what? Oh! speak, or I shall sink with apprehension.

Vio. To tell you, that he is——my husband.

Soph. Husband! your husband? What do I hear? Ungenerous, base, deceitful Belfield! I thought he seemed confounded at your appearance; every thing confirms his treachery: and I cannot doubt the truth of what you tell me.

Vio. A truth it is, Madam, that I must ever reflect on with the most sorrowful regret.

Soph. Come, let me beg you to walk towards the house: I ask no account of this transaction of Mr. Belfield's: I would fain banish his name from my memory for ever, and you shall this instant be a witness to his peremptory dismission. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.

Enter BELFIELD, *Junior, and* PATERSON.

Bel. jun. And so, Sir, these are her ladyship's commands, are they?

Pat. This is what I am commissioned by Lady Dove to tell you: what report shall I make to her?

Bel. jun. Even what you please, Mr. Paterson; mould it and model it to your liking; put as many palliatives as you think proper, to sweeten it to her ladyship's taste; so you do but give her to understand that I neither can nor will abandon my Sophia.—Cease to think of her, indeed!—What earthly power can exclude her idea from my thoughts? I am surprised Lady Dove should think of sending me such a message; and I wonder, Sir, that you should consent to bring it.

Pat. Sir!

Bel. jun. Nay, Mr. Paterson, don't assume such a menacing air; nor practise on my temper too far in this business: I know both your situation and my own: consider, Sir, mine is a cause that would animate the most dastardly spirit; yours is enough to damp the most courageous. [*Exit.*

Pat. A very short and sententious gentleman: but there is truth in his remark; mine is but a sorry commission, after all; the man's in the right to fight for his mistress; she is worth the venture: and if there were no way else to get quit of mine, I should be in the right to fight too; egad, I don't see why aversion shouldn't make me as desperate as love makes him. Hell and fury! here comes my Venus.

SCENE VII.

Enter LADY DOVE.

Lady D. Well, Paterson, what says the fellow to my message?

Pat. Says, Madam! I'm ashamed to tell you what he says: he's the arrantest boatswain that ever I conversed with.

Lady D. But tell me what he says.

Pat. Every thing that scandal and scurrility can utter against you.

Lady D. Against me! What could he say against me?

Pat. Modesty forbids me to tell you.

Lady D. Oh, the vile reprobate! I, that have been so guarded in my conduct, so discreet in my partialities, as to keep 'em secret, even from my own husband; but I hope he didn't venture to abuse my person.

Pat. No, Madam, no; had he proceeded to such lengths, I couldn't in honour have put up with it: I hope I have more spirit than to suffer any reflection upon your ladyship's personal accomplishments.

Lady D. Well; but did you say nothing in defence of my reputation?

Pat. Nothing.

Lady D. No!

Pat. Not a syllable. Trust me for that: 'tis the wisest way, upon all tender topics to be silent; for he who takes upon him to defend a lady's reputation, only publishes her favours to the world: and, therefore, I would always leave that office to a husband.

Lady D. 'Tis true; and, if Sir Benjamin had any heart——

Pat. Come, come, my dear lady, don't be too severe upon Sir Benjamin; many men of no better appearance than Sir Benjamin have shown themselves perfect heroes: I know a whole family, that, with the limbs of ladies, have the hearts of lions.——Who can tell but your husband may be one of this sort?

Lady D. Ah!——

Pat. Well, but try him; tell him how you have been used, and see what his spirit will prompt him to do.——Apropos! here the little gentleman comes; if he wont fight, 'tis but what you expect; if he will, who can tell where a lucky arrow may hit? [*Exit.*

SCENE VIII.

Enter SIR BENJAMIN DOVE.

Lady D. Sir Benjamin, I want to have a little discourse in private with you.

Sir B. With me, my lady?

Lady D. With you, Sir Benjamin: 'tis upon a matter of a very serious nature: pray sit down by me. I don't know how it is, my dear,

but I have observed of late, with much concern, a great abatement in your regard for me.

Sir B. Oh, fy, my lady, why do you think so? What reason have you for so unkind a suspicion?

Lady D. 'Tis in vain for you to deny it; I am convinced you have done loving me.

Sir B. Well, now, I vow, my dear, as I am a sinner, you do me wrong.

Lady D. Look'e, Sir Benjamin, love like mine is apt to be quick-sighted; and I am persuaded, I am not deceived in my observation.

Sir B. Indeed, and indeed, my Lady Dove, you accuse me wrongfully.

Lady D. Mistake me not, my dear; I do not accuse you, I accuse myself; I am sensible there are faults and imperfections in my temper.

Sir B. Oh! trifles, my dear; mere trifles.

Lady D. Come, come, I know you have led but an uncomfortable life of late; and, I am afraid, I have been innocently, in some degree, the cause of it.

Sir B. Far be it from me to contradict your ladyship, if you are pleased to say so.

Lady D. I am sure it has been as I say; my over-fondness for you has been troublesome and vexatious: you hate confinement, I know you do; you are a man of spirit, and formed to figure in the world.

Sir B. Oh! you flatter me.

Lady D. Nay, nay, there's no disguising it; you sigh for action; your looks declare it: this alteration in your habit and appearance puts it out of doubt; there is a certain quickness in your eye; 'twas the first symptom that attracted my regards; and I am mistaken, Sir Benjamin, if you don't possess as much courage as any man.

Sir B. Your ladyship does me honour.

Lady D. I do you justice, Sir Benjamin.

Sir B. Why, I believe, for the matter of courage, I have as much as my neighbours; but 'tis of a strange, perverse quality; for as some spirits rise with the difficulties they have to encounter, my courage, on the contrary, is always greatest, when there is least call for it.

Lady D. Oh! you shall never make me believe this, Sir Benjamin: you couldn't bear to see me ill used, I'm positive you couldn't.

Sir B. 'Tis as well, however, not to be too sure of that. [*Aside.*

Lady D. You couldn't be so mean-spirited, as to stand by and hear your poor dear wife abused and insulted, and——

Sir B. Oh! no, by no means, 'twould break my heart; but who has abused you, and insulted you, and——

Lady D. Who? why, this young Belfield that I told you of.

Sir B. Oh, never listen to him; a woman of your years should have more sense than to mind what such idle, young fleerers can say of you.

Lady D. [*Rising.*] My years, Sir Benjamin! —Why, you are more intolerable than he is; but let him take his course; let him run away with your daughter; it shall be no further concern of mine to prevent him.

Sir B. No, my dear, I have done that effectually.

Lady D. How so, pray?

Sir B. By taking care he sha'n't run away with my estate at the same time. Some people lock their daughters up to prevent their eloping; I've gone a wiser way to work with mine, let her go loose, and locked up her fortune.

Lady D. And, o' my conscience I believe you mean to do the same by your wife; turn her loose upon the world, as you do your daughter; leave her to the mercy of every freebooter; let her be vilified and abused; her honour, her reputation, mangled and torn by every paltry privateering fellow that fortune casts upon your coasts.

Sir B. Hold, my lady, hold! young Belfield didn't glance at your reputation, I hope; did he?

Lady D. Indeed but he did though, and therein I think every wife has a title to her husband's protection.

Sir B. True, my dear, 'tis our duty to plead, but yours to provide us with the brief.

Lady D. There are some insults, Sir Benjamin, that no man of spirit ought to put up with; and the imputation of being made a wittol of, is the most unpardonable of any.

Sir B. Right, my dear, even truth you know is not to be spoke at all times.

Lady D. How, Sir, would you insinuate any thing to the disparagement of my fidelity? But choose your side, quarrel you must, either with him or with me.

Sir B. Oh! if that's the alternative, what a deal of time have we wasted!——Step with me into my library, and I'll pen him a challenge immediately. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—The Cabin, with a view of the sea, as before.

Enter PHILIP *and* LUCY WATERS.

Phil. How I have loved you, Lucy, and what I have suffered on your account, you know well enough; and you shouldn't now, when I am struggling to forget you, come to put me in mind of past afflictions: go, go, leave me: I pray you leave me.

Lucy. Nay, Philip, but hear me.

Phil. Hear you, ungrateful girl; you know it has been all my delight to hear you, to see you, and to sit by your side; for hours I have done it; for whole days together: but those days are past; I must now labour for my livelihood; and, if you rob me of my time, you wrong me of my subsistence.

Lucy. O! Philip, I am undone if you don't protect me.

Phil. Ah! Lucy, that, I fear, is past prevention.

Lucy. No, Philip, no, I am innocent; and therefore, persecuted by the most criminal of men: I have disclosed all Mr. Belfield's artifices to Miss Sophia, and now am terrified to death; I saw him follow me out of the Park, as I was coming hither, and I dare not return home alone; indeed, Philip, I dare not.

Phil. Well, Lucy, step in with me, and fear nothing: I see the 'squire is coming—He who can refuse his protection to a woman, may he never taste the blessings a woman can bestow! [*Exeunt.*

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SCENE II.

Enter BELFIELD, *Senior.*

Bel. sen. Ay, 'tis she! Confusion follow her! How perversely has she traversed my projects with Sophia!—By all that's resolute, I'll be revenged.—My brother too returned——Vexatious circumstance! there am I foiled again——Since first I stepped out of the path of honour, what have I obtained?—O treachery! treachery! if thou canst not in this world make us happy, better have remained that dull formal thing, an honest man, and trusted to what the future might produce.

Enter PHILIP.

Bel. sen. So, fellow, who are you?

Phil. A man, Sir; an honest man.

Bel. sen. A saucy one, methinks.

Phil. The injurious are apt to think so; however, I ask pardon: as your riches make you too proud, my honesty perhaps makes me too bold.

Bel. sen. O! I know you now; you are son to that old fellow I thought proper to discharge from my farm; please to betake yourself from the door of your cabin; there's a young woman within I must have a word with.

Phil. If 'tis Lucy Waters you would speak with——

Bel. sen. If, rascal! It is Lucy Waters that I would speak with; that I will speak with; and, in spite of your insolence, compel to answer whatever I please to ask, and go with me wherever I please to carry her.

Phil. Then, Sir, I must tell you, poor as I am, she is under my protection: you see, Sir, I am armed; you have no right to force an entrance here; and, while I have life you never shall.

Bel. sen. Then be it at your peril, villain, if you oppose me. [*They fight.*

Enter PATERSON, *who beats down their swords.*

Pat. For shame, Mr. Belfield! what are you about? Tilting with this peasant.

Bel. sen. Paterson, stand off.

Pat. Come, come, put up your sword.

Bel. sen. Damnation, Sir! what do you mean? Do you turn against me?—Give way, or by my soul, I'll run you through.

Enter CAPTAIN IRONSIDES *and* SKIFF.

Iron. Hey-day, what the devil ails you all? I thought the whole ship's company had sprung a mutiny.——Master and I were taking a nap together for good fellowship; and you make such a damned clattering and clashing, there's no sleeping in peace for you.

Bel. sen. Come, Mr. Paterson, will you please to bear me company, or stay with your new acquaintance?

Iron. Oh ho! my righteous nephew, is it you that are kicking up this riot? Why, you ungracious profligate, would you murder an honest lad in the door of his own house?—his castle—his castellum——Are these your fresh water tricks?

Bel. sen. Your language, Captain Ironsides, savours strongly of your profession; and I hold both you, your occupation, and opinion, equally vulgar and contemptible.

Pat. Come, Mr. Belfield come: for Heaven's sake let us go home.

Iron. My profession! Why, what have you to say to my profession, you unsanctified whelp you? I hope, 'tis an honest vocation to fight the enemies of one's country; you, it seems, are for murdering the friends; I trust, it is not for such a skip-jack as thee art to fleer at my profession. Master, did'st ever hear the like?

Skiff. Never, captain, never; for my own part, I am one of few words; but, for my own part, I always thought, that to be a brave seaman, like your honour, was the greatest title an Englishman can wear.

Iron. Why so it is, Skiff: ahem!

Bel. sen. Well, Sir, I leave you to the enjoyment of your honours; so your servant. Sirrah, I shall find a time for you.

[BELFIELD *is going out.*

Iron. Hark'e, Sir, come back, one more word with you.

Bel. sen. Well, Sir——

Iron. Your father was an honest gentleman; your mother, though I say it that should not say it, was an angel; my eyes ache when I speak of her: ar'n't you ashamed, sirrah, to disgrace such parents? My nephew Bob, your brother, is as honest a lad, and as brave, as ever stepped between stem and stern; a' has a few faults indeed, as who is free? But, you, Andrew, you are as false as a quick-sand, and as full of mischief as a fire-ship.

Bel. sen. Captain Ironsides, I have but little time to bestow on you; if you have nothing else to entertain me with, the sooner we part the better.

Iron. No, Sir, one thing more, and I have done with you; they tell me you're the parliament-man here for the borough of Knavestown: the Lord have mercy upon the nation, when such fellows as thou art are to be our law-makers——For my own part, I can shift; I'll take shipping, and live in Lapland, and be dry-nurse to a bear, rather than dwell in a country where I am to be governed by such a thing as thou art.

Bel. sen. By your manners I should guess you had executed that office already: however, lose no time, fit out a new charming Sally, and set sail for Lapland: 'tis the properest place for you to live in, and a bear the fittest company for you to keep.

[*Exeunt* BELFIELD *and* PATERSON.

Iron. Hark'e, Philip, I forget to ask what all this stir was about?

Phil. Sir, if you please to walk in, I will inform you.

Iron. With all my heart. A pragmatical, impertinent coxcomb! Come, master, we'll fill a pipe, and hear the lad's story within doors. I never yet was ashamed of my profession, and I'll take care my profession shall have no reason to be ashamed of me. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

Enter BELFIELD *Junior, and* SOPHIA.

Bel. jun. Madam, Madam, will you not vouchsafe to give me a hearing?

Soph. Unless you could recall an act no

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earthly power can cancel, all attempt at explanation is vain.

Bel. jun. Yet, before we part for ever, obstinate, inexorable Sophia, tell me what is my offence.

Soph. Answer yourself that question, M.. Belfield; consult your own heart, consult your Violetta.

Bel. jun. Now, on my life, she's meanly jealous of Violetta; that grateful woman has been warm in her commendations of me, and her distempered fancy turns that candour into criminality.

Soph. Ha! he seems confounded! guilty beyond all doubt.

Bel. jun. By Heaven I'll no longer be the dupe to these bad humours; Lucy Waters, Violetta, every woman she sees or hears, alarms her jealousy, overthrows my hopes, and rouses every passion into fury. Well, Madam, at length I see what you allude to; I shall follow your advice, and consult my Violetta; nay, more, consult my happiness; for with her, at least, I shall find repose; with you, I plainly see, there can be none.

Soph. 'Tis very well, Sir; the only favour you can now grant me is, never to let me see you again; for after what has passed between us, every time you intrude into my company, you will commit an insult upon good-breeding and humanity.

Bel. jun. Madam, I'll take care to give you no further offence. [*Exit.*

Soph. Oh! my poor heart will break!

SCENE IV.

Enter SIR BENJAMIN DOVE.

Sir B. Hey-day, Sophia, what's the matter? What ails my child? Who has offended you? Did not I see the younger Belfield part from you just now?

Soph. O, Sir! if you have any love for me, don't name that base, treacherous wretch to me any more. [*Exit.*

Sir B. Upon my word, I am young Mr. Belfield's most obsequious servant: a very notable confusion, truly, has he been pleased to make in my family. Lady Dove raves, Sophia cries; my wife calls him a saucy impudent fellow; my daughter says he's a base treacherous wretch: from all which I am to conclude, that he has spoke too plain truths to the one, and told too many lies to the other; one lady is irritated because he has refused favours; the other, perhaps, is afflicted because he has obtained 'em. Lady Dove has peremptorily insisted upon my giving him a challenge; but, to say the truth, I had no great stomach to the business till this fresh provocation; I perceive now I am growing into a most unaccountable rage; 'tis something so different from what I ever felt before, that, for what I know, it may be courage, and I mistake it for anger; I never did quarrel with any man, and hitherto no man ever quarrelled with me: egad, if once I break the ice, it sha'n't stop here: if young Belfield doesn't prove me a coward, Lady Dove shall see that I am a man of spirit.——Sure I see my gentleman coming hither again.

[*Steps aside.*

Enter BELFIELD, *Junior.*

Bel. jun. What meanness, what infatuation possesses me, that I should resolve to throw myself once more in her way! but she's gone, and yet I may escape with credit.

Sir B. Ay, there he is sure enough: by the mass I don't like him: I'll listen a while, and discover what sort of a humour he is in.

Bel. jun. I am ashamed of this weakness; I am determined to assume a proper spirit, and act as becomes a man upon this occasion.

Sir B. Upon my soul I'm very sorry for it.

Bel. jun. Now am I so distracted between love, rage, and disappointment, that I could find in my heart to sacrifice her, myself, and all mankind.

Sir B. Lord ha' mercy upon us, I'd better steal off and leave him to himself.

Bel. jun. And yet, perhaps, all this may proceed from an excess of fondness in my Sophia.

Sir B. Upon my word, you are blessed with a most happy assurance.

Bel. jun. Something may have dropped from Violetta to alarm her jealousy; and, working upon the exquisite sensibility of her innocent mind, may have brought my sincerity into question.

Sir B. I don't understand a word of all this.

Bel. jun. Now could I fall at her feet for pardon, though I know not in what I have offended; I have not the heart to move. Fy upon it! What an arrant coward has love made me!

Sir B. A coward, does he say? I am heartily rejoiced to hear it; if I must needs come to action, pray Heaven it be with a coward! I'll even take him while he is in the humour, for fear he should recover his courage, and I lose mine. ——So, Sir, your humble servant, Mr. Belfield! I'm glad I have found you, Sir.

Bel. jun. Sir Benjamin, your most obedient. Pray, what are your commands now you have found me?

Sir B. Hold! hold! don't come any nearer; don't you see I am in a most prodigious passion? Fire and fury, what's the reason you have made all this disorder in my house? my daughter in tears; my wife in fits: every thing in an uproar; and all your doing. Do you think I'll put up with this treatment? If you suppose you have a coward to deal with, you'll find yourself mistaken; greatly mistaken, let me tell you, Sir! Mercy upon me, what a passion I am in! In short, Mr. Belfield, the honour of my house is concerned, and I must and will have satisfaction.—I think this is pretty well to set in with; I'm horribly out of breath; I sweat at every pore. What great fatigues do men of courage undergo!

Bel. jun. Look'e, Sir Benjamin, I don't rightly comprehend what you would be at; but, if you think I have injured you, few words are best; disputes between men of honour are soon adjusted; I'm at your service, in any way you think fit.

Sir B. How you fly out now! Is that giving me the satisfaction I require? I am the person injured in this matter, and, as such, have a right to be in a passion; but I see neither right nor reason why you, who have done the wrong, should be as angry as I who have received it.

Bel. jun. I suspect I have totally mistaken this honest gentleman; he only wants to build some reputation with his wife upon this rencounter, and 'twould be inhuman not to gratify him.

Sir B. What shall I do now? Egad I seem

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to have posed him: this plaguy sword sticks so hard in the scabbard——Well, come forth, rapier, 'tis but one thrust; and what should a man fear that has Lady Dove for his wife?

Bel. jun. Hey-day! is the man mad! Put up your sword, Sir Benjamin; put it up, and don't expose yourself in this manner.

Sir B. You shall excuse me, Sir; I have had some difficulty in drawing it, and am determined now to try what metal it's made of. So come on, Sir.

Bel. jun. Really this is too ridiculous; I tell you, Sir Benjamin, I am in no humour for these follies. I've done no wrong to you or yours: on the contrary, great wrong has been done to me; But I have no quarrel with you? so pray, put up your sword.

Sir B. And I tell you, Mr. Belfield, 'tis in vain to excuse yourself.—The less readiness he shows, so much the more resolution I feel.

Bel. jun. Well, Sir Knight, if such is your humour, I wont spoil your longing. So have at you.

Enter LADY DOVE.

Lady D. Ah! [*Shrieks.*

Bel. jun. Hold, hold, Sir Benjamin, I never fight in ladies' company. Why, I protest you are a perfect Amadis de Gaul; a Don Quixotte in heroism; and the presence of this your Dulcinea renders you invincible.

Sir B. Oh! my lady, is it you? don't be alarmed, my dear: 'tis all over: a small fracas between this gentleman and myself; that's all; don't be under any surprise; I believe the gentleman has had enough; I believe he is perfectly satisfied with my behaviour, and I persuade myself you will have no cause for the future to complain of his. Mr. Belfield, this is Lady Dove.

Bel. jun. Madam, to a generous enemy 'tis mean to deny justice, or withhold applause. You are happy in the most valiant of defenders; gentle as you may find him in the tender passions, to a man, Madam, he acquits himself like a man. Sir Benjamin Dove, in justice to your merit, I am ready to make any submission to this lady you shall please to impose. ——If you suffer her to bully you after this, you deserve to be hen-pecked all the days of your life.

Sir B. Say no more, my dear Bob; I shall love you for this the longest hour I have to live.

Bel. jun. If I have done you any service, promise me only one hour's conversation with your lovely daughter, and make what use of me you please.

Sir B. Here's my hand you shall have it; leave us. [*Exit* BELFIELD *Junior.*

Lady D. What am I to think of all this? It cann't well be a contrivance; and yet 'tis strange, that yon little animal should have the assurance to face a man, and be so bashful at a rencounter with a woman.

Sir B. Well, Lady Dove, what are you musing upon? you see you are obey'd, the honour of your family is vindicated: slow to enter into these affairs, being once engaged, I pertinaciously conduct them to an issue.

Lady D. Sir Benjamin, ——I——I——

Sir B. Here, Jonathan, do you hear, set my things ready in the library: make haste,

Lady D I say, Sir Benjamin, I think——

Sir B. Well, let's hear what it is you think.

Lady D. Bless us all, why you snap one up so—I say, I think, my dear, you have acquitted yourself tolerably well, and I am perfectly satisfied.

Sir B. Humph! you think I have done tolerably well, I think so too; do you apprehend me? Tolerably! for this business that you think tolerably well done, is but half concluded, let me tell you: nay, what some would call the toughest part of the undertaking remains unfinished; but I dare say, with your concurrence, I shall find it easy enough.

Lady D. What is it you mean to do with my concurrence; what mighty project does your wise brain teem with?

Sir B. Nay, now I reflect on't again, I don't think there'll be any need of your concurrence; for, nolens or volens, I'm determined it shall be done. In short, this it is, I am unalterably resolved from this time forward, Lady Dove, to be sole and absolute in this house, master of my own servants, father to my own child, and sovereign lord and governor, Madam, over my own wife.

Lady D. You are?

Sir B. I am. Gods! Gods! what a pitiful, contemptible figure does a man make under petticoat government. Perish he that's mean enough to stoop to such indignities! I am determined to be free—

PATERSON *enters, and whispers* LADY DOVE.

Hah! how's this, Mr. Paterson? What liberties are these you take with my wife, and before my face? no more of these freedoms, I beseech you, Sir, as you expect to answer it to a husband, who will have no secrets whispered to his wife, to which he is not privy; nor any appointments made, in which he is not a party.

Pat. Hey-day? what a change of government is here! Egad, I'm very glad on't—I've no notion of a female administration. [*Exit.*

Lady D. What insolence is this, Sir Benjamin; what ribaldry do you shock my ears with? Let me pass, Sir, I'll stay no longer in the same room with you.

Sir B. Not in the same room, not under the same roof, shall you long abide, unless you reform your manners: however for the present, you must be content to stay where you are.

Lady D. What, Sir, will you imprison me in my own house? I'm sick; I'm ill; I'm suffocated, I want air; I must and will walk into the garden.

Sir B. Then, Madam, you must find some better weapon than your fan to parry my sword with: this pass I defend: what, dost think, after having encountered a man, I shall turn my back upon a woman! No, Madam, I have ventured my life to defend your honour; 'twould be hard if I wanted spirit to protect my own.

Lady D. You, monster, would you draw your sword upon a woman.

Sir B. Unless it has been your pleasure to make me a monster, Madam, I am none.

Lady D. Would you murder me, you inhuman brute? Would you murder your poor, fond, defenceless wife?

Sir B. Nor tears, nor threats, neither scolding, nor soothing, shall shake me from my purpose: your yoke, Lady Dove, has laid too heavy upon my shoulders; I can sup-

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port it no longer: to-morrow, Madam, you leave this house.

Lady D. Will you break my heart, you tyrant? Will you turn me out of doors to starve, you barbarous man?

Sir B. Oh, never fear; you will fare to the full as well as you did in your first husband's time: in your poor, dear, dead Mr. Searcher's time. You told me once you prized the paltry greyhound that hung at his button-hole, more than all the jewels my folly had lavished upon you. I take you at your word; you shall have your bawble, and I will take back all mine; they'll be of no use to you hereafter.

Lady D. O! Sir Benjamin, Sir Benjamin, for mercy's sake, turn me not out of your doors! I will be obedient, gentle, and complying for the future; don't shame me; on my knees I beseech you don't.

Enter BELFIELD *Senior.*

Sir B. Mr. Belfield, I am heartily glad to see you; don't go back, Sir; you catch us indeed a little unawares; but these situations are not uncommon in well-ordered families; rewards and punishments are the life of government, and the authority of a husband must be upheld.

Bel. sen. I confess, Sir Benjamin, I was greatly surprised at finding Lady Dove in that attitude: but I never pry into family secrets; I had much rather suppose your lady was on her knees to intercede with you in my behalf, than be told she was reduced to that humble posture for any reason that affects herself.

Sir B. Sir, you are free to suppose what you please for Lady Dove; I'm willing to spare you that trouble on my account; and therefore I tell you plainly, if you will sign and seal your articles this night, to-morrow morning Sophia shall be yours: I'm resolved that the self-same day, which consecrates the redemption of my liberty, shall confirm the surrender of yours.

Lady D. O! Mr. Belfield, I beseech you intercede with this dear, cruel man, in my behalf; would you believe that he harbours a design of expelling me his house, on the very day too when he purposes celebrating the nuptials of his daughter?

Bel. sen. Come, Sir Benjamin, I must speak to you now as a friend in the nearest connection; I beg you will not damp our happiness with so melancholy an event: I will venture to pledge myself for her ladyship.

Sir B. Well, for your sake, perhaps, I may prolong her departure for one day; but I'm determined, if she does stay to-morrow, she shall set the first dish upon the table, if 'tis only to show the company what a refractory wife in the hands of a man of spirit may be brought to submit to. Our wives, Mr. Belfield, may tease us, and vex us, and still escape with impunity: but if once they thoroughly provoke us, the charm breaks, and they are lost for ever. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—The Sea Coast as before.

Enter GOODWIN *and* FANNY.

Good. What you tell me, Fanny, gives me great concern, that Mr. Francis should think to seduce the innocence of my child for a paltry bribe: what can have passed to encourage him to put such an affront upon you?

Fanny. Till this proposal, which I tell you of, I always took Mr. Francis for one of the best behaved, modestest young men I had ever met with.

Good. To say the truth, Fanny, so did I; but the world is full of hypocrisy, and our acquaintance with him has been very short.——

Enter FRANCIS.

Hark'e, young man, a word with you? What is it I or my children have done to offend you?

Fran. Offend me! what is it you mean?

Good. When your vessel was stranded upon our coast, did we take advantage of your distress? On the contrary, wasn't this poor hut thrown open to your use, as a receptacle for your treasures, and a repose for your fatigues? Have either those treasures, or that repose, been invaded? Whom amongst you have we robbed or defrauded?

Fran. None, none; your honesty has been as conspicuous as your hospitality.

Good. Why, then, having received no injury, do you seek to do one; an injury of the basest nature——You see there a poor girl, whose only portion in this world is her innocence, and of that you have sought to——

Fran. Hold: nor impute designs to me which I abhor; you say your daughter has no portion but her innocence: assured of that I ask none else; and, if she can forgive the stratagem I have made use of, I am ready to atone for it by a life devoted to her service.

Good. Well, Sir, I am happy to find you are the man I took you for, and cannot discommend your caution; so that if you like my daughter, and Fanny is consenting——But, soft! who have we got here?

Fran. I wish Mr. Paterson was further for interrupting us just now.

SCENE II.

Enter PATERSON.

Pat. Pray, good people, isn't there a lady with you of the name of Violetta?

Good. There is.

Pat. Can you direct me to her? I have business with her of the utmost consequence.

Good. Fanny, you and Mr. Francis step in and let the lady know.

[*Exit* FANNY *and* FRANCIS.

SCENE III.

GOODWIN *and* PATERSON.

Good. If it's no offence, Mr. Paterson, allow me to ask you whether there is any hope of our young gentleman here, who is just returned, succeeding in his addresses to Miss Dove?

Pat. Certainly none, master Goodwin.

Good. I'm heartily sorry for it.

Pat. I find you are a stranger to the reasons which make against it: but how are you interested in his success?

Good. I am a witness of his virtues, and consequently not indifferent to his success. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

Enter VIOLETTA.

Pat. Madam, I presume your name is Violetta.

Vio. It is, Sir.

Pat. I wait upon you, Madam, at Miss Dove's desire, and as a particular friend of Mr. Andrew Belfield's.

Vio. Sir!——

Pat. Madam!

Vio. Pray proceed.

Pat. To intreat the favour of your company at Cropley-castle upon business, wherein that lady and gentleman are intimately concerned: I presume, Madam, you guess what I mean.

Vio. Indeed, Sir, I cannot easily guess how I can possibly be a party in any business between Miss Dove and Mr. Belfield. I thought all intercourse between those persons was now entirely at an end.

Pat. Oh! no, Madam, by no means; the affair is far from being at an end.

Vio. How, Sir! not at an end?

Pat. No, Madam; on the contrary, from Sir Benjamin's great anxiety for the match, and, above all, from the very seasonable intelligence you was so good to communicate to Miss Sophia, I am not without hopes that Mr. Andrew Belfield will be happy enough to conquer all her scruples, and engage her to consent to marry him.

Vio. Indeed! but pray, Sir, those scruples of Miss Dove's, which you flatter yourself Mr. Belfield will so happily conquer, how is it that ladies in this country reconcile themselves to such matters? I should have thought such an obstacle utterly insurmountable.

Pat. Why, to be sure, Madam, Miss Dove has had some doubts and difficulties to contend with: but duty, you know——and, as I said before, you, Madam, you have been a great friend to Mr. Belfield; you have forwarded matters surprisingly.

Vio. It is very surprising, truly, if I have.

Pat. You seem greatly staggered at what I tell you: I see you are a stranger to the principles upon which young ladies frequently act in this country: I believe, Madam, in England, as many, or more matches are made from pique, than for love; and, to say the truth, I take this of Miss Dove's to be one of that sort. There is a certain person, you know, who will feel upon this occasion.

Vio. Yes; I well know there is a certain person, who will feel upon this occasion; but, are the sufferings of that unhappy one to be converted into raillery and amusement?

Pat. Oh, Madam! the ladies will tell you, that therein consists the very luxury of revenge.——But, I beseech you, have the goodness to make haste; my friend Mr. Belfield may stand in need of your support.

Vio. Thus insulted, I can contain myself no longer. Upon what infernal shore am I cast! into what society of demons am I fallen! that a woman, whom by an act of honour, I would have redeem'd from misery and ruin, should have the insolence, the inhumanity, to invite me to be a spectatress of her marriage with my own husband!

Pat. With your husband! What do I hear? Is Mr. Andrew Belfield your husband?

Vio. Ay; do you doubt it? Would I could say he was not!

Pat. Just Heaven! you then are the Violetta, you are the Portuguese lady I have heard so much of, and married to Mr. Belfield: base and perfidious!——Why, Madam, both Miss Dove and myself conceived that 'twas the young adventurer with whom you suffered shipwreck, that——

Vio. What! Lewson, the brave, generous, honourable Lewson?

Pat. Lewson! Lewson! as sure as can be you mean young Belfield; for now the recollection strikes me, that I've heard he took that name before he quitted England. That Lewson, Madam, whom we believed you married to, is Robert Belfield, and younger brother to your husband.

Vio. Mercy defend me! into what distress had this mutual mistake nearly involved us?

Pat. Come then, Madam, let us lose no time, but fly with all despatch to Cropley-castle; I have a post-chaise waiting, which will convey us thither in a few minutes: but, before we go, I'll step in and direct these good people to find young Belfield, and send him after us—Old Ironsides and all must be there.

[*Exit.*

SCENE V.

Vio. Let me reflect upon my fate—Wedded, betrayed, abandoned! at once a widow and a wife. All that my soul held dear, in the same hour obtained and lost. O false, false Belfield! Strong indeed must be that passion, and deeply seated in my heart, which even thy treachery could not eradicate! Twice shipwrecked! twice rescued from the jaws of death; just Heaven! I do not, dare not murmur; nor can I doubt but that the hand invisibly is stretched forth to save me, and through this labyrinth of sorrow to conduct me to repose.

Enter PATERSON.

Pat. Now, Madam, if you will trust yourself to my convoy, I'll bring you into harbour, where you shall never suffer shipwreck more.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.—SIR BENJAMIN DOVE'S *House.*

Enter SIR BENJAMIN DOVE *and* LADY DOVE.

Sir B. Upon these terms and stipulations, Lady Dove, I consent to your remaining at Cropley-castle. Enjoy your own prerogative, and leave me in possession of mine; above all things, my dear, I must insist that Mr. Paterson be henceforward considered as my friend and companion, and not your ladyship's.

Lady D. Nay, but indeed and indeed, my dear Sir Benjamin, that is being too hard with me, to debar me the common gratifications of every woman of distinction: Mr. Paterson, you know, is my very particular friend.

Sir B. 'Tis for his being so very particular my dear, that I object to him.

Lady D. Friendship, Sir Benjamin, is the virtuous recreation of delicate and susceptible minds; would you envy me that innocent pleasure? Why you know, my dearest, that your passion for me, which was once so violent, is now softened and subsided into mere friendship.

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Sir B. True, my dear; and, therefore, I am afraid lest my love having, by easy degrees, slackened into friendship, his friendship should, by as natural a transition, quicken into love; say no more, therefore, upon this point, but leave me to Mr. Paterson, and Mr. Paterson to me—Go—send Sophia to me—oh, here she comes: your ladyship need not be present at our conference; I think my own daughter surely belongs to my province, and not yours.—Good morning to you.

[*Exit* LADY DOVE.

SCENE VII.

Enter SOPHIA.

Sir B. Well, daughter, are you prepared to comply with my desires, and give your hand to Andrew Belfield this morning?

Soph. Sir!

Sir B. My heart is fixed upon this event; I have watched late and early to bring it to bear; and you'll find, my child, when you come to peruse your marriage settlement, how tenderly I have consulted your happiness in this match.

Soph. Alas! I should never think of searching for happiness amongst deeds and conveyances; 'tis the man, and not the money, that is likely to determine my lot.

Sir B. Well, and is not Mr. Belfield a man? a fine man, as I take it, he is, and a fine estate I'm sure he has got; then it lies so handy and contiguous to my own; only a hedge betwixt us; think of that, Sophy, only a hedge that parts his manor from mine; then consider, likewise, how this alliance will accommodate matters in the borough of Knavestown, where I and my family have stood three contested elections with his, and lost two of them; that sport will now be at an end, and our interests will be consolidated by this match, as well as our estates.

Soph. Still you mistake my meaning; I talk of the qualities of a man, you of his possessions; I require in a husband, good morals, good nature, and good sense; what has all this to do with contiguous estates, connected interests, and contested elections.

Sir B. I don't rightly understand what you would have, child; but this I well know, that if money alone will not make a woman happy, 'twill always purchase that that will.——I hope, Sophy, you've done thinking of that rambling, idle, young fellow, Bob Belfield.

Soph. Perish all thought of him for ever!—Nothing can be more contrary, more impossible in nature, than my union with young Belfield:—age, ugliness, ill-nature, bring any thing to my arms, rather than him.

Sir B. But why so angry with him, child?—This violent detestation and abhorrence is as favourable a symptom as any reasonable lover could wish for.

SCENE VIII.

Enter PATERSON.

Pat. Joy to you, Sir Benjamin? all joy attend you both! the bridegroom by this time is arrived; we saw his equipage enter the avenue as ours drove into the court.

Sir B. Mr. Paterson, Sir, I know not if yet your friend is to be a bridegroom; I find my daughter here so cold and uncomplying, for my own part, I don't know how I shall look Mr. Belfield in the face.

Pat. Fear nothing, Sir Benjamin: make haste and receive your son in law; I have news to communicate to Miss Dove, which, I am confident, will dispose her to comply with all your wishes.

Sir B. Well, Sir, I shall leave her to your tutorage. This obliging gentleman undertakes not only for my wife, but for my daughter too.

[*Exit.*

Soph. I am surprised, Mr. Paterson——

Pat. Hold, Madam, for one moment: I have made a discovery of the last importance to your welfare: you are in an error with regard to young Belfield——Violetta, the lady you believed him married to, is here in the house; I have brought her hither at your request, and from her I learn that the elder brother is her husband; he, who this very morning, but for my discovery, had been yours also.

Soph. What's this you tell me, Sir?——Where is this lady, where is Violetta; where is young Belfield?

Pat. Violetta, Madam, I have put under safe convoy, and by this time your waiting woman has lodged her privately in the closet of your bedchamber; there you will find her, and learn the whole process of this providential escape.—I'll only speak a word to Sir Benjamin, and come to you without any further delay.

[*Exit.*

SCENE IX.

Enter SIR BENJAMIN DOVE, *and* BELFIELD, *Senior.*

Sir B. Well, Mr. Paterson, what says my daughter?

Pat. Every thing that becomes an obedient daughter to say; so that if this gentleman is not made completely happy within this hour, the fault will lie at his door, and not with Miss Sophia.

Sir B. This is good news, Paterson; but I am impatient to have the ceremony concluded; the bells are ringing, the parson is waiting, and the equipages are at the door; step up to Sophia, and tell her to hasten; and hark'e, my friend, as you go by Lady Dove's door, give her a call, do you mind me, only a call at the door: don't you go in; she's busy at work upon a large parcel of ribands, which I have given her to make into wedding favours, she'll be very angry if you go into her chamber. Go, go, get you gone.

[*Exit* PATERSON.

Bel. sen. How comes it to pass, Sir Benjamin, that Mr. Paterson becomes so necessary an agent in the female affairs of your family? I confess to you, my pride is wounded, when I find I am to thank him for your daughter's consent to marry me. The man that can prevail upon a woman to act against her liking, what may he not persuade her to do with it?

Sir B. Your remark is just; Paterson has certainly some secret faculty of persuasion; and all that can be said is, that 'tis better to see your danger before marriage, than to be feeling it out, as I have done, afterwards.

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SCENE X.

Enter CAPTAIN IRONSIDES, *and* BELFIELD, *Junior.*

Sir B. What, old acquaintance, are you come to rejoice with me on this occasion?——Bob Belfield too, as I live; you are both heartily welcome——I could have spared their visit notwithstanding. [*Aside.*

Bel. sen. My brother here? vexation!

Bel. jun. Sir Benjamin, I come now to claim your promise of one hour's conversation with your daughter.

Sir B. The devil you do!

Bel. sen. Ridiculous!

Bel. jun. To you, Sir, obligations of this sort may be matter of ridicule; but while I religiously observe all promises I make to others, I shall expect others to be as observant of those they make to me.

Bel. sen. Sir, I have a most profound veneration for your principles, and am happy to find your understanding so much cultivated by travel: but in spite of your address, you will find it rather difficult to induce me to wave my right in Miss Dove in favour of a professed adventurer.

Bel. jun. Shameless, unfeeling man! an adventurer do you call me? You, whose unbrotherly persecution drove me to this hazardous, this humiliating occupation?

Iron. Sirrah! Bob! no reflections upon privateering; it has lined your pockets well, you young rogue: and you may tell your fine brother there, that we have landed treasure enough upon his estate to buy the fee-simple of it: ay, and for what I know, of Sir Wiseacre's here, into the bargain.

Sir B. What's that you say, Captain Ironsides? Let's have a word in a corner with you.

Bel. sen. Look'e, Sir, if you conceive yourself wronged by me, there is but one way——You know your remedy.

Bel. jun. I know your meaning, brother, and to demonstrate how much greater my courage is than yours, I must confess to you, I dare not accept your proposal.

Sir B. No, no, I've given him enough of that, I believe.

Iron. Bob Belfield, if I did not know thee for a lad of mettle, I shouldn't tell what to make of all this:—for my own part, I understand none of your scruples and refinements, not I; a man is a man; and if I take care to give an affront to no man, I think I have a right to take an affront from no man.

Sir B. Come, gentlemen, suspend your dispute; here comes my daughter, let her decide betwixt you.

Bel. jun. Let me receive my sentence from her lips, and I will submit to it.

Enter SOPHIA, PATERSON, *and* LADY DOVE.

Sir B. Here's a young gentleman, daughter, that will take no denial; he comes to forbid the banns just when you are both going into the church to be married.

Soph. Upon my word, this is something so extraordinary. What are the gentleman's reasons for this behaviour?

Sir B. He claims a sort of promise from me that he should be indulged in an hour's conversation with you, before you give your hand to his brother.

Soph. An hour's conversation! What little that gentleman can have to say to me, I believe, may be said in a very few minutes.

Bel. sen. I think, brother, this conversation don't promise a great deal.

Soph. In the first place, then, I own to this gentleman, and the company present, that there was a time when I entertained the highest opinion of his merit. Nay, I will not scruple to confess that I had conceived a regard for him of the tenderest sort.

Iron. And pray, young lady, how came my nephew to forfeit your good opinion?

Soph. By a conduct, Sir, that must for ever forfeit not my esteem only, but yours and all mankind's: I am sorry to be his accuser, but I will appeal to you, Mr. Belfield, who are his brother, whether it is reconcileable either to honour or humanity, to prosecute an affair of marriage with one woman, when you are previously and indispensably engaged to another.

Bel. sen. Humph!

Soph. Yet this, Sir, is the treatment I have received: judge, therefore, if I can desire or consent to have any long conversation with a gentleman who is under such engagements; nay, whom I can prove actually married to another woman in this very house, and ready to vouch the truth of what I assert. Judge for me, Mr. Belfield, could you believe any man capable of such complicated, such inconceivable villany?

Bel. sen. Heavens! This touches me too closely.

Sir B. Sir, I would fain know what excuse you can have for this behaviour? I can tell you, Sir, I don't understand it.

Lady D. Oh! fy upon you, Mr. Belfield! I wonder you are not ashamed to show your face in this family.

Sir B. Who desired you to put in your oar?

Iron. Why, sirrah, would not one wife content you? 'Tis enough in all reason for one man; is it not, Sir Benjamin?

Bel. jun. Sir, when it is proved I am married, accuse me.

Iron. Look'e, Bob, I don't accuse you for marrying, 'twas an indiscretion, and I can forgive it: but to deny it is a meanness, and I abhor it.

Soph. Mr. Belfield, do you say nothing upon this occasion.

Bel. sen. Paterson, I am struck to the heart; I cannot support my guilt: I am married to Violetta; save me the confusion of relating it; this dishonourable engagement for ever I renounce; nor will I rest till I have made atonement to an injured wife. Madam, I beg leave to withdraw for a few minutes.

Bel. jun. Hold, Sir; this contrivance is of your forging; you have touched me too near: and now, if you dare draw your sword, follow me.

Soph. Hold, gentlemen, you forget the lady is now in the house; she is a witness that will effectually put an end to your dispute: I will conduct her hither. [*Exit.*

Bel. jun. I agree to it.

Iron. Hark'e, nephew, I shrewdly suspect you have been laying a train to blow yourself up: if once Bob comes fairly alongside of you, you'll find your quarters too hot to hold you: I never yet found my boy out in a lie, and

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sha'n't tamely see a lie imposed upon him; for while he is honest, and I have breath, he shall never want a friend to stand by him, or a father to protect him.

Bel. sen. Mr. Paterson, explain my story; I will depart this instant in search of Violetta.

Enter SOPHIA *and* VIOLETTA.

Soph. Stay, I conjure you; stay, turn, and look back upon this lady before you go.
[*Presenting* VIO.

Bel. sen. My wife!

Sir B. Hey-day! here's a turn.

Iron. I thought how 'twould be.

Vio. Yes, Sir, your faithful, your forsaken wife.

Bel. sen. How shall I look upon you? What shall I say? Where shall I hide my confusion? Oh! take me in your arms, and in that soft shelter let me find forgiveness and protection.

Vio. Be this your only punishment! and this!

Bel. jun. Was it then a sister I preserved from death?

Bel. sen. What's this I hear? Oh! brother, can you pardon too?

Bel. jun. Be indeed a brother, and let this providential event be the renovation of your friendship.

Bel. sen. What shall I say to you, Madam? [*To* SOPHIA.] Paterson, you know my heart: bear witness to it's remorse. By Heaven, my secret resolution was instantly to have departed in search of this my injured wife; but I'm not worthy of even your resentment: here is one that merits and returns your love.
[*Turning to his Brother.*

Iron. Come, god-daughter, we can never say the fleet's fairly come to an anchor, while the admiral's ship is out at sea. [*Presenting* BELFIELD, *junior.*] My nephew here is as honest a lad as lives, and loves you at the soul of him: give him your hand, and I'll broach the last chest of dollars to make him a fortune deserving you. What say you, my old friend?

Sir B. Here's my hand! I've spoke the word; she's his own. Lady Dove, I wont hear a syllable to the contrary.

Iron. Then the galleon is thy own, boy.—— What should an old fellow like me do with money? Give me a warm night-cap, a tift of punch, and an elbow-chair in your chimney-corner; and I'll lay up for the rest of my days.

Bel. jun. How shall I give utterance to my gratitude or my love?

Enter GOODWIN, FANNY, FRANCIS, PHILIP, *and* LUCY.

Sir B. So, so! more work for the parson.

Iron. What! Francis, hast thou chosen a mate, and art bound upon a matrimonial cruise as well as thy master?

Fran. Ay, Sir; so he is happy as well as myself, and has no objection to my choice.

Bel. sen. What! are you all assembled to overwhelm me with confusion? Like some poor culprit, surrounded by a crowd of witnesses, I stand convicted and appalled. But all your wrongs shall be redressed; yours Goodwin; Philip's; Lucy's: my whole life shall be employed in acts of justice and atonement. Virtue, and this virtuous woman, were my first ruling passions.

Now they resume the social soft control,
And love and happiness possess my soul.
[*Exeunt omnes.*

EPILOGUE.

WHO but has seen the celebrated strife,
Where Reynold calls the canvass into life:
And, 'twixt the tragic and the comic muse,
Courted of both, and dubious where to choose,
Th' immortal Actor stands?——Here we espy
An awful figure pointing to the sky;
A grave, sublime, commanding form she bears,
And in her zone, an unsheathed dagger wears,
On t'other side, with sweet attractive mien,
The playful muse of Comedy is seen;
She, with a thousand soft bewitching smiles,
Mistress of love, his yielding heart beguiles;
(For where's the heart so harden'd to withstand
The fond compulsion of so fair a hand?)
Oh! would she here bestow those winning arts!
This night we'd fix her empire in your hearts;
No tragic passions should deface the age,
But all should catch good humour from the stage:
The storming husband, and imperious wife,
Should learn the doctrine of a quiet life;
The plodding drudge, should here at times resort,
And leave his stupid club, and stummy port;
The pensive politician, who foresees
Clouds, storms, and tempests, in the calms of peace;
The scribbling tribe, who vent their angry spleens
In songs, prints, pamphlets, papers, magazines:
Lucius and Anti-Lucius, pro's and con's,
The list of placets, and of placet-nons;
The mobbing vulgar, and the ruling great,
And all who storm and all who steer the state;
Here should forget the labour of the day,
And laugh their cares, and their complaints away.
The wretch of Jonathan's, who crush'd with shame,
Crawls lamely out from India's desperate game,
Safely might speculate within these walls;
For here, while you approve, stock never falls:
Pleased then, indulge the efforts of to-night,
Nor grudge to give, if you've received delight.

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THE CARELESS HUSBAND:

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY COLLEY CIBBER, ESQ.

REMARKS.

THIS comedy, as it would do honour to the pen of any modern, will establish the fame of Colley Cibber.

It abounds in correct délineations of polished life, and many shrewd sentiments of character. There is a delicacy in the recovery of the libertine, which every reader or spectator feels and receives as a lesson by which the heart may become the better.

> 'Your gentleness shall move,
> More than your force move us to gentleness.'

For so, in the language of Shakspeare, it might be said to every reformer whose discipline seems harsh and unpalatable.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LORD MORELOVE.
LORD FOPPINGTON.
SIR CHARLES EASY.

LADY BETTY MODISH.
LADY EASY.
LADY GRAVEAIRS.
MRS. EDGING, Woman to Lady Easy.

SCENE.—Windsor.

PROLOGUE.

Of all the various vices of the age,
And shoals of fools exposed upon the stage,
How few are lash'd that call for satire's rage!
What can you think to see our plays so full
Of madmen, coxcombs, and the driveling fool?
Of cits, of sharpers, rakes, and roaring bullies,
Of cheats, of cuckolds, aldermen and cullies?
Would not one swear, 'twere taken for a rule,
That satire's rod, in the dramatic school,
Was only meant for the incorrigible fool?
As if too vice and folly were confined
To the vile scum alone of human kind;
Creatures a muse should scorn: such abject trash
Deserves not satire's but the hangman's lash.
Wretches so far shut out from sense of shame,
Newgate or Bedlam only should reclaim;
For satire ne'er was meant to make wild monsters tame.
No, Sirs——
We rather think the persons fit for plays,
Are they whose birth and education says
They've every help that should improve mankind,
Yet still live slaves to a vile tainted mind;

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Such as in wit are often seen t' abound,
And yet have some weak part, where folly's found;
For follies sprout like weeds, highest in fruitful ground,
And 'tis observed, the garden of the mind
To no infestive weed's so much inclined,
As the rank pride that some from affectation find.
A folly too well known to make its court
With most success among the better sort.
Such are the persons we to-day provide,
And nature's fools for once are laid aside.
This is the ground, on which our play we build;
But in the structure must to judgment yield:
And where the poet fails in art, or care,
We beg your wonted mercy to the player.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—Sir Charles Easy's *Lodgings*.

Enter Lady Easy.

Lady E. Was ever woman's spirit by an injurious husband, broke like mine? A vile licentious man! must he bring home his follies too? Wrong me with my very servant! O! how tedious a relief is patience! and yet in my condition 'tis the only remedy: for to reproach him with my wrongs, is taking on myself the means of a redress, bidding defiance to his falsehood, and naturally but provoke him to undo me. The uneasy thought of my continual jealousy may tease him to a fixed aversion; and hitherto, though he neglects, I cannot think he hates me.—It must be so: since I want power to please him, he never shall upbraid me with an attempt of making him uneasy—My eyes and tongue shall yet be blind and silent to my wrongs; nor would I have him think my virtue could suspect him, till by some gross apparent proof of his misdoing, he forces me to see—and to forgive it.

Enter Edging *hastily*.

Edg. O Madam!

Lady E. What's the matter?

Edg. I have the strangest thing to show your ladyship——such a discovery——

Lady E. You are resolved to make it without much ceremony, I find. What's the business, pray?

Edg. The business, Madam, I have not patience to tell you; I am out of breath at the very thoughts on't; I shall not be able to speak this half hour.

Lady E. Not to the purpose, I believe! but methinks you talk impertinently with a great deal of ease.

Edg. Nay, Madam, perhaps not so impertinent as your ladyship thinks; there is that will speak to the purpose, I am sure—A base man— [*Gives a letter.*

Lady E. What is this? An open letter! Whence comes it?

Edg. Nay, read it, Madam, you will soon guess——If these are the tricks of husbands keep me a maid still, say I.

Lady E. [*Looking on the superscription.*] To Sir Charles Easy! Ha! Too well I know this hateful hand.—O my heart: but I must veil my jealousy, which 'tis not fit this creature should suppose I am acquainted with. [*Aside.*] This direction is to your master; how came you by it?

Edg. Why, Madam, as my master was laying down, after he came in from hunting, he sent me into his dressing-room to fetch his snuff box out of his waist-coat-pocket, and so as I was searching for the box, Madam, there I found this wicked letter from a mistress; which I had no sooner read, but, I declare it, my very blood rose at him again; methought I could have torn him and her to pieces.

Lady E. Intolerable! This odious thing's jealous of him herself, and wants me to join with her in a revenge upon him—Sure I am fallen, indeed! But 'twere to make me lower yet, to let her think I understand her. [*Aside.*

Edg. Nay, pray, Madam, read it, you will be out of patience at it.

Lady E. You are bold, mistress; has my indulgence, or your master's good humour, flattered you into the assurance of reading his letters; a liberty I never gave myself—Here—lay it where you had it immediately—should he know of your sauciness, 'twould not be my favour could protect you. [*Exit.*

Edg. Your favour! marry come up! sure I don't depend upon your favour!—It's not come to that, I hope.—Poor creature—don't you think I am my master's mistress for nothing—You shall find, Madam, I wont be snapped up as I have been—Not but it vexes me to think she should not be as uneasy as I. I am sure he is a base man to me, and I could cry my eyes out that she should not think him as bad to her every jot. If I am wronged, sure she may very well expect it, that is but his wife—A conceited thing—she need not be so easy neither—I am as handsome as she, I hope—Here's my master—I'll try whether I am to be huffed by her, or no. [*Walks behind.*

Enter Sir Charles Easy.

Sir C. So! The day is come again!—Life but rises to another stage, and the same dull journey is before us.—How like children do we judge of happiness! When I was stinted in my fortune, almost every thing was a pleasure to me, because most things then being out of my reach, I had always the pleasure of hoping for them; now fortune's in my hand, she is as insipid as an old acquaintance—It is mighty silly, faith.—Just the same thing by my wife, too; I am told she is extremely handsome, nay, and have heard a great many people say she is certainly the best woman in the world—Why, I don't know but she may, yet I could never find that her person or good qualities gave me any concern—In my eye, the woman has no more charms than my mother.

Edg. Hum!—he takes no notice of me yet—I'll let him see I can take as little notice of him. [*She walks by him gravely, he turns her about and holds her, she struggles.*] Pray, Sir!

Sir C. A pretty pert air, that—I'll humour

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it—What's the matter, child? Are not you well? Kiss me, hussy.

Edg. No, the deuce fetch me if I do.

Sir C. Has any thing put thee out of humour, love?

Edg. No, Sir, 'tis not worth my being out of humour at—though if ever you have any thing to say to me again, I'll be burned.

Sir C. Somebody has belied me to thee.

Edg. No, Sir, 'tis you have belied yourself to me—Did not I ask you, when you first made a fool of me, if you would be always constant to me; and did not you say, I might be sure you would? And here, instead of that, you are going on in your old intrigue with my Lady Graveairs.

Sir C. So——

Edg. Beside, don't you suffer my lady to huff me every day as if I were her dog, or had no more concern with you—I declare I wont bear it, and she sha'n't think to huff me—for aught I know I am as agreeable as she: and though she dares not take any notice of your baseness to her, you sha'n't think to use me so—and so pray take your nasty letter—I know the hand well enough—for my part I wont stay in the family to be abused at this rate: I, that have refused lords and dukes for your sake: I'd have you to know, Sir, I have had as many blue and green ribbons after me, for aught I know, as would have made me a falbala apron.

Sir C. My Lady Graveairs! my nasty letter! and I wont stay in the family! Death! I'm in a pretty condition!—What an unlimited privilege has this jade got from being a whore?

Edg. I suppose, Sir, you think to use every body as you do your wife.

Sir C. My wife, hah! Come hither Mrs. Edging; hark you, drab.

[*Seizing her by the shoulder.*

Edg. Oh!

Sir C. When you speak of my wife, you are to say your lady, and you are never to speak of your lady to me in any regard of her being my wife—for look you, child, you are not her strumpet, but mine, therefore I only give you leave to be saucy with me.—In the next place, you are never to suppose there is any such person as my Lady Graveairs; and lastly, my pretty one, how came you by this letter?

Edg. It's no matter, perhaps.

Sir C. Aye, but if you should not tell me quickly, how are you sure I wont take a great piece of flesh out of your shoulder?—My dear.

[*Shakes her.*

Edg. O lud! O lud! I will tell you Sir.

Sir C. Quickly, then——

Edg. Oh! I took it out of your pocket, Sir.

Sir C. When?

Edg. Oh! this morning, when you sent me for your snuff-box.

Sir C. And your ladyship's pretty curiosity has looked it over, I presume—ha—

[*Shakes her again.*

Edg. O lud! dear Sir, don't be angry—indeed I'll never touch one again.

Sir C. I don't believe you will, and I'll tell you how you shall be sure you never will.

Edg. Yes, Sir.

Sir C. By stedfastly believing that the next time you offer it, you will have your pretty white neck twisted behind you.

Edg. Yes, Sir. [*Courtesying.*

Sir C. And you will be sure to remember every thing I have said to you.

Edg. Yes, Sir.

Sir C. And now, child, I was not angry with your person, but your follies; which, since I find you are a little sensible of—don't be wholly discouraged—for I believe I—I shall have occasion for you again—

Edg. Yes, Sir.

Sir C. In the mean time, let me hear no more of your lady, child.

Edg. No, Sir.

Sir C. Here she comes: begone.

Edg. Yes, Sir—Oh! I was never so frightened in my life. [*Exit.*

Sir C. So! good discipline makes good soldiers—It often puzzles me to think, from my own carelessness, and my wife's continual good humour, whether she really knows any thing of the strength of my forces—I'll sift her a little.

Enter LADY EASY.

My dear, how do you do? You are dressed very early to-day: are you going out?

Lady E. Only to church, my dear.

Sir C. Is it so late, then?

Lady E. The bell has just rung.

Sir C. Well, child, how does Windsor air agree with you? Do you find yourself any better yet? or have you a mind to go to London again?

Lady E. No, indeed, my dear; the air is so very pleasant, that if it were a place of less company, I could be content to end my days here.

Sir C. Pr'ythee, my dear, what sort of company would most please you.

Lady E. When business would permit it, yours; and in your absence a sincere friend, that were truly happy in an honest husband, to set a cheerful hour and talk in mutual praise of our condition.

Sir C. Are you then really very happy, my dear?

Lady E. Why should you question it?

[*Smiling on him.*

Sir C. Because I fancy I am not so good to you as I should be.

Lady E. Pshaw.

Sir C. Nay, the deuce take me if I don't really confess myself so bad, that I have often wondered how any woman of your sense, rank, and person, could think it worth her while to have so many useless good qualities.

Lady E. Fy, my dear.

Sir C. By my soul, I am serious.

Lady E. I cannot boast of my good qualities, nor if I could, do I believe you think them useless.

Sir C. Nay, I submit to you—Don't you find them so? Do you perceive that I am one tittle the better husband for your being so good a wife?

Lady E. Pshaw! you jest with me.

Sir C. Upon my life I don't—Tell me truly, was you never jealous of me?

Lady E. Did I ever give you any sign of it?

Sir C. Um—that's true——but do you really think I never gave you occasion?

Lady E. That's an odd question—but suppose you had?

Sir C. Why then, what good has your vir-

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tue done you, since all the good qualities of it could not keep me to yourself.

Lady E. What occasion have you given me to suppose I have not kept you to myself?

Sir C. I give you occasion?—Fy! my dear—you may be sure—I—look you, that is not the thing, but still a—(death! what a blunder have I made?)—a—still, I say, Madam, you sha'n't make me believe you have never been jealous of me, not that you ever had any real cause, but I know women of your principles have more pride than those that have no principles at all; and where there is pride, there must be some jealousy—so that if you are jealous, my dear, you know you wrong me, and—

Lady E. Why then, upon my word, my dear, I don't know that ever I wronged you that way in my life.

Sir C. But suppose I had given a real cause to be jealous, how would you do then?

Lady E. It must be a very substantial one that makes me jealous.

Sir C. Say it were a substantial one; suppose now I were well with a woman of your own acquaintance, that under pretence of frequent visits to you, should only come to carry on an affair with me—suppose now my Lady Graveairs and I were great?

Lady E. Would I could not suppose it! [*Aside.*

Sir C. If I come off here, I believe I am pretty safe. [*Aside.*]—Suppose, I say, my lady and I were so very familiar, that not only yourself, but half the town should see it?

Lady E. Then I should cry myself sick in some dark closet, and forget my tears when you spoke kindly to me.

Sir C. The most convenient piece of virtue, sure, that ever wife was mistress of. [*Aside.*

Lady E. But, pray, my dear, did you ever think that I had any ill thoughts of my Lady Graveairs?

Sir C. O fy! child; only you know she and I used to be a little free sometimes, so I had a mind to see if you thought there was any harm in it; but, since I find you very easy, I think myself obliged to tell you, that, upon my soul, my dear, I have so little regard to her person, that the deuce take me, if I would not as soon have an affair with thy woman.

Lady E. Indeed, my dear, I should as soon suspect you with one as t'other.

Sir C. Poor dear—shouldst thou?—give me a kiss.

Lady E. Pshaw! you don't care to kiss me.

Sir C. By my soul, I do—I wish I may die, if I don't think you a very fine woman.

Lady E. I only wish you would think me a good wife. [*Kisses her.*] But pray, my dear, what has made you so strangely inquisitive?

Sir C. Inquisitive—Why—a—I don't know, one is always saying one foolish thing or another—Toll le roll. [*Sings and talks.*] My dear, what! are we never to have any ball here?—Toll le roll. I fancy I could recover my dancing again, if I would but practise. Toll loll loll.

Lady E. This excess of carelessness to me excuses half his vices. If I can make him once think seriously—Time yet may be my friend.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Sir, Lord Morelove gives his service—

Sir C. Lord Morelove! where is he?

Serv. At the Chocolate-house; he called me to him as I went by, and bid me to tell your honour he'll wait upon you presently.

Lady E. I thought you had not expected him here again this season, my dear.

Sir C. I thought so too, but you see there's no depending upon the resolution of a man that's in love.

Lady E. Is there a chair?

Serv. Yes, Madam. [*Exit* SERV.

Lady E. I suppose Lady Betty Modish has drawn him hither.

Sir C. Ay, poor soul, for all his bravery, I am afraid so.

Lady E. Well, my dear, I ha'n't time to ask my lord how he does now; you'll excuse me to him, but I hope you'll make him dine with us.

Sir C. I'll ask him. If you see Lady Betty at prayers, make her dine too; but don't take any notice of my lord's being in town.

Lady E. Very well! if I should not meet her there, I'll call at her lodgings.

Sir C. Do so.

Lady E. My dear, your servant. [*Exit.*

Sir C. My dear, I'm yours.——Well! one way or other this woman will certainly bring about her business with me at last; for though she cannot make me happy in her own person, she lets me be so intolerably easy with the women that can, that she has at least brought me into a fair way of being as weary of them too.

Enter SERVANT *and* LORD MORELOVE.

Serv. Sir, my lord's come.

Lord M. Dear Charles!

Sir C. My dear lord! this is a happiness undreamed of; I little thought to have seen you at Windsor again this season! I concluded of course, that books and solitude had secured you till winter.

Lord M. Nay, I did not think of coming myself, but I found myself not very well in London, so I thought—a—little hunting and this air—

Sir C. Ha, ha, ha!

Lord M. What do you laugh at?

Sir C. Only because you should not go on with your story: if you did but see how silly a man fumbles for an excuse, when he is a little ashamed of being in love, you would not wonder what I laugh at;—ha, ha, ha!

Lord M. Thou art a very happy fellow——nothing touches thee—always easy—Then you conclude I follow Lady Betty again.

Sir C. Yes faith, I do: and to make you easy, my lord, I cannot see why a man that can ride fifty miles after a poor stag, should be ashamed of running twenty in chase of a fine woman, that, in all probability, will show him so much the better sport too. [*Embracing.*

Lord M. Dear Charles, don't flatter my distemper; I own I still follow her: do you think her charms have power to excuse me to the world?

Sir C. Ay, ay! a fine woman's an excuse for any thing, and the scandal of our being in jest, is a jest itself; we are all forced to be their fools, before we can be their favourites.

Lord M. You are willing to give me hope; but I can't believe she has the least degree of inclination for me.

Sir C. I don't know that—I am sure her

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pride likes you, and that's generally your fine ladies' darling passion.

Lord M. Do you suppose if I could grow indifferent it would touch her.

Sir C. Sting her to the heart—Will you take my advice?

Lord M. I have no relief but that. Had I not thee now and then to talk an hour, my life were insupportable.

Sir C. I am sorry for that, my lord:—but mind what I say to you—but hold, first let me know the particulars of your late quarrel with her.

Lord M. Why,—about three weeks ago, when I was last here at Windsor, she had for some days treated me with a little more reserve, and another with more freedom than I found myself easy at.

Sir C. Who was that other?

Lord M. One of my Lord Foppington's gang—the pert coxcomb that's just come to a small estate and a great periwig—he that sings himself among the women—What do you call him—He wont speak to a commoner when a lord is in company—you always see him, with a cane dangling at his button, his breast open, no gloves, one eye tucked under his hat, and a tooth-pick——Startup, that's his name.

Sir C. O! I have met him in a visit——but pray go on.

Lord M. So, disputing with her about the conduct of women, I took the liberty to tell her how far I thought she erred in hers; she told me I was rude, and that she would never believe any man could love a woman that thought her in the wrong in any thing she had a mind to, at least if he dared to tell her so.—This provoked me into her whole character, with so much spirit and civil malice, as I have seen her bestow upon a woman of true beauty, when the men first toasted her; so in the middle of my wisdom, she told me, she desired to be alone, that I would take my odious proud heart along with me, and trouble her no more—I—bowed very low, and as I left the room, vowed I never would, and that my proud heart should never be humbled by the outside of a fine woman—About an hour after, I whipped into my chaise for London, and have never seen her since.

Sir C. Very well, and how did you find your proud heart by that time you got to Hounslow?

Lord M. I am almost ashamed to tell you—I found her so much in the right, that I cursed my pride for contradicting her at all, and began to think, according to her maxim, that no woman could be in the wrong to a man that she had in her power.

Sir C. Ha, ha! Well, I'll tell you what you shall do. You can see her without trembling, I hope.

Lord M. Not if she receives me well.

Sir C. If she receives you well, you will have no occasion for what I am going to say to you—first, you shall dine with her.

Lord M. How! where! when!

Sir C. Here! here! at two o'clock.

Lord M. Dear Charles!

Sir C. My wife is gone to invite her: when you see her first, be neither too humble nor too stubborn; let her see, by the ease in your behaviour, you are still pleased in being near her, while she is upon reasonable terms with you. This will either open the door of an *eclaircissement*, or quite shut it against you—and if she is still resolved to keep you out—

Lord M. Nay, if she insults me, then, perhaps I may recover pride enough to rally her by an over-acted submission.

Sir C. Why you improve, my lord: this is the very thing I was going to propose to you.

Lord M. Was it, faith! hark you, dare you stand by me?

Sir C. Dare I! ay, to my last drop of assurance, against all the insolent airs of the proudest beauty in Christendom.

Lord M. Nay, then, defiance to her—We two—Thou hast inspired me—I find myself as valiant as a flattered coward.

Sir C. Courage, my lord—I'll warrant we beat her.

Lord M. My blood stirs at the very thought on't: I long to be engaged.

Sir C. She will certainly give ground, when she once sees you are thoroughly provoked.

Lord M. Dear Charles, thou art a friend indeed.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Sir, my Lord Foppington gives his service, and if your honour's at leisure, he'll wait on you as soon as he is dressed.

Lord M. Lord Foppington? Is he in town?

Sir C. Yes,—I heard last night he was come. Give my service to his lordship, and tell him I should be glad he will do me the honour of his company here at dinner. [*Exit* SERV.]—We may have occasion for him in our design upon Lady Betty.

Lord M. What use can we make of him?

Sir C. We'll see when he comes; at least there is no danger in him; but I suppose you know he is your rival.

Lord M. Pshaw! a coxcomb.

Sir C. Nay, don't despise him neither—he is able to give you advice; for though he is in love with the same woman, yet to him she has not charms enough to give a minute's pain.

Lord M. Pr'ythee, what sense has he of love?

Sir C. Faith! very near as much as a man of sense ought to have: I grant you he knows not how to value a woman truly deserving, but he has a pretty just esteem for most ladies about town.

Lord M. That he follows, I grant you—for he seldom visits any of extraordinary reputation.

Sir C. Have a care, I have seen him at Lady Betty Modish's.

Lord M. To be laughed at.

Sir C. Don't be too confident of that; the women now begin to laugh with him, not at him: for he really sometimes rallies his own humour with so much ease and pleasantry, that a great many women begin to think he has no follies at all, and those he has, have been as much owing to his youth, and a great estate, as want of natural wit: 'tis true, he often is a bubble to his pleasures, but he has always been wisely vain enough to keep himself from being too much the ladies' humble servant in love.

Lord M. There, indeed, I almost envy him.

Sir C. The easiness of his opinion upon the sex, will go near to pique you—We must have him.

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Lord M. As you please—but what shall we do with ourselves till dinner?

Sir C. What think you of a party at piquet?

Lord M. O! you are too hard for me.

Sir C. Fy! fy! when you play with his Grace?

Lord M. Upon my honour, he gives me three points.

Sir C. Does he! Why then you shall give me but two—Here, fellow, get cards. *Allons.*

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—LADY BETTY MODISH's *Lodgings.*

Enter LADY BETTY *and* LADY EASY, *meeting.*

Lady B. Oh, my dear, I am overjoyed to see you! I am strangely happy to-day; I have just received my new scarf from London, and you are most critically come to give me your opinion of it.

Lady E. Oh, your servant, Madam; I am a very indifferent judge, you know. What, is it with sleeves?

Lady B. Oh, 'tis impossible to tell you what it is?——'Tis all extravagance both in mode and fancy, my dear. I believe there's six thousand yards of edging in it—Then such an enchanting slope from the elbow—something so new, so lively, so noble, so coquette and charming—but you shall see it, my dear—

Lady E. Indeed, I wont, my dear; I am resolved to mortify you for being so wrongfully fond of a trifle.

Lady B. Nay, now, my dear, you are ill-natured.

Lady E. Why, truly I'm half angry to see a woman of your sense, so warmly concerned in the care of her outside; for when we have taken our best pains about it, 'tis the beauty of the mind alone that gives us lasting virtue.

Lady B. Ah, my dear! my dear! you have been a married woman to a fine purpose indeed, that know so little of the taste of mankind. Take my word, a new fashion upon a fine woman, is often a greater proof of her value than you are aware of.

Lady E. That I can't comprehend; for you see among the men, nothing's more ridiculous than a new fashion. Those of the first sense are always the last that come into 'em.

Lady B. That is, because the only merit of a man is his sense; but doubtless the greatest value of a woman is her beauty; an homely woman at the head of a fashion, would not be allowed in it by the men, and consequently not followed by the women: so that to be successful in one's fancy, is an evident sign of one's being admired, and I always take admiration for the best proof of beauty, and beauty certainly is the source of power, as power, in all creatures is the height of happiness.

Lady E. At this rate you would rather be thought beautiful than good.

Lady B. As I had rather command than obey: the wisest homely woman can't make a man of sense of a fool, but the veriest fool of a beauty shall make an ass of a statesman; so that, in short, I can't see a woman of spirit has any business in this world but to dress—and make the men like her.

Lady E. Do you suppose this a principle the men of sense will admire you for?

Lady B. I do suppose, that when I suffer any man to like my person, he sha'n't dare to find fault with my principle.

Lady E. But men of sense are not so easily humbled.

Lady B. The easiest of any; one has ter thousand times the trouble with a coxcomb.

Lady E. Nay, that may be; for I have seen you throw away more good humour, in hopes of *tendresse* from my Lord Foppington, who loves all women alike, than would have made my Lord Morelove perfectly happy, who loves only you.

Lady B. The men of sense, my dear, make the best fools in the world: their sincerity and good-breeding throw them so entirely into one's power, and give one such an agreeable thirst of using them ill, to show that power—'tis impossible not to quench it.

Lady E. But methinks, my Lord Morelove's manner to you might move any woman to a kinder sense of his merit.

Lady B. Aye, but would it not be hard, my dear, for a poor weak woman to have a man of his quality and reputation in her power, and not to let the world see him there? Would any creature sit new dressed all day in her closet? Could you bear to have a sweet-fancied suit, and never show it at the play, or the drawing-room?

Lady E. But one would not ride in't, methinks, or harass it out when there's no occasion.

Lady B. Pooh! my Lord Morelove's a mere Indian damask, one can't wear him out: o' my conscience I must give him to my woman at last; I begin to be known by him: had I not best leave him off, my dear? for, poor soul, I believe I have a little fretted him of late.

Lady E. Now 'tis to me amazing how a man of his spirit can bear to be used like a dog for four or five years together—but nothing's a wonder in love; yet pray when you found you could not like him at first, why did you ever encourage him?

Lady B. Why, what would you have one do? for my part, I could no more choose a man by my eye, than a shoe; one must draw them on a little, to see if they are right to one's foot.

Lady E. But I'd no more fool on with a man I could not like, than I'd wear a shoe that pinched me.

Lady B. Aye, but then a poor wretch tells one, he'll widen 'em, or do any thing, and is so civil and silly, that one does not know how to turn such a trifle, as a pair of shoes, or an heart, upon a fellow's hands again.

Lady E. Well, I confess you are very happily distinguished among most women of fortune, to have a man of my Lord Morelove's sense and quality so long and honourably in love with you: for now a days one hardly ever hears of such a thing as a man of quality in love with the woman he would marry. To be in love now, is only to have a design upon a woman, a modish way of declaring war against her virtue, which they generally attack first, by toasting up her vanity.

Lady B. Aye, but the world knows, that is not the case between my lord and me.

Lady E. Therefore I think you happy.

Lady B. Now I don't see it; I'll swear I'm better pleased to know there are a great many foolish fellows of quality that take occasion to toast me frequently.

Lady E. I vow I should not thank any gentleman for toasting me; and I have often won-

dered how a woman of your spirit could bear a great many other freedoms I have seen some men take with you.

Lady B. As how, my dear? Come, pr'ythee, be free with me, for you must know, I love dearly to hear my faults—Who is't you have observed to be too free with me?

Lady E. Why, there's my lord Foppington; could any woman but you bear to see him with a respectful fleer stare full in her face, draw up his breath, and cry—Gad you're handsome?

Lady B. My dear, fine fruit will have flies about it; but poor things, they do it no harm: for if you observe, people are generally most apt to choose that the flies have been busy with; ha, ha, ha!

Lady E. Thou art a strange giddy creature.

Lady B. That may be from so much circulation of thought, my dear.

Lady E. But my Lord Foppington's married, and one would not fool with him for his lady's sake; it may make her uneasy, and——

Lady B. Poor creature, her pride indeed makes her carry it off without taking any notice of it to me; though I know she hates me in her heart, and I can't endure malicious people, so I used to dine with her once a week, purely to give her disorder; if you had but seen when my lord and I fooled a little, the creature looked so ugly.

Lady E. But I should not think my reputation safe; my Lord Foppington's a man that talks often of his amours, but seldom speaks of favours that are refused him.

Lady B. Pshaw! will any thing a man says make a woman less agreeable? Will his talking spoil one's complexion, or put one's hair out of order?—and for reputation, look you, my dear, take it for a rule, that as amongst the lower rank of people, no woman wants beauty that has fortune; so among people of fortune, no woman wants virtue that has beauty; but an estate and beauty joined, are of an unlimited, nay, a power pontifical, make one not only absolute, but infallible—A fine woman's never in the wrong, or, if we were, 'tis not the strength of a poor creature's reason that can unfetter him.—Oh, how I love to hear a wretch curse himself for loving on, or now and then coming out with a——

Yet for the plague of human race
This devil has an angel's face.

Lady E. At this rate, I don't see you allow reputation to be at all essential to a fine woman.

Lady B. Just as much as honour to a great man. Power is always above scandal. Don't you hear people say the king of France owes most of his conquests to breaking his word; and would not the confederates have a fine time on't, if they were only to go to war with reproaches. Indeed, my dear, that jewel reputation is a very fanciful business; one shall not see a homely creature in town, but wears it in her mouth as monstrously as the Indians do bobs at their lips, and it really becomes them just alike.

Lady E. Have a care, my dear, of trusting too far to power alone: for nothing is more ridiculous than the fall of pride; and woman's pride at best may be suspected to be more a distrust than a real contempt of mankind: for when we have said all we can, a deserving husband is certainly our best happiness; and I don't question but my Lord Morelove's merit, in a little time, will make you think so too; for whatever airs you give yourself to the world, I'm sure your heart don't want good-nature.

Lady B. You are mistaken, I am very ill-natured, though your good humour won't let you see it.

Lady E. Then to give me a proof on't, let me see you refuse to go immediately and dine with me, after I have promised Sir Charles to bring you.

Lady B. Pray don't ask me.

Lady E. Why?

Lady B. Because, to let you see I hate good-nature, I'll go without asking, that you mayn't have the malice to say I did you a favour.

Lady E. Thou art a mad creature.

[*Exeunt arm in arm.*

SCENE II.—Changes to SIR CHARLES'S *Lodgings.*

LORD MORELOVE *and* SIR CHARLES *at Piquet.*

Sir C. Come, my lord, one single game for the *tout*, and so have done.

Lord M. No, hang 'em, I have enough of 'em! ill cards are the dullest company in the world—How much is it?

Sir C. Three parties.

Lord M. Fifteen pounds—very well.

[*While* LORD MORELOVE *counts out his money, a Servant gives* SIR CHARLES *a letter, which he reads to himself.*

Sir C. [*To the Servant.*] Give my service, say I have company dines with me, if I have time I'll call there in the afternoon—ha, ha, ha!

[*Exit Servant*

Lord M. What's the matter—there—

[*Paying the money.*

Sir C. The old affair—my Lady Graveairs.

Lord M. Oh! Pr'ythee how does that go on?

Sir C. As agreeably as a Chancery suit: for now it's come to the intolerable plague of my not being able to get rid on't; as you may see—— [*Giving the letter.*

Lord M. [*Reads.*] "Your behaviour since I came to Windsor has convinced me of your villany without my being surprised or angry at it. I desire you would let me see you at my lodgings immediately, where I shall have a better opportunity to convince you, that I never can, or positively will, be as I have been. Yours, &c." A very whimsical letter!—Faith, I think she has hard luck with you: if a man were obliged to have a mistress, her person and condition seem to be cut out for the ease of a lover: for she's a young, handsome, wild, well-jointured widow—But what's your quarrel?

Sir C. Nothing—she sees the coolness happens to be first on my side, and her business with me now, I suppose, is to convince me how heartily she's vexed that she was not beforehand with me.

Lord M. Her pride, and your indifference, must occasion a pleasant scene, sure; what do you intend to do?

Sir C. Treat her with a cold familiar air, till

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I pique her to forbid me her sight, and then take her at her word.

Lord M. Very gallant and provoking.

Enter a SERVANT.

Ser. Sir, my Lord Foppington—— [*Exit.*

Sir C. Oh—now, my lord, if you have a mind to be let into the mystery of making love without pain—here's one that's a master of the art, and shall declaim to you——

Enter LORD FOPPINGTON.

My dear lord Foppington!

Lord F. My dear agreeable! *Que je t' embrasse! Pardi! Il y a cent ans que je ne t'ai vu*—my lord, I am your lordship's most obedient humble servant.

Lord M. My lord, I kiss your hands—I hope we shall have you here some time; you seem to have laid in a stock of health to be in at the diversions of the place—You look extremely well.

Lord F. to see one's friends look so, my lord, may easily give a *vermeille* to one's complexion.

Sir C. Lovers in hope, my lord, always have a visible brilliant in their eyes and air.

Lord F. What dost thou mean, Charles?

Sir C. Come, come, confess what really brought you to Windsor, now you have no business there?

Lord F. Why, two hours, and six of the best nags in Christendom, or the devil drive me.

Lord M. You make haste, my lord.

Lord F. My lord, I always fly when I pursue—But they are well kept indeed—I love to have creatures go as I bid 'em; you have seen 'em, Charles, but so has all the world; Foppington's long tails are known on every road in England.

Sir C. Well, my lord, but how came they to bring you this road? You don't use to take these irregular jaunts without some design in your head of having more than nothing to do.

Lord F. Pshaw! Pox! pr'ythee, Charles, thou knowest I am a fellow *sans consequence*, be where I will.

Sir C. Nay, nay, this is too much among friends, my lord; come, come,—we must have it, your real business here?

Lord F. Why then, *entre nous*, there is a certain *fille de joye* about the court here, that loves winning at cards better than all the fine things I have been able to say to her—so I have brought an odd thousand bill in my pocket that I design, *tête à tête*, to play off with her at piquet, or so; and now the business is out.

Sir C. Ah, and a very good business too, my lord.

Lord F. If it be well done, Charles——

Sir C. That's as you manage your cards, my lord.

Lord M. This must be a woman of consequence, by the value you set upon her favours.

Sir C. Oh, nothing's above the price of a fine woman.

Lord F. Nay, look you, gentlemen, the price may not happen to be altogether so high neither.—For I fancy I know enough of the game to make it an even bet I get her for nothing.

Lord M. How so, my lord?

Lord F. Because, if she happen to lose a good sum to me, I shall buy her with her own money.

Lord M. That's new, I confess.

Lord F. You know, Charles, 'tis not impossible but I may be five hundred pounds deep with her—then bills may fall short, and the devil's in't if I want assurance to ask her to pay some way or other.

Sir C. And a man must be a churl indeed, that won't take a lady's personal security; ha, ha, ha!

Lord F. He, he, he! thou art a devil, Charles.

Lord M. Death! how happy is this coxcomb? [*Aside.*

Lord F. But to tell you the truth, gentlemen, I had another pressing temptation that brought me hither, which was—my wife.

Lord M. That's kind, indeed: my lady has been here this month; she'll be glad to see you.

Lord F. That I don't know; for I design this afternoon to send her to London.

Lord M. What! the same day you come, my lord? that would be cruel.

Lord F. Aye, but it will be mighty convenient; for she is positively of no manner of use in my amours.

Lord M. That's your fault; the town thinks her a very deserving woman.

Lord F. If she were a woman of the town, perhaps I should think so too; but she happens to be my wife; and when a wife is once given to deserve more than her husband's inclinations can pay, in my mind she has no merit at all.

Lord M. She's extremely well-bred, and of a very prudent conduct.

Lord F. Um—aye—the woman's proud enough.

Lord M. Add to this, all the world allows her handsome.

Lord F. The world's extremely civil, my lord; and I should take it as a favour done me, if they could find an expedient to unmarry the poor woman from the only man in the world that can't think her handsome.

Lord M. I believe there are a great many in the world that are sorry 'tis not in their power to unmarry her.

Lord F. I am a great many in the world's very humble servant, and whenever they find 'tis in their power, their high and mighty wisdoms may command me at a quarter of an hour's warning.

Lord M. Pray my lord, what did you marry for?

Lord F. To pay my debts at play, and disinherit my younger brother.

Lord M. But there are some things due to a wife.

Lord F. And there are some debts I don't care to pay—to both which I plead husband and my lord.

Lord M. If I should do so, I should expect to have my own coach stopped in the street, and to meet my wife with the windows up in a hackney.

Lord F. Then would I put in bail, and order a separate maintenance.

Lord M. So pay the double the sum of the debt, and be married for nothing.

Lord F. Now I think deferring a dun, and

getting rid of one's wife, are two the most agreeable sweets in the liberties of an English subject.

Lord M. If I were married, I would as soon part from my estate as my wife.

Lord F. Now I would not, sun-burn me if I would!

Lord M. Death! but since you are thus indifferent, my lord, why would you needs marry a woman of so much merit? Could not you have laid out your spleen upon some ill-natured shrew, that wanted the plague of an ill husband, and have let her alone to some plain, honest man of quality, that would have deserved her?

Lord F. Why faith, my lord, that might have been considered; but I really grew so passionately fond of her fortune, that, curse catch me, I was quite blind to the rest of her good qualities: for to tell you the truth, if it had been possible the old put of a peer could have tossed me in t'other five thousand for 'em, by my consent, she should have relinquished her merit and virtues to any of her younger sisters.

Sir C. Aye, aye, my lord, virtues in a wife are good for nothing but to make her proud, and put the world in mind of her husband's faults.

Lord F. Right, Charles: and strike me blind, but the women of virtue are now grown such idiots in love, that they expect of a man, just as they do of a coach-horse, that one's appetite, like t'other's flesh, should increase by feeding.

Sir C. Right, my lord, and don't consider that *toujours chapons bouillis* will never do with an English stomach.

Lord F. Ha, ha, ha! To tell you the truth, Charles, I have known so much of that sort of eating, that I now think, for a hearty meal, no wild fowl in Europe is comparable to a joint of Banstead mutton.

Lord M. How do you mean?

Lord F. Why, that for my part, I had rather have a plain slice of my wife's woman, than my guts full of e'er an Ortolan Duchess in Christendom.

Lord M. But I thought, my lord, your chief business now at Windsor had been your design upon a woman of quality.

Lord F. That's true, my lord; though I don't think your fine lady the best dish myself, yet a man of quality can't be without such things at his table.

Lord M. Oh, then you only desire the reputation of an affair with her.

Lord F. I think the reputation is the most inviting part of an amour with most women of quality.

Lord M. Why so, my lord?

Lord F. Why, who the devil would run through all the degrees of form and ceremony, that lead one up to the last favour, if it were not for the reputation of understanding the nearest way to get over the difficulty?

Lord M. But, my lord, does not the reputation of your being so general an undertaker frighten the women from engaging with you? For they say, no man can love but one at a time.

Lord F. That's just one more than ever I came up to: for stop my breath, if ever I loved one in my life.

Lord M. How do you get 'em then?

Lord F. Why, sometimes as they get other people; I dress and let them get me: or, if that wont do, as I got my title, I buy them.

Lord M. But how can you, that profess indifference think it worth your while to come so often up to the price of a woman of quality?

Lord F. Because you must know, my lord, that most of them begin now to come down to reason: I mean those that are to be had, for some die fools: but with the wiser sort, 'tis not, of late so very expensive; now and then a *partie quarre*, a jaunt or two in a hack to an Indian house, a little China, an odd thing for a gown, or so, and in three days after you meet her at the conveniency of trying it *chez Mademoiselle d' Epingle*.

Sir C. Aye, aye, my lord; and when you are there, you know, what between a little chat, a dish of tea, Mademoiselle's good humour, and a *petit chanson* or two, the devil's in't if a man can't fool away the time, 'till he sees how it looks upon her by candle-light.

Lord F. Heh, heh! well said, Charles? I' gad I fancy thee and I have unlaced many a reputation there——Your great lady is as soon undressed as her woman.

Lord M. I could never find it so——the shame or scandal of a repulse always made me afraid of attempting women of condition.

Sir C. Ha, ha! I'gad, my lord, you deserve to be ill-used; your modesty's enough to spoil any woman in the world; but my lord and I understand the sex a little better; we see plainly that women are only cold, as some men are brave from the modesty or fear of those that attack them.

Lord F. Right, Charles,—a man should no more give up his heart to a woman, than his sword to a bully; they are both as insolent as the devil after it.

Sir C. How do you like that, my lord?

[*Aside to* LORD MORELOVE.

Lord M. Faith, I envy him—But, my lord, suppose your inclination should stumble upon a woman truly virtuous, would not a severe repulse from such an one put you strangely out of countenance?

Lord F. Not at all, my lord—for if a man don't mind a box o' the ear in a fair struggle with a fresh country girl, why the deuce should he be concerned at an impertinent frown for an attack upon a woman of quality?

Lord M. Then you have no notion of a lady's cruelty?

Lord F. Ha, ha! let me blood, if I think there's a greater jest in nature. I am ready to crack my guts with laughing, to see a senseless flirt because the creature happens to have a little pride that she calls virtue about her, give herself all the insolent airs of resentment and disdain to an honest fellow, that all the while does not care three pinches of snuff if she and her virtues were to run with their last favours through the first regiment of guards—Ha, ha! it puts me in mind of an affair of mine, so impertinent——

Lord M. Oh, that's impossible, my lord—Pray let's hear it.

Lord F. Why I happened once to be very well in a certain man of quality's, family and his wife liked me.

Lord M. How do you know she liked you?

Lord F. Why, from the very moment I told her I liked her, she never durst trust herself at the end of a room with me.

Lord M. That might be her no liking you.

Lord F. My lord—Women of quality don't use to speak the thing plain—but to satisfy you I did not want encouragement, I never

came there in my life, but she did immediately smile, and borrow my snuff-box.

Lord M. She liked your snuff at least—Well, but how did she use you?

Lord F. By all that's infamous, she jilted me.

Lord M. How! jilt you?

Lord F. Ay, death's curse, she jilted me.

Lord M. Pray, let's hear.

Lord F. For when I was pretty well convinced she had a mind to me, I one day made her a hint of an appointment: upon which, with an insolent frown in her face, that made her look as ugly as the devil, she told me, that if ever I came thither again, her lord should know that she had forbidden me the house before.—Did you ever hear of such a slut?

Sir C. Intolerable!

Lord M. But how did her answer agree with you?

Lord F. Oh, passionately well! for I stared full in her face, and burst out a laughing; at which she turned upon her heel, and gave a crack with her fan like a coach whip, and bridled out of the room with the air and complexion of an incensed turkey-cock.

[*A Servant whispers* SIR CHARLES.

Lord M. What did you then?

Lord F. I—looked after her, gaped, threw up the sash, and fell a singing out of the window——so that you see, my lord, while a man is not in love, there's no great affliction in missing one's way to a woman.

Sir C. Ay, ay, you talk this very well, my lord; but now let's see how you dare behave yourself upon action—dinner's served, and the ladies stay for us—There's one within has been too hard for as brisk a man as yourself.

Lord M. I guess who you mean—Have a care, my lord, she'll prove your courage for you.

Lord F. Will she; then she's an undone creature. For let me tell you, gentlemen, courage is the whole mystery of making love, and of more use than conduct is in war; for the bravest fellow in Europe may beat his brains out against the stubborn walls of a town—But

——Women, born to be control'd,
Stoop to the forward and the bold.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—Continues.

Enter LORD MORELOVE *and* SIR CHARLES.

Lord M. So! Did I not bear up bravely?

Sir C. Admirably! with the best bred insolence in nature; you insulted like a woman of quality when her country-bred husband's jealous of her in the wrong place.

Lord M. Ha, ha! Did you observe, when I first came into the room, how carelessly she brushed her eyes over me, and when the company saluted me, stood all the while with her face to the window? Ha, ha!

Sir C. What astonished airs she gave herself, when you asked her, what made her so grave upon her old friends!

Lord M. And whenever I offered any thing in talk, what affected care she took to direct her observations of it to a third person!

Sir C. I observed she did not eat above the rump of a pigeon all dinner-time.

Lord M. And how she coloured when I told her, her ladyship had lost her stomach!

Sir C. If you keep your temper, she's undone.

Lord M. Provided she sticks to her pride, I believe I may.

Sir C. Ay, never fear her; I warrant, if the humour she is in, she would as soon part with her sense of feeling.

Lord M. Well, what's to be done next?

Sir C. Only observe her motions: for, by her behaviour at dinner, I am sure she designs to gall you with my Lord Foppington: if so, you must even stand her fire, and then play my Lady Graveairs upon her, whom I'll immediately pique, and prepare for your purpose.

Lord M. I understand you——the properest woman in the world too; for she'll certainly encourage the least offer from me, in hopes of revenging her slight upon you.

Sir C. Right; and the very encouragement she gives you, at the same time will give me a pretence to widen the breach of my quarrel with her.

Lord M. Besides, Charles, I own I am fond of an attempt that will forward a misunderstanding there, for your lady's sake. A woman so truly good in her nature, ought to have something more from a man, than bare occasions to prove her goodness.

Sir C. Why then, upon honour, my lord, to give you proof, that I am positively the best husband in the world, my wife—never yet found me out.

Lord M. That may be by her being the best wife in the world, she, may be, wont find you out.

Sir C. Nay, if she wont tell a man of his faults, when she sees them, how the deuce should he mend them? But, however, you see I am going to leave them off as fast as I can.

Lord M. Being tired of a woman, is, indeed, a pretty tolerable assurance of a man's not designing to fool on with her——Here she comes, and, if I don't mistake, brimful of reproaches——You can't take her in a better time——I'll leave you.

Enter LADY GRAVEAIRS.

Your ladyship's most humble servant. Is the company broke up, pray?

Lady G. No, my lord; they are just talking of basset; my Lord Foppington has a mind to tally, if your lordship would encourage the table.

Lord M. Oh, Madam, with all my heart!—But Sir Charles, I know, is hard to be got to it: I'll leave your ladyship to prevail with him. [*Exit.*

[SIR CHARLES *and* LADY GRAVEAIRS *salute coldly, and trifle some time before they speak.*

Lady G. Sir Charles, I sent you a note this morning——

Sir C. Yes, Madam, but there were some passages I did not expect from your ladyship; you seem to tax me with things that——

Lady G. Look you, Sir, 'tis not at all material whether I taxed you with any thing or no; I don't desire you to clear your-

self; upon my word, you may be very easy as to that matter; for my part, I am mighty well satisfied things are as they are; all I have to say to you is, that you need not give yourself the trouble to call at my lodgings this afternoon, if you should have time, as you were pleased to send me word—and so, your servant, Sir, that's all— [*Going.*

Sir C. Hold, Madam.

Lady G. Look you, Sir Charles, 'tis not your calling me back that will signify any thing, I can assure you.

Sir C. Why this extraordinary haste, Madam?

Lady G. In short, Sir Charles, I have taken a great many things from you of late, that you know I have often told you I would positively bear no longer. But I see things are in vain, and the more people strive to oblige people, the less they are thanked for it: and since there must be an end of one's ridiculousness one time or other, I don't see any time so proper as the present; and therefore, Sir, I desire you would think of things accordingly. Your servant. [*Going, he holds her.*

Sir C. Nay, Madam, let us start fair, however; you ought, at least, to stay till I am as ready as your ladyship; and then, if we must part,

Adieu, ye silent grots, and shady groves;
Ye soft amusements of our growing loves;
Adieu, ye whisper'd sighs, that fann'd the fire,
And all the thrilling joys of young desire.
[*Affectedly.*

Lady G. Oh, mighty well, Sir; I am very glad we are at last come to a right understanding, the only way I have long wished for; not but I'd have you to know I see your design through all your painted ease of resignation: I know you'd give your soul to make me uneasy now.

Sir C. Oh, fy, Madam! upon my word I would not make you uneasy, if it were in my power.

Lady G. Oh, dear Sir, you need not take such care, upon my word; you'll find I can part with you without the least disorder, I'll try, at least; and so, once more, and for ever, Sir, your servant: not but you must give me leave to tell you, as my last thought of you too, that I do think—you are a villain.
[*Exit hastily.*

Sir C. Oh, your very humble servant, Madam! [*Bowing low.*
What a charming quality is a woman's pride, that is strong enough to refuse a man her favours, when he's weary of them——Ah!

Re-enter LADY GRAVEAIRS.

Lady G. Look you, Sir Charles, don't presume upon the easiness of my temper: for to convince you that I am positively in earnest in this matter, I desire you would let me have what letters you have had of mine since you came to Windsor; and I expect you'll return the rest, as I will yours, as soon as we come to London.

Sir C. Upon my faith, Madam, I never keep any; I always put snuff in them, and so they wear out.

Lady G. Sir Charles, I must have them; for positively I wont stir without them.

Sir C. Ha! then I must be civil, I see. [*Aside.*]—Perhaps, Madam, I have no mind to part with them——or you.

Lady G. Look you, Sir, all those sort of things are in vain, now there's an end of every thing between us—If you say you wont give them, I must e'en get them as well as I can.

Sir C. Ha! that wont do then, I find. [*Aside.*

Lady G. Who's there? Mrs. Edging—Your keeping a letter, Sir, wont keep me, I'll assure you.

Enter EDGING.

Edg. Did your ladyship call me, Madam?

Lady G. Ay, child: pray do me the favour to fetch my cloak out of the dining room.

Edg. Yes, Madam.

Sir C. Oh, then there's hope again. [*Aside.*

Edg. Ha! she looks as if my master had quarrelled with her; I hope she's going away in a huff—she sha'n't stay for her cloak, I warrant ner——This is pure. [*Aside. Exit smiling.*

Lady G. Pray, Sir Charles, before I go, give me leave, now after all, to ask you—why you have used me thus?

Sir C. What is it you call usage, Madam?

Lady G. Why, then, since you will have it, how comes it you have been so grossly careless and neglectful of me of late? Only tell me seriously, wherein I have deserved this.

Sir C. Why, then, seriously, Madam——

Re-enter EDGING *with a cloak.*

We are interrupted——

Edg. Here is your ladyship's cloak, Madam.

Lady G. Thank you, Mrs. Edging—Oh, law! pray will you let somebody get me a chair to the door.

Edg. Humph—She might have told me that before, if she had been in such haste to go. [*Aside. Exit.*

Lady G. Now, Sir.

Sir C. Then, seriously, I say I am of late grown so very lazy in my pleasures, that I had rather lose a woman, than go through the plague and trouble of having or keeping her: and, to be free, I have found so much, even in my acquaintance with you, whom I confess to be a mistress in the art of pleasing, that I am from henceforth resolved to follow no pleasure that arises above the degree of amusement—And that woman that expects I should make her my business; why—like my business, is then in a fair way of being forgot. When once she comes to reproach me with vows and usage, and stuff—I had as lief hear her talk of bills, bonds, and ejectments: her passion becomes as troublesome as a law-suit, and I would as soon converse with my solicitor. In short, I shall never care sixpence for any woman that wont be obedient.

Lady G. I'll swear, Sir, you have a very free way of treating people; I am glad I am so well acquainted with your principles, however——And you would have me obedient?

Sir C. Why not? My wife's so; and I think she has as much pretence to be proud as your ladyship.

Lady G. Lard! is there no chair to be had, I wonder?

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Enter EDGING.

Edg. Here's a chair, Madam.

Lady G. 'Tis very well, Mrs. Edging; pray will you let somebody get me a glass of fair water?

Edg. Humph—her huff is almost over, I suppose—I see he's a villain still.

[*Aside. Exit.*

Lady G. Well, that was the prettiest fancy about obedience, sure, that ever was. Certainly, a woman of condition must be infinitely happy under the dominion of so generous a lover. But how came you to forget kicking and whipping all this while? Methinks you should not have left so fashionable an article out of your scheme of government.

Sir C. Um—No, there is too much trouble in that; though I have known them of admirable use in reformation of some humoursome gentlewomen.

Lady G. But one thing more, and I have done—Pray, what degree of spirit must the lady have, that is to make herself happy under so much freedom, order, and tranquillity?

Sir C. Oh, she must at least have as much spirit as your ladyship, or she'd give me no pleasure in breaking it.

Lady G. No, that would be troublesome. You had better take one that's broken to your hand: there are such souls to be hired, I believe; things that will rub your temples in an evening, till you fall fast asleep in their laps; creatures, too, that think their wages their reward. I fancy, at last, that will be the best method for the lazy passion of a married man, that has out-lived his any other sense of gratification.

Sir C. Look you, Madam; I have loved you very well a great while; now you would have me love you better and longer, which is not in my power to do; and I don't think there is any plague upon earth, like a dun that comes for more money than one is ever likely to be able to pay.

Lady G. A dun! Do you take me for a dun, Sir? Do I come a dunning to you?

[*Walks in a heat.*

Sir C. Hist! don't expose yourself——here's company——

Lady G. I care not—A dun! You shall see, Sir, I can revenge an affront, though I despise the wretch that offers it—A dun! Oh, I could die with laughing at the fancy! [*Exit.*

Sir C. So—she's in admirable order—Here comes my lord; and, I am afraid, in the very nick of his occasion for her.

Enter LORD MORELOVE.

Lord M. Oh, Charles, undone again! all is lost and ruined.

Sir C. What's the matter now?

Lord M. I have been playing the fool yonder, even to contempt; my senseless jealousy has confessed a weakness I shall never forgive myself. She has insulted on it to that degree too—I can't bear the thought—Oh, Charles, this devil still is mistress of my heart; and I could dash my brains out to think how grossly too I have let her know it.

Sir C. Ah, how it would tickle her if she saw you in this condition! ha, ha, ha!

Lord M. Pr'ythee don't torture me: think of some present ease, or I shall burst.

Sir C. Well, well, let's hear, pray—What has she done to you? Ha, ha!

Lord M. Why, ever since I left you, she has treated me with so much coolness and ill-nature, and that thing of a lord with so much laughing ease, such an acquainted, such a spiteful familiarity, that at the last, she saw, and triumphed in my uneasiness.

Sir C. Well, and so you left the room in a pet? Ha!

Lord M. Oh, worse, worse still! for at last, with half shame and anger in my looks, I thrust myself between my lord and her, pressed her by the hand, and in a whisper, trembling, begged her, in pity of herself and me, to show her good humour only where she knew it was truly valued: at which she broke from me with a cold smile, sat her down by the peer, whispered him, and burst into a loud laughter in my face.

Sir C. Ha, ha! then would I have given fifty pounds to have seen your face. Why, what in the name of common sense had you to do with humility? Will you never have enough on't? Death! 'twas setting a lighted match to gunpowder, to blow yourself up.

Lord M. I see my folly now, Charles. But what shall I do with the remains of life that she has left me?

Sir C. Oh, throw it at her feet, by all means! put on your tragedy face, catch fast hold of her petticoat, whip out your handkerchief, and in point blank verse, desire her, one way or other, to make an end of the business.

[*In a whining tone.*

Lord M. What a fool dost thou make me!

Sir C. I only show you as you came out of her hands, my lord.

Lord M. How contemptibly have I behaved myself!

Sir C. That's according as you bear her behaviour.

Lord M. Bear it! no—I thank thee, Charles; thou hast waked me now; and if I bear it ——What have you done with my Lady Graveairs?

Sir C. Your business, I believe——She's ready for you; she's just come down stairs, and if you don't make haste after her. I expect her back again, with a knife or a pistol presently.

Lord M. I'll go this minute.

Sir C. No, stay a little: here comes my lord; we'll see what we can get out of him, first.

Lord M. Methinks, now, I could laugh at her.

Enter LORD FOPPINGTON.

Lord F. Nay, pr'ythee, Sir Charles, let's have a little of thee—We have been *so chagrin* without thee, that, stop my breath, the ladies are gone half asleep to church for want of thy company.

Sir C. That's hard, indeed, while your lordship was among them. Is Lady Betty gone too?

Lord F. She was just upon the wing; but I caught her by the snuff-box, and she pretends to stay to see if I'll give it her again, or no.

Lord M. Death! 'tis that I gave her, and the only present she would ever receive from me—Ask him how he came by it.

[*Aside to* SIR CHARLES.

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Sir C. Pr'ythee don't be uneasy—Did she give it you, my lord?

Lord F. Faith, Charles, I can't say she did, or she did not; but we were playing the fool, and I took it—*à la*—Pshaw! I can't tell thee in French neither; but Horace touches it to a nicety—'twas *pignus direptum male pertinaci.*

Lord M. So—but I must bear it—If your lordship has a mind to the box, I'll stand by you in keeping of it.

Lord F. My lord, I am passionately obliged to you; but I am afraid I cannot answer your hazarding so much of the lady's favour.

Lord M. Not at all, my lord: 'tis possible I may not have the same regard to her frown that your lordship has.

Lord F. That's a bite, I am sure—he'd give a joint of his little finger to be as well with her as I am. [*Aside.*]—But here she comes—Charles, stand by me—Must not a man be a vain coxcomb now, to think this creature followed one?

Sir C. Nothing so plain, my lord.

Lord F. Flattering devil!

Enter LADY BETTY.

Lady B. Pshaw, my Lord Foppington!—pr'ythee don't play the fool now, but give me my snuff-box—Sir Charles, help me to take it from him.

Sir C. You know I hate trouble, Madam.

Lady B. Pooh! you'll make me stay till prayers are half over now.

Lord F. If you'll promise me not to go to church, I'll give it you.

Lady B. I'll promise nothing at all; for positively I will have it. [*Struggling with him.*

Lord F. Then, comparatively, I wont part with it. Ha, ha! [*Struggles with her.*

Lady B. Oh, you devil, you have killed my arm! Oh!——Well, if you'll let me have it, I'll give you a better.

Lord M. Oh, Charles! that has a view of distant kindness in it.

[*Aside to* SIR CHARLES.

Lord F. Nay, now I keep it superlatively—I find there's a secret value in it.

Lady B. Oh, dismal! Upon my word, I am only ashamed to give it to you. Do you think I would offer such an odious fancied thing to any body I had the least value for?

Sir C. Now it comes a little nearer, methinks it does not seem to be any kindness at all. [*Aside to* LORD MORELOVE.

Lord F. Why, really, Madam, upon second view, it has not extremely the mode of a lady's utensil. Are you sure it never held any thing but snuff?

Lady B. Oh, you monster!

Lord F. Nay, I only ask, because it seems to me to have very much the air and fancy of Monsieur Smoakandsot's tobacco box.

Lord M. I can bear no more.

Sir C. Why, don't then; I'll step in to the company, and return to your relief immediately. [*Exit.*

Lord M. [*To* LADY B.] Come, Madam, will your ladyship give me leave to end the difference. Since the slightness of the thing may let you bestow it without any mark of favour, shall I beg it of your ladyship.

Lady B. Oh, my lord, nobody sooner—I beg you give it, my lord.

[*Looking earnestly on* LORD F. *who, smiling, gives it to* LORD M. *and then bows gravely to her.*

Lord M. Only to have the honour of restoring it to your lordship; and if there be any other trifle of mine your lordship has a fancy to, though it were a mistress, I don't know any person in the world that has so good a claim to my resignation.

Lord F. Oh, my lord, this generosity will distract me!

Lord M. My lord, I do you but common justice. But from your conversation, I had never known the true value of the sex. You positively understand them the best of any man breathing; therefore I think every one of common prudence ought to resign to you.

Lord F. Then, positively, your lordship is the most obliging person in the world; for I'm sure your judgment can never like any woman that is not the finest creature in the universe.

[*Bowing to* LADY BETTY.

Lord M. Oh, your lordship does me too much honour! I have the worst judgment in the world; no man has been more deceived in it.

Lord F. Then your lordship, I presume, has been apt to choose in a mask, or by candlelight.

Lord M. In a mask, indeed, my lord, and of all masks the most dangerous.

Lord F. Pray, what's that, my lord?

Lord M. A bare face.

Lord F. Your lordship will pardon me, if I don't so readily comprehend how a woman's bare face can hide her face.

Lord M. It often hides her heart, my lord; and therefore I think it sometimes a more dangerous mask than a piece of velvet: that's rather a mark than a disguise of an ill woman. But the mischiefs skulking behind a beauteous form give no warning; they are always sure, fatal, and innumerable.

Lady B. Oh, barbarous aspersion! my lord Foppington, have you nothing to say for the poor women?

Lord F. I must confess, Madam, nothing of this nature ever happened in my course of amours. I always judge the beauteous part of a woman to be the most agreeable part of her composition; and when once a lady does me the honour to toss that into my arms, I think myself obliged, in good nature, not to quarrel about the rest of her equipage.

Lady B. Why, ay, my lord, there's some good humour in that now.

Lord M. He's happy in a plain English stomach, Madam; I could recommend a dish that's perfectly to your lordship's *gout*, where beauty is the only sauce to it.

Lady B. So—

Lord F. My lord, when my wine's right, I never care it should be zested.

Lord M. I know some ladies would thank you for that opinion.

Lady B. My Lord Morelove is really grown such a churl to the women, I don't only think he is not, but can't conceive how he ever could be in love.

Lord M. Upon my word, Madam, I once thought I was. [*Smiling.*

Lady B. Fy, fy! how could you think so? I fancy now you had only a mind to domineer over some poor creature, and so you thought you were in love—ha, ha!

Lord M. The lady I loved, Madam, grew so unfortunate in her conduct, that at last she brought me to treat her with the same indifference and civility as I now pay your ladyship.

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Lady B. And, ten to one, just at that time she never thought you such tolerable company.

Lord M. That I can't say, Madam; for at that time she grew so affected, there was no judging of her thoughts at all. [*Mimicking her.*

Lady B. What, and so you left the poor lady. Oh, you inconstant creature.

Lord M. No, Madam, to have loved her on had been inconstancy; for she was never two hours together the same woman.

[LADY B. *and* LORD M. *seem to talk.*

Lord F. [*Aside.*] Ha, ha, ha! I see he has a mind to abuse her; so I'll even give him an opportunity of doing his business with her at once for ever—My lord, I perceive your lordship is going to be good company to the lady; and, for her sake, I don't think it good manners in me to disturb you—

Enter SIR CHARLES.

Sir C. My Lord Foppington—

Lord F. Oh, Charles! I was just wanting thee—Hark thee—I have three thousand secrets for thee—I have made such discoveries! to tell thee all in one word, Morelove's as jealous of me as the devil, he, he he!

Sir C. Is it possible? Has she given him any occasion?

Lord F. Only rallied him to death upon my account; she told me, within, just now, she'd use him like a dog, and begged me to draw off for an opportunity.

Sir C. Oh, keep in while the scent lies, and she is your own, my lord.

Lord F. I can't tell that, Charles: but I am sure she is fairly unharboured; and when once I throw off my inclinations, I usually follow them till the game has enough on't; and between thee and I, she is pretty well blown too; she can't stand long, I believe; for, curse catch me, if I have not rid down half a thousand pounds after her already.

Sir C. What do you mean?

Lord F. I have lost five hundred to her at piquet since dinner.

Sir C. You are a fortunate man, faith; you are resolved not to be thrown out, I see.

Lord F. Hang it, what should a man come out for, if he does not keep up to the sport?

Sir C. Well pushed, my lord.

Lord F. Tavo! have at her—

Sir C. Down, down, my lord—ah! 'ware haunches!

Lord F. Ah, Charles! [*Embracing him.*]—Pr'ythee, let's observe a little; there's a foolish cur, now I have run her to a stand, has a mind to be at her by himself, and thou shalt see, she wont stir out of her way for him.

[*They stand aside.*

Lord M. Ha, ha! your ladyship is very grave of a sudden; you look as if your lover had insolently recovered his common senses.

Lady B. And your lordship is so very gay, and unlike yourself, one would swear you were just come from the pleasure of making your mistress afraid of you.

Lord M. No faith, quite contrary; for, do you know, Madam, I have just found out, that, upon your account, I have made myself one of the most ridiculous puppies upon the face of the earth—I have, upon my faith—nay, and so extravagantly such, ha, ha, ha! that it is at last become a jest even to myself, and I cann't help laughing at it for the soul of me, ha, ha, ha!

Lady B. I want to cure him of that laugh, now. [*Aside.*]—My lord, since you are so generous, I'll tell you another secret—Do you know, too, that I still find, (spite of all your great wisdom, and my contemptible qualities, as you are pleased, now and then, to call them) do you know, I say, that I see, under all this, that you still love me with the same helpless passion: and can your vast foresight imagine I wont use you accordingly for these extraordinary airs you are pleased to give yourself?

Lord M. Oh, by all means, Madam! 'tis fit you should, and I expect it, whenever it is in your power—Confusion! [*Aside.*

Lady B. My lord, you have talked to me this half hour, without confessing pain.—[*Pauses, and affects to gape.*] Only remember it.

Lord M. Hell and tortures!

Lady B. What did you say, my lord?

Lord M. Fire and furies!

Lady B. Ha, ha! he's disordered—Now I am easy—My Lord Foppington, have you a mind to your revenge at piquet?

Lord F. I have always a mind to an opportunity of entertaining your ladyship, Madam.

[LADY B. *coquets with* LORD F.

Lord M. Oh, Charles! the insolence of this woman might furnish out a thousand devils.

Sir C. And your temper is enough to furnish out a thousand such women. Come away; I have business for you upon the terrace.

Lord M. Let me but speak one word to her.

Sir C. Not a syllable: the tongue's a weapon you'll always have the worst at; for I see you have no guard, and she carries a devilish edge.

Lady B. My lord, don't let any thing I have said frighten you away; for if you have the least inclination to stay and rail, you know the old conditions; 'tis but your asking me pardon the next day, and you may give your passion any liberty you think fit.

Lord M. Daggers and death!

Sir C. Is the man distracted?

Lord M. Let me speak to her now, or I shall burst—

Sir C. Upon condition you'll speak no more of her to me, my lord; do as you please.

Lord M. Pr'ythee, pardon me—I know not what to do.

Sir C. Come along; I'll set you to work, I warrant you—Nay, nay, none of your parting ogles—Will you go?

Lord M. Yes—and I hope for ever—

[*Exit* SIR C. *pulling away* LORD M.

Lord F. Ha, ha, ha! Did ever mortal monster set up for a lover with such unfortunate qualifications?

Lady B. Indeed, my Lord Morelove has something strangely singular in his manner.

Lord F. I thought I should have burst to see the creature pretend to rally, and give himself the airs of one of us—But, run me through, Madam, your ladyship pushed like a fencing master; that last thrust was a *coup de grace*, I believe; I'm afraid his honour will hardly meet your ladyship in haste again.

Lady B. Not unless his second, Sir Charles, keeps him better in practice, perhaps—Well the humour of this creature has done me signal service to-day. I must keep it up, for fear of a second engagement. [*Aside.*

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Lord F. Never was a poor wit so foiled at his own weapon, sure!

Lady B. Wit! had he ever any pretence to it?

Lord F. Ha, ha! he has not much in love, I think, though he wears the reputation of a very pretty young fellow among some sort of people; but strike me stupid, if ever I could discover common sense in all the progress of his amours; he expects a woman should like him for endeavouring to convince her, that she has not one good quality belonging to the whole composition of her soul and body.

Lady B. That, I suppose, is only in a modest hope that she'll mend her faults, to qualify herself for his vast merit, ha, ha!

Lord F. Poor Morelove! I see she can't endure him. [*Aside.*

Lady B. Or if one really had all those faults, he does not consider that sincerity in love is as much out of fashion as sweet snuff; nobody takes it now.

Lord F. Oh, no mortal, Madam, unless it be here and there a 'squire, that's making his lawful court to the cherry-cheek charms of my Lord Bishop's great fat daughter in the country.

Lady B. Oh! what a surfeiting couple has he put together!—

[*Throwing her hand carelessly upon his.*

Lord F. Fond of me, by all that's tender—— Poor fool, I'll give thee ease immediately. [*Aside.*]—But, Madam, you were pleased just now to offer me my revenge at piquet— Now here's nobody within, and I think we can't make use of a better opportunity.

Lady B. Oh! no: not now, my lord!—I have a favour I would fain beg of you first.

Lord F. But time, Madam, is very precious in this place, and I shall not easily forgive myself if I don't take him by the forelock.

Lady B. But I have a great mind to have a little more sport with my Lord Morelove first, and would fain beg your assistance.

Lord F. Oh! with all my heart; and upon second thoughts, I don't know but piquing a rival in public may be as good sport as being well with a mistress in private: for, after all, the pleasure of a fine woman is like that of her virtue, not so much in the thing as the reputation of having it. [*Aside.*]—Well, Madam, but how can I serve you in this affair?

Lady B. Why, methought, as my Lord Morelove went out, he showed a stern resentment in his look that seemed to threaten me with rebellion, and downright defiance: now I have a great fancy that you and I should follow him to the Terrace, and laugh at his resolution before he has time to put it in practice.

Lord F. And so punish his fault before he commits it; ha, ha, ha!

Lady B. Nay, we wont give him time, if his courage should fail, to repent it.

Lord F. Ha, ha, ha! let me blood, if I don't long to be at it, ha, ha!

Lady B. Oh! 'twill be such diversion to see him bite his lips, and broil within, only with seeing us ready to split our sides in laughing at nothing! ha, ha!

Lord F. Ha, ha! I see the creature does really like me. [*Aside.*] And then, Madam, to hear him hum a broken piece of a tune, in affectation of his not minding us—'twill be so foolish, when we know he loves us to death all the while, ha, ha!

Lady B. And if at last his sage mouth should open in surly contradiction of our humour, then will we, in pure opposition to his, immediately fall foul upon every thing that is not gallant and fashionable: constancy shall be the mark of age and ugliness, virtue a jest, we'll rally discretion out of doors, lay gravity at our feet, and only love, free love, disorder, liberty, and pleasure, be our standing principles.

Lord F. Madam, you transport me: for if ever I was obliged to nature for any one tolerable qualification, 'twas positively the talent of being exuberantly pleasant upon this subject—I am impatient—my fancy's upon the wing already—let's fly to him.

Lady B. No, no; stay till I am just got out; our going together wont be so proper.

Lord F. As your ladyship pleases, Madam— But when this affair is over, you wont forget that I have a certain revenge due.

Lady B. Ay, ay! after supper I am for you—Nay, you sha'n't stir a step, my lord!—

[*Seeing her to the door.*

Lord F. Only to tell you, you have fixed me yours to the last existence of my soul's eternal entity—

Lady B. O, your servant. [*Exit.*

Lord F. Ha, ha! stark mad for me, by all that's handsome? Poor Morelove! That a fellow, who has ever been abroad, should think a woman of her spirit is to be taken by a regular siege, as the confederates do towns, when so many of the French successes might have shown him the surest way is to whisper the governor. —How can a coxcomb give himself the fatigue of bombarding a woman's understanding, when he may with so much ease make a friend of her constitution—I'll see if I can show him a little French play with Lady Betty—let me see —ay, I'll make an end of it the old way, get her into piquet at her own lodgings—not mind one tittle of my play, give her every game before she's half up, that she may judge of the strength of my inclination by my haste of losing up to her price; then of a sudden, with a familiar leer, cry—rat piquet—sweep counters, cards, and money all upon the floor & *donc —l'affaire est faite.* [*Exit.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—The Castle Terrace.

Enter LADY BETTY *and* LADY EASY.

Lady E. My dear, you really talk to me as if I were your lover, and not your friend: or else I am so dull, that by all you've said I can't make the least guess at your real thoughts—Can you be serious for a moment!

Lady B. Not easily: but I would do more to oblige you.

Lady E. Then pray deal ingenuously, and tell me without reserve, are you sure you don't love my Lord Morelove?

Lady B. Then seriously—I think not—But because I wont be positive you shall judge by the worst of my symptoms—First, I own I like his conversation, his person has neither fault nor beauty—well enough—I don't remember I ever secretly wished myself married to him, or—that I ever seriously resolved against it.

Lady E. Well, so far you are tolerably safe: —But come—as to his manner of addressing you, what effect has that had?

Lady B. I am not a little pleased to observe

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few men follow a woman with the same fatigue and spirit that he does me—am more pleased when he lets me use him ill; and if ever I have a favourable thought of him, 'tis when I see he can't bear that usage.

Lady E. Have a care; that last is a dangerous symptom—he pleases your pride I find.

Lady B. Oh! perfectly: in that—I own no mortal ever can come up to him.

Lady E. But now, my dear, now comes the main point—Jealousy! Are you sure you have never been touched with it? Tell me that with a safe conscience, and then I pronounce you clear.

Lady B. Nay then I defy him: for positively I was never jealous in my life.

Lady E. How, Madam! have you never been stirred enough, to think a woman strangely forward for being a little familiar in talk with him? Or, are you sure his gallantry to another never gave you the least disorder? Were you never, upon no accident, in an apprehension of losing him?

Lady B. Hah! Why, Madam—Bless me!—wh—wh—why sure you don't call this jealousy, my dear?

Lady E. Nay, nay, that is not the business—Have you ever felt any thing of this nature, Madam?

Lady B. Lord! don't be so hasty, my dear—any thing of this nature—O Lud! I swear I don't like it: dear creature bring me off here; for I am half frighted out of my wits.

Lady E. Nay, if you can rally upon't, your wound is not over deep, I'm afraid.

Lady B. Well that's comfortably said, however.

Lady E. But come to the point——How far have you been jealous?

Lady B. Why,——O, bless me! he gave the music one night to my Lady Languish here upon the terrace: and (though she and I were very good friends) I remember I could not speak to her in a week for't——Oh!

Lady E. Nay, now you may laugh if you can: for take my word, the marks are upon you——But come what else?

Lady B. O, nothing else, upon my word, my dear!

Lady E. Well, one word more, and then I give sentence: suppose you were heartily convinced, that he actually followed another woman?

Lady B. But, pray, my dear, what occasion is there to suppose any such thing at all?

Lady E. Guilty, upon my honour.

Lady B. Pshaw! I defy him to say, that ever I owned any inclination for him.

Lady E. No, but you have given him terrible leave to guess it.

Lady B. If ever you see us meet again, you will have but little reason to think so, I can assure you.

Lady E. That I shall see presently; for here comes Sir Charles, and I'm sure my lord can't be far off.

Enter SIR CHARLES.

Sir C. Servant, Lady Betty——my dear, how do you do?

Lady E. At your service, my dear——but, pray what have you done with my Lord Morelove?

Lady B. Ay, Sir Charles, pray, how does your pupil do? Have you any hopes of him? Is he docible?

Sir C. Well, Madam, to confess your triumph over me, as well as him, I own my hopes of him are lost. I offered what I could to his instruction, but he is incorrigibly yours, and undone—and the news, I presume does not displease your ladyship.

Lady B. Fy, fy, Sir Charles, you disparage your friend; I am afraid you don't take pains with him.

Sir C. Ha! I fancy, Lady Betty, your good-nature wont let you sleep a nights: don't you love dearly to hurt people?

Lady B. Oh! your servant: then, without a jest the man is so unfortunate in his want of patience, that, let me die, if I don't often pity him.

Sir C. Ha! strange goodness—O, that I were your lover for a month or two?

Lady B. What then?

Sir C. I would make that pretty heart's blood of your's ache in a fortnight.

Lady B. Hugh——I should hate you: your assurance would make your address intolerable.

Sir C. I believe it would, for I'd never address you at all.

Lady B. Oh! you clown you!

[*Hitting him with her fan.*

Sir C. Why, what to do? to feed a diseased pride, that's eternally breaking out in the affectation of an ill-nature that—in my conscience I believe is but affectation.

Lady B. You, or your friend, have no great reason to complain of my fondness, I believe. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir C. [*Looking earnestly at her.*] Thou insolent creature! How can you make a jest of a man, whose whole life's but one continued torment, from your want of common gratitude?

Lady B. Torment! for my part, I really believe him as easy as you are.

Sir C. Poor intolerable affectation! You know the contrary, you know him blindly yours, you know your power, and the whole pleasure of your life's the poor and low abuse of it.

Lady B. Pray how do I abuse it—if I have any power.

Sir C. You drive him to extremes that make him mad, then punish him for acting against his reason: you've almost turned his brain; his common judgment fails him; he is now, at this very moment, driven by his despair upon a project, in hopes to free him from your power, that I am sensible, and so must every one be that has his sense, of course must ruin him with you for ever. I almost blush to think of it, yet your unreasonable disdain has forced him to it; and should he now suspect I offered but a hint of it to you, and in contempt of his design, I know he'd call my life to answer it: but I have no regard to men in madness, I rather choose for once to trust in your good-nature, in hopes the man, whom your unwary beauty had made miserable, your generosity would scorn to make ridiculous.

Lady B. Sir Charles, you charge me very home; I never had it in my inclination to make any thing ridiculous that did not deserve it. Pray, what is this business you think so extravagant in him?

Sir C. Something so absurdly rash and bold you'll hardly forgive even me that tell it you.

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Lady B. O fy! If it be a fault, Sir Charles, I shall consider it as his, not yours. Pray, what is it?

Lady E. I long to know, methinks.

Sir C. You may be sure he did not want my dissuasions from it.

Lady B. Let's hear it.

Sir C. Why this man, whom I have known to love you with such excess of generous desire, whom I have heard in his extatic praises on your beauty talk, till from the soft heat of his distilling thoughts, the tears have fallen—

Lady B. Oh! Sir Charles—— [*Blushing.*

Sir C. Nay, grudge not, since 'tis past, to hear what was (though you contemned it) once his merit; but now, I own, that merit ought to be forgotten.

Lady B. Pray, Sir, be plain.

Sir C. This man, I say, whose unhappy passion has so ill succeeded with you, at last has forfeited all his hopes (into which, pardon me, I confess my friendship had lately flattered him) his hopes of even deserving now your lowest pity or regard.

Lady B. You amaze me——For I can't suppose his utmost malice dares assault my reputation—and what—

Sir C. No, but he maliciously presumes the world will do it for him; and indeed he has taken no unlikely means to make them busy with their tongues: for he is this moment upon the open terrace, in the highest public gallantry with my Lady Graveairs. And to convince the world and me, he said, he was not that tame lover we fancied him, he'd venture to give her music to-night: nay, I heard him, before my face, speak to one of the hautboys to engage the rest, and desired they would all take their directions only from my Lady Graveairs.

Lady B. My Lady Graveairs! truly I think my lord's very much in the right on't——for my part, Sir Charles, I don't see any thing in this that's so very ridiculous, nor indeed that ought to make me think either the better or the worse of him for't.

Sir C. Pshaw! pshaw! Madam, you and I know 'tis not in his power to renounce you; this is but the poor disguise of resenting passion, vainly ruffled to a storm, which the least gentle look from you can reconcile at will, and laugh into a calm again.

Lady B. Indeed, Sir Charles, I sha'n't give myself that trouble, I believe.

Sir C. So I told him, Madam: are not all your complaints, said I, already owing to her pride; and can you suppose this public defiance of it (which you know you can't make good too) wont incense her more against you?—That's what I'd have, said he, staring wildly; I care not what becomes of me, so I but live to see her piqued at it.

Lady B. Upon my word, I fancy my lord will find himself mistaken—I sha'n't be piqued, I believe—I must first have a value for the thing I lose, before it piques me: piqued! ha, ha, ha! [*Disordered.*

Sir C. Madam, you've said the very thing I urged to him; I know her temper so well, said I, that though she doated on you, if you once stood out against her, she'll sooner burst than show the least motion by uneasiness.

Lady B I can assure you, Sir Charles, my lord wont find himself deceived in your opinion——piqued!

Sir C. She has it. [*Aside.*

Lady E. Alas, poor woman! how little do our passions make us!

Lady B. Not but I would advise him to have a little regard to my reputation in this business; I would have him take heed of publicly affronting me.

Sir C. Right, Madam, that's what I strictly warned him of; for, among friends, whenever the world sees him follow another woman, the malicious tea-tables will be very apt to be free with your ladyship.

Lady B. I'd have him consider that, methinks.

Sir C. But, alas! Madam, 'tis not in his power to think with reason; his mad resentment has destroyed even his principles of common honesty: he considers nothing but a senseless proud revenge, which in his fit of lunacy 'tis impossible that either threats or danger can dissuade him from.

Lady B. What! does he defy me, threaten me! then he shall see that I have passions too, and know, as well as he, to stir my heart against any pride that dares insult me. Does he suppose I fear him? Fear the little malice of a slighted passion, that my own scorn has stung into a despised resentment! Fear him! Oh! it provokes me to think he dare have such a thought!

Lady E. Dear creature, don't disorder yourself so.

Lady B. Let me but live to see him once more within my power, and I'll forgive the rest of fortune.

Lady E. Well, I am certainly very ill-natured; for though I see this news has disturbed my friend, I can't help being pleased with any hopes of my Lady Graveairs being otherwise disposed of. [*Aside.*] My dear, I'm afraid you have provoked her a little too far.

Sir C. Oh! not at all——You shall see—I'll sweeten her, and she'll cool like a dish of tea.

Lady B. I may see him with his complaining face again—

Sir C. I am sorry, Madam, you so wrongly judge of what I've told you; I was in hopes to have stirred your pity not your anger; I little thought your generosity would punish him for faults, which you yourself resolved he should commit—Yonder he comes, and all the world with him: might I advise you, Madam, you should not resent the thing at all——I would not so much as stay to see him in his fault; nay, I'd be the last that heard of it; nothing can sting him more, or so justly punish his folly as your utter neglect of it.

Lady E. Come, dear creature, be persuaded, and go home with me; Indeed it will show more indifference to avoid him.

Lady B. No, Madam, I'll oblige his vanity for once, and stay to let him see how strangely he has piqued me.

Sir C. [*Aside.*] O not at all to speak of; you had as good part with a little of that pride of yours, or I shall yet make it a very troublesome companion to you.

[*Goes from them and whispers* LORD MORELOVE.

Enter LORD FOPPINGTON; *a little after,* LORD MORELOVE, *and* LADY GRAVEAIRS.

Lord F. Ladies, your servant—O! we have wanted you beyond reparation—such diversion!

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Lady B. Well, my lord, have you seen my Lord Morelove?

Lord F. Seen him! ha, ha, ha, ha!—Oh! I have such things to tell you, Madam—you'll die—

Lady B. O, pray let's hear them, I was never in a better humour to receive them.

Lord F. Hark you. [*They whisper.*

Lord M. So she's engaged already. [*To* SIR C.

Sir C. So much the better; make but a just advantage of my success, and she's undone.

Lord F. } *Lady B.* } Ha, ha, ha!

Sir C. You see already what ridiculous pains she is taking to stir your jealousy and cover her own.

Lord F. } *Lady B.* } Ha, ha, ha!

Lord M. O, never fear me; for, upon my word, it now appears ridiculous even to me.

Sir C. And hark you— [*Whispers* LORD M.

Lady B. And so the widow was as full of airs as his lordship?

Sir C. Only observe that, and it is impossible you can fail. [*Aside.*

Lord M. Dear Charles, you have convinced me, and I thank you.

Lady G. My Lord Morelove! What, do you leave us?

Lord M. Ten thousand pardons, Madam, I was but just——

Lady G. Nay, nay, no excuses, my lord, so you will but let us have you again.

Sir C. [*Aside to* LADY G.] I see you have good humour, Madam, when you like your company.

Lady G. And you, I see, for all your mighty thirst of dominion, could stoop to be obedient, if one thought it worth one's while to make you so.

Sir C. Ha! power would make her an admirable tyrant. [*Aside.*

Lady E. [*Observing* SIR C. *and* LADY G.] So there's another couple have quarrelled too, I find—Those airs to my Lord Morelove, look as if designed to recover Sir Charles into jealousy: I'll endeavour to join the company, and it may be, that will let me into the secret. [*Aside.*]—My Lord Foppington, I vow this is very uncomplaisant, to engross so agreeable a part of the company to yourself.

Sir C. Nay, my lord, this is not fair, indeed, to enter into secrets among friends!—Ladies, what say you? I think we ought to declare against it.

Lady B. Well, ladies, I ought only to ask your pardon: my lord's excusable, for I would haul him into a corner.

Lord F. I swear 'tis very hard, ho! I observe, two people of extreme condition can no sooner grow particular, but the multitude of both sexes are immediately up, and think their properties invaded—

Lady B. Odious multitude——

Lord F. Perish the canaille.

Lady G. O, my lord, we women have all reason to be jealous of Lady Betty Modish's power.

Lord M. [*To* LADY B.] As the men, Madam, all have of my Lord Foppington; besides, favourites of great merit discourage those of an inferior class for their prince's service; he has already lost you one of your retinue, Madam.

Lady B. Not at all, my lord; he has only made room for another: one must sometimes make vacancies, or there could be no preferment.

Lady E. Ha, ha! Ladies' favours, my lord, like places at court, are not always held for life you know.

Lady B. No, indeed! if they were, the poor fine women would be always used like their wives, and no more minded than the business of the nation.

Lady E. Have a care, Madam: an undeserving favourite has been the ruin of many a prince's empire.

Lord F. Ha, ha! Upon my soul, Lady Betty, we must grow more discreet; for positively if we go on at this rate, we shall have the world throw you under the scandal of constancy; and I shall have all the swords of condition at my throat for a monopolist.

Lord M. O! there's no great fear of that, my lord; though the men of sense give it over, there will be always some idle fellows vain enough to believe their merit may succeed as well as your lordship's.

Lady B. Or, if they should not, my lord, cast lovers, you know, need not fear being long out of employment, while there are so many well-disposed people in the world—There are generally neglected wives, stale maids, or charitable widows, always ready to relieve the necessities of a disappointed passion—and, by the way, hark you, Sir Charles—

Lord M. [*Aside.*] So! she's stirred I see; for all her pains to hide it—she would hardly have glanced an affront at a woman she was not piqued at.

Lady G. [*Aside.*] That wit was thrown at me, I suppose; but I'll return it.

Lady B. [*Softly to* SIR C.] Pray, how come you all this while to trust your mistress so easily?

Sir C. One is not so apt, Madam, to be alarmed at the liberties of an old acquaintance, as perhaps your ladyship ought to be at the resentment of a hard used, honourable lover.

Lady B. Suppose I were alarmed, how does that make you easy?

Sir C. Come, come, be wise at last; my trusting them together, may easily convince you, that (as I told you before,) I know his addresses to her are only outward, and it will be your fault now, if you let him go on till the world thinks him in earnest, and a thousand busy tongues are set upon malicious inquiries into your reputation.

Lady B. Why, Sir Charles, do you suppose, while he behaves himself as he does, that I wont convince him of my indifference?

Sir C. But hear me, Madam——

Lady G. [*Aside.*] The air of that whisper looks as if the lady had a mind to be making her peace again; and 'tis possible, his worship's being so busy in the matter too, may proceed as much from his jealousy of my lord with me, as friendship to her; at least I fancy so: therefore I'm resolved to keep her still piqued, and prevent it, though it be only to gall him——Sir Charles, that is not fair to take a privilege you just now declared against in my Lord Foppington.

Lord M. Well observed, Madam.

Lady G. Besides, it looks so affected to whisper, when every body guesses the secret.

Lord M. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady B. Oh! Madam, your pardon in particular: but it is possible you may be mistaken:

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the secrets of people that have any regard to their actions, are not so soon guessed, as theirs that have made a confidant of the whole town.

Lord F. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady G. A coquette, in her affected airs of disdain to a revolted lover, I'm afraid, must exceed your ladyship in prudence, not to let the world see, at the same time, she'd give her eyes to make her peace with him: ha, ha!

Lord M. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady B. 'Twould be a mortification, indeed, if it were in the power of a fading widow's charms to prevent it; and the man must be miserably reduced, sure, that could bear to live buried in woollen, or take up with the motherly comforts of a swan-skin petticoat.—Ha, ha!

Lord F. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady G. Widows, it seems, are not so squeamish to their interest; they know their own minds, and take the man they like, though it happens to be one that a froward vain girl has disobliged, and is pining to be friends with.

Lord M. Nay, though it happens to be one that confesses he once was fond of a piece of folly, and afterwards ashamed on't.

Lady B. Nay, my lord, there's no standing against two of you.

Lord F. No, faith, that's odds at tennis, my lord: not but if your ladyship pleases, I'll endeavour to keep your back-hand a little; though upon my soul you may safely set me up at the line: for, knock me down, if ever I saw a rest of wit better played, than that last, in my life—What say you, Madam, shall we engage?

Lady B. As you please, my lord.

Lord F. Ha, ha, ha! *Allons! tout de bon jouer, mi lor.*

Lord M. O, pardon me, Sir, I shall never think myself in any thing a match for the lady.

Lord F. To you, Madam.

Lady B. That's much, my lord, when the world knows you have been so many years teasing me to play the fool with you.

Lord F. Ah, *bien-joué:* Ha, ha, ha!

Lord M. At that game, I confess, your ladyship has chosen a much properer person to improve your hand with.

Lord F. To me, Madam——My lord, I presume whoever the lady thinks fit to play the fool with, will at least be able to give as much envy as the wise person that had not wit enough to keep well with her when he was so.

Lady G. Oh! my lord! Both parties must needs be greatly happy; for I dare swear, neither will have any rivals to disturb them.

Lord M. Ha, ha!

Lady B. None that will disturb them, I dare swear.

Lord F. Ha, ha, ha!

Lord M.
Lady G. } Ha, ha, ha!
Lady B.

Sir C. I don't know, gentlefolks——but you are all in extreme good humour, methinks, I hope there's none of it affected.

Lady E. I should be loth to answer for any but my Lord Foppington. [*Aside.*

Lady B. Mine is not, I'll swear.

Lord M. Nor mine, I'm sure.

Lady G. Mine's sincere, depend upon't.

Lord F. And may the eternal frowns of the whole sex doubly demme, if mine is not.

Lady E. Well, good people, I am mighty glad to hear it. You have all performed extremely well: but if you please, you shall even give over your wit now, while it is well.

Lady B. [*Aside.*] Now I see his humour, I'll stand it out, if I were sure to die for't.

Sir C. You should not have proceeded so far with my Lord Foppington, after what I had told you. [*Aside to* LADY B.

Lady B. Pray, Sir Charles, give me leave to understand myself a little.

Sir C. Your pardon, Madam, I thought a right understanding would have been for both your interest and reputation.

Lady B. For his, perhaps.

Sir C. Nay, then, Madam, it's time for me to take care of my friend.

Lady B. I never, in the least, doubted your friendship to him in any thing that was to show yourself my enemy.

Sir C. Since I see, Madam, you have so ungrateful a sense of my Lord Morelove's merit, and my service, I shall never be ashamed of using my power henceforth to keep him entirely out of your ladyship's.

Lady B. Was ever any thing so insolent! I could find in my heart to run the hazard of a downright compliance, if it were only to convince him, that my power, perhaps, is not inferior to his. [*Aside.*

Lady E. My Lord Foppington, I think you generally lead the company upon these occasions. Pray will you think of some prettier sort of diversion for us than parties and whispers?

Lord F. What say you ladies, shall we step and see what's done at the basset-table?

Lady B. With all my heart; Lady Easy——

Lady E. I think 'tis the best thing we can do, and because we wont part to night, you shall all sup where you dined—What say you, my lord?

Lord M. Your ladyship may be sure of me, Madam.

Lord F. Ay! ay! we'll all come.

Lady E. Then pray let's change parties a little. My Lord Foppington, you shall 'squire me.

Lord F. Oh! you do me honour, Madam.

Lady B. My Lord Morelove, pray let me speak with you.

Lord M. Me, Madam?

Lady B. If you please, my lord.

Lord M. Ha! that look shot through me.—What can this mean? [*Aside.*

Lady B. This is no proper place to tell you what it is, but there is one thing I'd fain be truly answered in: I suppose you'll be at my Lady Easy's by and by, and if you'll give me leave there——

Lord M. If you please to do me that honour, Madam, I shall certainly be there.

Lady B. That's all, my lord.

Lord M. Is not your ladyship for walking?

Lady B. If your lordship dares venture with me.

Lord M. O! Madam! [*Taking her hand.*]—How my heart dances! what heavenly music's in her voice, when softened into kindness. [*Aside.*

Lady B. Ha! his hand trembles——Sir Charles may be mistaken.

Lord F. My Lady Graveairs, you wont let Sir Charles leave us? [*Exeunt.*

[*Manent* SIR C. *and* LADY G.

Lady G. No, my lord, we'll follow you——stay a little. [*To* SIR C.

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Sir C. I thought your ladyship designed to follow them.

Lady G. Perhaps I'd speak with you.

Sir C. But, Madam, consider, we shall certainly be observed.

Lady G. Lord, Sir, if you think it such a favour. [*Exit hastily.*

Sir C. Is she gone? let her go, &c. [*Exit singing.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—Continues.

Enter SIR CHARLES *and* LORD MORELOVE.

Sir C. Come a little this way——My Lady Graveairs had an eye upon me as I stole off, and I'm apprehensive will make use of any opportunity to talk with me.

Lord M. Oh! we are pretty safe here—Well, you were speaking of Lady Betty.

Sir C. Aye, my lord—I say, notwithstanding all this sudden change of her behaviour, I would not have you yet be too secure of her: for, between you and I, since I told you, I have professed myself an open enemy to her power with you, 'tis not impossible but this new air of good-humour may very much proceed from a little woman's pride, of convincing me you are not yet out of her power.

Lord M. Not unlikely. But still, can we make no advantage of it?

Sir C. That's what I have been thinking of——look you——Death! my Lady Graveairs!

Lord M. Ha! she will have audience, I find.

Sir C. There's no avoiding her—the truth is, I have owed her a little good-nature a great while—I see there is but one way of getting rid of her—I must even appoint her a day of payment at last. If you'll step into my lodgings, my lord, I'll just give her an answer, and be with you in a moment.

Lord M. Very well, I'll stay there for you. [*Exit* LORD MORELOVE.

Enter LADY GRAVEAIRS *on the other side.*

Lady G. Sir Charles!

Sir C. Come, come, no more of these reproachful looks: you'll find, Madam, I have deserved better of you than your jealousy imagines—Is it a fault to be tender of your reputation?—fy, fy—This may be a proper time to talk, and of my contriving too—you see I just now shook off my Lord Morelove on purpose.

Lady G. May I believe you?

Sir C. Still doubting my fidelity, and mistaking my discretion for want of good-nature.

Lady G. Don't think me troublesome—For I confess 'tis death to think of parting with you: since the world sees for you I have neglected friends and reputation, have stood the little insults of disdainful prudes, that envied me perhaps your friendship; have borne the freezing looks of near and general acquaintance—Since this is so—don't let them ridicule me too, and say my foolish vanity undid me? Don't let them point at me as a cast mistress?

Sir C. You wrong me, to suppose the thought: you'll have better of me when we meet: When shall you be at leisure?

Lady G. I confess I would see you once again; if what I have more to say prove ineffectual, perhaps it may convince me then, 'tis my interest to part with you—Can you come to-night?

Sir C. You know we have company, and I'm afraid they'll stay too late—Can't it be before supper?—What's o'clock now?

Lady G. It's almost six.

Sir C. At seven then be sure of me, till when I'd have you go back to the ladies, to avoid suspicion, and about that time have the vapours.

Lady G. May I depend upon you? [*Exit.*

Sir C. Depend on every thing—A very troublesome business this—Send me once fairly rid on't—if ever I'm caught in an honourable affair again!—A debt now that a little ready civility, and away, would satisfy, a man might bear with; but to have a rent-charge upon one's good-nature, with an unconscionable long scroll of arrears too, that would eat out the profits of the best estate in Christendom—ah—intolerable! Well! I'll even to my lord, and shake off the thoughts on't. [*Exit.*

Enter LADY BETTY *and* LADY EASY.

Lady B. I observe, my dear, you have usually this great fortune at play; it were enough to make one suspect your good luck with a husband.

Lady E. Truly I don't complain of my fortune either way.

Lady B. Pr'ythee tell me, you are often advising me to it; are there those real comfortable advantages in marriage, that our old aunts and grandmothers would persuade us of?

Lady E. Upon my word, if I had the worst husband in the world, I should still think so.

Lady B. Ay, but then the hazard of not having a good one, my dear.

Lady E. You may have a good one, I dare say, if you don't give airs till you spoil him.

Lady B. Can there be the same dear, full delight in giving ease as pain? Oh, my dear, the thought of parting with one's power is insupportable.

Lady E. And the keeping it till it dwindles into no power at all, is most ruefully foolish.

Lady B. But still to marry before one's heartily in love——

Lady E. Is not half so formidable a calamity—but if I have any eyes, my dear, you'll run no great hazard of that in venturing on my Lord Morelove—You don't know, perhaps, that within this half hour the tone of your voice is strangely softened to him: ha, ha, ha!

Lady B. My dear, you are positively one or other, the most censorious creature in the world—and so I see it's in vain to talk with you—Pray, will you go back to the company?

Lady E. Ah! Poor Lady Betty! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—Changes to SIR CHARLES'S *Lodgings.*

Enter SIR CHARLES *and* LORD MORELOVE.

Lord M. Charles you have transported me!

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you have made my part in the scene so very easy too, 'tis impossible I should fail in it.

Sir C. That's what I considered; for now the more you throw yourself into her power, the more I shall be able to force her into yours.

Lord M. After all, (begging the ladies' pardon) your fine women, like bullies, are only stout when they know their men: a man of an honest courage may fright 'em into any thing! Well, I am fully instructed, and will about it instantly—Wont you go along with me?

Sir C. That may not be so proper;—besides, I have a little business upon my hands.

Lord M. Oh, your servant, Sir—Good bye to you—you sha'n't stir.

Sir C. My lord, your servant—[*Exit* LORD MORELOVE.] So! now to dispose of myself 'till 'tis time to think of my Lady Gravesirs—Umph! I have no great maw to that business, methinks—I don't find myself in humour enough to come up to the civil things that are usually expected in the making up of an old quarrel—[EDGING *crosses the stage.*] There goes a warmer temptation by half;—Ha! into my wife's bedchamber too—I question if the jade has any great business there!—I have a fancy she has only a mind to be taking the opportunity of nobody's being at home, to make her peace with me—let me see—ay, I shall have time enough to go to her ladyship afterwards—Besides, I want a little sleep, I find—Your young fops may talk of their women of quality—But to me now, there's a strange agreeable convenience in a creature one is not obliged to say much to upon these occasions.

[*Going.*

Enter EDGING.

Edg. Did you call me, Sir?

Sir C. Ha! all's right—[*Aside.*]—Yes, Madam, I did call you.

[*Sits down.*

Edg. What would you please to have, Sir?

Sir C. Have! Why, I would have you grow a good girl, and know when you are well used, hussy.

Edg. Sir, I don't complain of any thing, not I.

Sir C. Well, don't be uneasy—I am not angry with you now—Come and kiss me.

Edg. Lard, Sir!

Sir C. Don't be a fool, now—Come hither.

Edg. Pshaw—— [*Goes to him.*

Sir C. No wry face—so—sit down. I wont have you look grave neither, let me see you smile, you jade, you.

Edg. Ha, ha! [*Laughs and blushes.*

Sir C. Ah! you melting rogue.

Edg. Come, don't you be at your tricks now—Lard! can't you sit still and talk with one? I am sure there is ten times more love in that, and fifty times the satisfaction, people may say what they will.

Sir C. Well! now you're good, you shall have your own way—I am going to lie down in the next room; and, since you love a little chat, come and throw my night-gown over me, and you shall talk me to sleep.

[*Exit* SIR CHARLES.

Edg. Yes, Sir,——for all his way, I see he likes me still.

[*Exit after him.*

SCENE III.—Changes to the Terrace.

Enter LADY BETTY, LADY EASY, *and* LORD MORELOVE.

Lord M. Nay, Madam, there you are too severe upon him; for, bating now and then a little vanity, my Lord Foppington does not want wit sometimes to make him a very tolerable woman's man.

Lady B. But such eternal vanity grows tiresome.

Lady E. Come, if he were not so loose in his morals, his vanity methinks might be easily excused, considering how much 'tis in fashion: for, pray observe what's half the conversation of most of the fine young people about town, but a perpetual affectation of appearing foremost in the knowledge of manners, new modes, and scandal? and in that I don't see any body comes up to him.

Lord M. Nor I, indeed—and here he comes—Pray, Madam, let's have a little more of him; nobody shows him to more advantage than your ladyship.

Lady B. Nay, with all my heart; you'll second me, my lord.

Lord M. Upon occasion, Madam——

Lady E. Engaging upon parties, my lord?

[*Aside, and smiling to* LORD M.

Enter LORD FOPPINGTON.

Lord F. So, ladies! what's the affair now?

Lady B. Why, you were, my lord? I was allowing you a great many good qualities, but Lady Easy says you are a perfect hypocrite: and that whatever airs you give yourself to the women, she's confident you value no woman in the world equal to your own lady.

Lord F. You see, Madam how I am scandalized upon your account. But it's so natural for a prude to be malicious, when a man endeavours to be well with any body but herself; did you ever observe she was piqued at that before! ha, ha!

Lady B. I'll swear you are a provoking creature.

Lord F. Let's be more familiar upon't, and give her disorder! ha, ha!

Lady B. Ha, ha, ha!

Lord F. Stop my breath, but Lady Easy is an admirable discoverer—Marriage is indeed a prodigious security of one's inclination: a man's likely to take a world of pains in an employment, where he can't be turned out for his idleness.

Lady B. I vow, my lord, that's vastly generous to all the fine women! you are for giving them a despotic power in love, I see, to reward and punish as they think fit.

Lord F. Ha, ha! Right, Madam, what signifies beauty without power! And a fine woman when she's married makes as ridiculous a figure as a beaten general marching out of a garrison.

Lady E. I'm afraid, Lady Betty, the greatest danger in your use of power, would be from a heedless liberality; you would more mind the man than his merit.

Lord F. Piqued again by all that's fretful—Well, certainly to give envy is a pleasure inexpressible. [*To* LADY BETTY.

Lady B. Ha, ha!

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Lady E. Does not she show him well, my lord? [*Aside to* LORD M.

Lord M. Perfectly, and me to myself—For now I almost blush to think I ever was uneasy at him. [*To* LADY E.

Lord F. Lady Easy, I ask ten thousand pardons, I'm afraid I am rude all this while.

Lady E. Oh, not at all, my lord you are always good company, when you please: not but in some things, indeed, you are apt to be like other fine gentlemen, a little too loose in your principles.

Lord F. Oh, Madam, never to the offence of the ladies; I agree in any community with them; nobody is a more constant churchman, when the fine women are there.

Lady E. Oh, fy, my lord, you ought not to go for their sake at all. And I wonder, you that are for being such a good husband of your virtues, are not afraid of bringing your prudence into a lampoon or a play.

Lady B. Lampoons and plays, Madam, are only things to be laughed at.

Lord F. Odso! ladies, the court's coming home, I see: shall not we make our bows?

Lady B. Oh, by all means.

Lady E. Lady Betty, I must leave you: for I am obliged to write letters, and I know you wont give me time after supper.

Lady B. Well, my dear, I'll make a short visit and be with you. [*Exit* LADY EASY.] Pray what's become of my Lady Graveairs?

Lord M. Oh, I believe she's gone home, Madam, she seemed not to be very well.

Lord F. And where's Sir Charles, my lord?

Lord M. I left him at his own lodgings.

Lady B. He's upon some ramble I'm afraid.

Lord F. Nay, as for that matter, a man may ramble at home sometimes—But here come the chaises, we must make a little more haste, Madam. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—Changes to SIR CHARLES'S *Lodgings.*

Enter LADY EASY *and a* SERVANT.

Lady E. Is your master come home?

Serv. Yes Madam.

Lady E. Where is he?

Serv. I believe, Madam, he's laid down to sleep.

Lady E. Where's Edging? Bid her get me some wax and paper—stay, it's no matter, now I think on it, there's some above upon my toilette. [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE V. Opens and discovers SIR CHARLES *without his Periwig, and* EDGING *by him, both asleep in two easy Chairs.*

Enter LADY EASY, *who starts and trembles some time unable to speak.*

Lady E. Ha! protect me, virtue, patience, reason!
Teach me to bear this killing sight, or let
Me think my dreaming senses are deceived!
For sure a sight like this might raise the arm
Of duty even to the breast of love! At least
I'll throw the vizor of my patience off:
Now wake him in his guilt,
And barefaced front him with my wrongs.
I'll talk to him till he blushes, nay till he-
Frowns on me, perhaps—and then
I'm lost again—the ease of a few tears
Is all that's left to me——
And duty too forbids me to insult,
When I have vow'd obedience—Perhaps
The fault's in me, and nature has not form'd
Me with the thousand little requisites
That warm the heart of love——
Somewhere there is a fault—— [serve.
But Heaven best knows what both of us de-
Ha! bare headed, and in so sound a sleep!
Who knows, while thus exposed to the unwholesome air,
But Heaven offended may o'ertake his crime,
And, in some languishing distemper leave him
A severe example of its violated laws—
Forbid it mercy and forbid it love.
This may prevent it.
[*Takes a Steinkirk off her neck, and lays it gently on his head.*
And if he should wake offended at my too busy care, let my heart-breaking patience, duty, and my fond affection plead my pardon. [*Exit.*

[*After she has been out some time, a bell rings;* EDGING *wakes and stirs* SIR CHARLES.

Edg. Oh!

Sir C. How now! what's the matter?

Edg. Oh, bless my soul, my lady's come home.

Sir C. Go, go then. [*Bell rings.*

Edg. Oh, lud! my head's in such a condition too. [*Runs to the glass.*] I am coming, Madam, —Oh, lud! here's no powder neither—Here, Madam. [*Exit.*

Sir C. How now? [*Feeling the Steinkirk upon his head.*] What's this? How came it here? [*Puts on his wig.*] Did not I see my wife wear this to-day?——Death! she can't have been here, sure—It could not be jealousy that brought her home—for my coming was accidental—so too, I fear, was hers—How careless have I been?—not to secure the door neither —'Twas foolish—It must be so! She certainly has seen me here sleeping with her woman;—if so, how low a hypocrite to her must that sight have proved me?—The thought has made me despicable even to myself—How mean a vice is lying, and how often have these empty pleasures lulled my honour and my conscience to lethargy, while I grossly have abused her, poorly skulking behind a thousand falsehoods? —Now I reflect this has not been the first of her discoveries—How contemptible a figure must I have made to her?——A crowd of recollected circumstances confirms me now, she has been long acquainted with my follies, and yet with what amazing prudence has she borne the secret pangs of injured love, and wore an everlasting smile to me? This asks a little thinking——something should be done—I'll see her instantly, and be resolved from her behaviour. [*Exit.*

SCENE VI.—Changes to another Room.

Enter LADY EASY *and* EDGING.

Lady E. Where have you been, Edging?

Edg. Been, Madam! I—I—I—I came as soon as I heard you ring, Madam.

Lady E. How guilt confounds her! but she's below my thought—Fetch my last new sack hither—I have a mind to alter it a little—make haste.

Edg. Yes, Madam——I see she does not suspect any thing. [*Exit.*

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Lady E. Heigh ho! [*Sitting down.*] I had forgot—but I'm unfit for writing now——'Twas a hard conflict——yet it's a joy to think it over: a secret pride, to tell my heart my conduct has been just——How low are vicious minds that offer injuries, how much superior innocence that bears 'em.——Still there's a pleasure even in the melancholy of a quiet conscience—Away, my fears, it is not yet impossible—for while his human nature is not quite shook off, I ought not to despair.

Re-enter EDGING *with a Sack.*

Edg. Here's the sack, Madam.

Lady E. So, sit down there——and, let me see—here—rip off all that silver.

Edg. Indeed, I always thought it would become your ladyship better without it——But now suppose, Madam, you carried another row of gold round the scollops, and then you take and lay this silver plain all along the gathers, and your ladyship will perfectly see, it will give the thing ten thousand times another air.

Lady E. Pr'ythee, don't be impertinent: do as I bid you.

Edg. Nay, Madam, with all my heart, your ladyship may do as you please.

Lady E. This creature grows so confident, and I dare not part with her, lest he should think it jealousy. [*Aside.*

Enter SIR CHARLES.

Sir C. So, my dear! What, at work! how are you employed, pray?

Lady E. I was thinking to alter this sack here.

Sir C. What's amiss? Methinks it very pretty.

Edg. Yes, Sir, it's pretty enough for that matter, but my lady has a mind it should be proper too.

Sir C. Indeed!

Lady E. I fancy plain gold and black would become me better.

Sir C. That's a grave thought, my dear.

Edg. O, dear Sir, not at all, my lady's much in the right; I am sure, as it is, it's fit for nothing but a girl.

Sir C. Leave the room.

Edg. Lord, Sir! I can't stir——I must stay to—

Sir C. Go— [*Angrily.*

Edg. [*Throwing down the work hastily, and crying aside.*] If ever I speak to him again I'll be burned. [*Exit.*

Sir C. Sit still, my dear,—I came to talk with you——and which you well may wonder at, what I have to say is of importance too, but 'tis in order to my hereafter always talking kindly to you.

Lady E. Your words were never disobliging, nor can I charge you with a look that ever had the appearance of being unkind.

Sir C. The perpetual spring of your good humour let me draw no merit from what I have appeared to be, which makes me curious now to know your thoughts of what I really am: and never having asked you this before, it puzzles me: nor can I (my strange negligence considered) reconcile to reason your first thought of venturing upon marriage with me.

Lady E. I never thought it such a hazard.

Sir C. How could a woman of your restraint in principles, sedateness, sense, and tender disposition, propose to lead a happy life with one (now I reflect) that hardly took an hour's pains, even before marriage, to appear but what I am: a loose, unheeded wretch, absent in all I do, civil, and as often rude without design, unseasonably thoughful, easy to a fault, and in my best of praise, but carelessly good natured? How shall I reconcile your temper with having made so strange a choice?

Lady E. You own words may answer you—Your having never seemed to be but what you really were; and through that carelessness of temper there still shone forth to me an undesigning honesty, I always doubted of in smoother faces: thus while I saw you took least pains to win me, you pleased and wooed me most: nay, I have thought, that such a temper could never be deliberately unkind; or, at the worst, I knew that errors from the want of thinking might be borne; at least, when probably one moment's serious thought would end 'em: these were my worst of fears, and these, when weighed by growing love against my solid hopes, were nothing.

Sir C. My dear, your understanding startles me, and justly calls my own in question: I blush to think I've worn so bright a jewel in my bosom, and, till this hour, have scarce been curious once to look up on it's lustre.

Lady E. You set too high a value on the common qualities of an easy wife.

Sir C. Virtues, like benefits, are double, when concealed: and I confess, I yet suspect you of a higher value far than I have spoke you.

Lady E. I understand you not.

Sir C. I'll speak more plainly to you—be free and tell me—Where did you leave this handkerchief?

Lady E. Ha!

Sir C. What is it you start at? You hear the question.

Lady E. What shall I say? my fears confound me.

Sir C. Be not concerned, my dear, be easy in the truth, and tell me.

Lady E. I cannot speak—and I could wish you'd not oblige me to it—'tis the only thing I ever yet refused you—and though I want reason for my will, let me not answer you.

Sir C. You will then be a reason; and since I see you are so generously tender of reproaching me, it is fit I should be easy in my gratitude, and make what ought to be my shame my joy; let me be therefore pleased to tell you now, your wondrous conduct has waked me to a sense of your disquiet past, and resolution never to disturb it more—And (not that I offer it as a merit, but yet in blind compliance to my will) let me beg you would immediately discharge your women.

Lady E. Alas! I think not of her—O, my dear, distract me not with this excess of goodness. [*Weeping.*

Sir C. Nay, praise me not, lest I reflect how little I have deserved it; I see you are in pain to give me this confusion.—Come, I will not shock your softness by my untimely blush for what is past, but rather sooth you to a pleasure at my sense of joy, for my recovered happiness to come. Give then to my new-born love what name you please, it cannot, shall not be too kind: Oh! it cannot be too soft for what my soul swells up with emulation to deserve——Receive me then entire at last, and take what yet no woman ever truly had, my conquered heart.

Lady E. Oh, the soft treasure! Oh, the dear

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reward of long deserving love—Now am I blessed indeed to see you kind without the expense of pain in being so, to make you mine with easiness: thus! thus to have you mine is something more than happiness, 'tis double life, and madness of abounding joy. But it was a pain intolerable to give you a confusion.

Sir C. O thou engaging virtue! But I am too slow in doing justice to thy love; I know thy softness will refuse me; but remember I insist upon it—let thy woman be discharged this minute.

Lady E. No, my dear, think me not so low in faith, to fear, that, after what you have said, it will ever be in her power to do me future injury: when I can conveniently provide for her, I'll think on it: but to discharge her now, might let her guess at the occasion; and methinks I would have our difference, like our endearments, be equally a secret to our servants.

Sir C. Still my superior every way—be it as you have better thought—Well, my dear, now I'll confess a thing that was not in your power to accuse me off; to be short, I own this creature is not the only one I have been to blame with.

Lady E. I know she is not, and was always less concerned to find it so, for constancy in errors might have been fatal to me.

Sir C. What is it you know, my dear! [*Surprised.*

Lady E. Come, I'm not afraid to accuse you now—my Lady Graveairs—Your carelessness, my dear, let all the world know it, and it would have been hard indeed, had it been only to me a secret.

Sir C. My dear, I will ask no more questions, for fear of being more ridiculous: I do confess, I thought my discretion there had been a master-piece——How contemptible must I have looked all this while.

Lady E. You sha'n't say so.

Sir C. Well, to let you see I had some shame, as well as nature in me, I had writ this to my Lady Graveairs upon my first discovering that you knew I had wronged you: read it.

Lady E. [*Reads.*] "Something has happened, that prevents the visit I intended you; and I could gladly wish, you never would reproach me if I tell you, 'tis utterly inconvenient that I should ever see you more."——This indeed was more than I had merited.

Enter a SERVANT.

Sir C. Who is there? Here—Step with this to my Lady Graveairs.

[*Seals the letter, and gives it to the Servant.*

Serv. Yes, Sir——Madam, my Lady Betty's come.

Lady E. I'll wait on her.

Sir C. My dear, I am thinking there may be other things my negligence may have wronged you in: but be assured, as I discover, all shall be corrected——Is there any part or circumstance in your fortune that I can change or yet make easier to you?

Lady E. None, my dear, your good-nature never stinted me in that; and now, methinks, I have less occasion there than ever.

Re-enter SERVANT.

Serv. Sir, my Lord Morelove's come.

Sir C. I am coming——I think I told you of the design we had laid against Lady Betty.

Lady E. You did, and I should be pleased to be myself concerned in it.

Sir C. I believe we may employ you: I know he waits for me with impatience. But, my dear, wont you think me tasteless to the joy you have given me, to suffer at this time any concern but you to employ my thoughts?

Lady E. Seasons must be obeyed; and since I know your friend's happiness depending, I could not taste my own, should you neglect it.

Sir C. Thou easy sweetness——Oh! what a waste on thy neglected love, has my unthinking brain committed; but time and future thrift of tenderness shall yet repair it all. The hours will come when this soft, gliding stream that swells my heart, uninterrupted shall renew its course——

And like the ocean after ebb shall move,
With constant force of due returning love.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII.—Changes to another Room.

Re-enter LADY EASY *and* LADY BETTY.

Lady B. You have been in tears, my dear, and yet you look pleased too.

Lady E. You will pardon me, if I cannot let you into circumstances: but be satisfied, Sir Charles has made me happy, even to a pain of joy.

Lady B. Indeed I am truly glad of it, though I am sorry to find that any one who has generosity enough to do you justice, should unprovoked be so great an enemy to me.

Lady E. Sir Charles your enemy!

Lady B. My dear, you will pardon me if I always thought him so, but now I am convinced of it.

Lady E. In what, pray? I cannot think you will find him so.

Lady B. Oh! Madam, it has been his whole business of late to make an utter breach between my Lord Morelove and me.

Lady E. That may be owing to your usage of my lord: perhaps he thought it would not disoblige you. I am confident you are mistaken in him.

Lady B. Oh! I don't use to be out in things of this nature; I can see well enough; but I shall be able to tell you more when I have talked with my lord.

Lady E. Here he comes; and because you shall talk with him——No excuses——for positively I will leave you together.

Lady B. Indeed, my dear, I desire you will stay then; for I know you think now, that I have a mind to——

Lady E. To——to——ha, ha, ha!

Lady B. Well! remember this.

Enter LORD MORELOVE.

Lord M. I hope I don't fright you away Madam?

Lady E. Not at all, my lord; but I must beg your pardon for a moment: I will wait upon you immediately. [*Exit.*

Lady B. My lady Easy gone?

Lord M. Perhaps, Madam, in friendship to you; she thinks I may have deserved the coldness you of late have shown to me, and was

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willing to give you this opportunity to convince me, you have not done it without just grounds and reason.

Lady B. How handsomely does he reproach me! but I cannot bear that he should think I know it—[*Aside.*] My lord, whatever has passed between you and me, I dare swear that could not be her thoughts at this time: for when two people have appeared professed enemies, she cannot but think one will as little care to give, as the other to receive a justification of their actions.

Lord M. Passion indeed often does repeated injuries on both sides, but I don't remember in my heat of error I ever yet professed myself your enemy.

Lady B. My lord, I shall be very free with you—I confess I do not think now I have a greater enemy in the world.

Lord M. If having long loved you to my own disquiet, be injurious, I am contented then to stand the foremost of your enemies.

Lady B. Oh! my lord, there's no great fear of your being my enemy that way I dare say—

Lord M. There is no other way my heart can bear to offend you now, and I foresee in that it will persist to my undoing.

Lady B. Fy, fy, my lord, we know where your heart is well enough.

Lord M. My conduct has indeed deserved this scorn, and therefore 'tis but just I should submit to your resentment and beg (though I am assured in vain) for pardon. [*Kneels.*

Enter SIR CHARLES.

Sir C. How, my lord! [LORD M. *rises.*

Lady B. Ha! he here! This was unlucky. [*Aside.*

Lord M. Oh, pity my confusion! [*To* LADY B.

Sir C. I am sorry to see you can so soon forget yourself: methinks the insults you have borne from that lady, by this time should have warned you into a disgust of her regardless principles.

Lord M. Hold, Sir Charles! while you and I are friends, I desire you would speak with honour of this lady—'Tis sufficient I have no complaint against her, and—

Lady B. My lord, I beg you would resent this thing no farther: an injury like this is better punished with our contempt: apparent malice should only be laughed at.

Sir C. Ha, ha! the old resource. Offers of any hopes to delude him from his resentment, and then as the Grand Monarque did with Cavalier, and then you are sure to keep your word with him.

Lady B. Sir Charles, to let you know how far I am above your little spleen, my lord, your hand from this hour——

Sir C. Pshaw! pshaw! all design! all pique! mere artifice and disappointed woman.

Lady B. Look you, Sir, not that I doubt my lord's opinion of me, yet——

Sir C. Look you, Madam, in short, your word has been too often taken, to let you make up quarrels, as you used to do, with a soft look and a fair promise you never intended to keep.

Lady B. Was ever such insolence! He wont give me leave to speak.

Lord M. Sir Charles!

Lady B. No, pray, my lord, have patience; and since his malice seems to grow particular, I dare his worst, and urge him to the proof on't. Pray, Sir, wherein can you charge me with breach of promise to my lord?

Sir C. Death! you wont deny it? How often, to piece up a quarrel, have you appointed him to visit you alone; and though you have promised to see no other company the whole day, when he has come he has found you among the laugh of noisy fops, coquets, and coxcombs, dissolutely gay, while your full eyes ran over with transport of their flattery, and your own vain power of pleasing? How often, I say, have you been known to throw away, at least four hours of your good humour upon such wretches; and the minute they were gone, grew only dull to him, sunk into a distasteful spleen, complained you had talked yourself into the head-ach, and then indulged upon the dear delight of seeing him in pain: and by that time you had stretched and gaped him heartily out of patience, of a sudden most importantly remember you had outsat your appointment with my Lady Fiddle-faddle, and immediately order your coach to the Park.

Lady B. Yet, Sir, have you done!

Sir C. No——though this might serve to show the nature of your principles: but the noble conquest you have gained at last over defeated sense of reputation too, has made your fame immortal.

Lord M. How, Sir!

Lady B. My reputation!

Sir C. Ay, Madam your reputation—My lord, if I advance a falsehood, then resent it—I say, your reputation——It has been your life's whole pride of late to be the common toast of every public table, vain even in the infamous addresses of a married man, my Lord Foppington; let that be reconciled with reputation, I will now shake hands with shame, and bow me to the low contempt which you deserve from him; not but I suppose you will yet endeavour to recover him. Now you find ill usage in danger of losing your conquest, 'tis possible you will stop at nothing to preserve him.

Lady B. Sir Charles— [*Walks disordered, and he after her.*

Sir C. I know your vanity is so voracious, it will even wound itself to feed itself; offer him a blank, perhaps to fill up with hopes of what nature he pleases, and part even with your pride to keep him.

Lady B. Sir Charles, I have not deserved this of you. [*Bursting into tears.*

Sir C. Ah! true woman, drop him a soft dissembling tear, and then his just resentment must be hushed of course.

Lord M. Oh Charles! I can bear no more, those tears are too reproaching.

Sir C. Hist, for your life! [*Aside, and then loud.*] My lord, if you believe her, you are undone; the very next sight of my Lord Foppington would make her yet forswear all that she can promise.

Lady B. My Lord Foppington! is that the mighty crime that must condemn me then? You know I used him but as a tool of my resentment, which you yourself, by a pretended friendship to us both, most artfully provoked me to——

Lord M. Hold, I conjure you, Madam, I want not this conviction.

Lady B. Send for him this minute, and you and he shall both be witnesses of the contempt

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and detestation I have for any forward hopes his vanity may have given him, or your malice would insinuate.

Sir C. Death! you would as soon eat fire, as soon part with your luxurious taste of folly, as dare to own the half of this before his face, or any one, that would make you blush to deny it to——Here comes my wife, now we shall see——Ha! and my Lord Foppington with her——Now, now, we shall see this mighty proof of your sincerity——Now, my lord, you'll have a warning sure, and henceforth know me for your friend indeed——

Enter LADY EASY *and* LORD FOPPINGTON.

Lady E. In tears, my dear! what's the matter?

Lady B. O, my dear, all I told you is true: Sir Charles has shown himself so inveterably my enemy, that if I believed I deserved but half his hate, 'twould make me hate myself.

Lord F. Hark you, Charles, pr'ythee what is this business?

Sir C. Why yours, my lord, for aught I know——I have made such a breach betwixt them——I cannot promise much for the courage of a woman; but if hers holds, I am sure it is wide enough; you may enter ten a-breast, my lord.

Lord F. Say'st thou so, Charles? then I hold six to four, I am the first man in the town.

Lady E. Sure there must be some mistake in this: I hope he has not made my lord your enemy.

Lady B. I know not what he has done.

Lord M. Far be that thought! alas, I am too much in fear myself, that what I have this day committed, advised by his mistaken friendship, may have done my love irreparable prejudice.

Lady B. No, my lord, since I perceive his little arts have not prevailed upon your good-nature to my prejudice, I am bound in gratitude, in duty to myself, and to the confession you have made, my lord, to acknowledge now, I have been to blame too.

Lord M. Ha! is it possible; can you own so much? O my transported heart!

Lady B. He says I have taken pleasure in seeing you uneasy——I own it——but 'twas when that uneasiness I thought proceeded from your love; and if you did love——'twill not be much to pardon it.

Lord M. Oh! let my soul, thus bending to your power, adore this soft descending goodness.

Lady B. And since the giddy woman's slights I have shown you too often, have been public, 'tis fit at last the amends and reparation should be so: therefore what I offered to Sir Charles, I now repeat before this company, my utter detestation of any past or future gallantry, that has or shall be offered by me, to your uneasiness.

Lord M. Oh be less generous, or teach me to deserve it——Now blush, Sir Charles, at your injurious accusation.

Lord F. Ah! *Pardi! Voilà quelque chose d' extraordinaire.*

Lady B. As for my Lord Foppington, I owe him thanks for having been so friendly an instrument of our reconciliation; for though in the little outward gallantry I received from him, I did not immediately trust him with my design in it, yet I have a better opinion of his understanding, than to suppose he could mistake it.

Lord F. I am struck dumb with the deliberation of her assurance; and do not positively remember, that the *nonchalance* of my temper ever had so bright an occasion to show itself before.

Lady B. My lord, I hope you will pardon the freedom I have taken with you.

Lord F. Oh, Madam, do not be under the confusion of an apology upon my account; for in cases of this nature, I am never disappointed, but when I find a lady of the same mind two hours together——Madam, I have lost a thousand fine women in my time; but never had the ill-manners to be out of humour with any one for refusing me, since I was born.

Lady B. My lord, that's a very prudent temper.

Lord F. Madam, to convince you that I am in a universal peace with mankind, since you own I have so far contributed to your happiness, give me leave to have the honour of completing it, by joining your hand where you have already offered up your inclination.

Lady B. My lord, that's a favour I can't refuse you.

Lord M. Generous, indeed, my lord.

[LORD FOPPINGTON *joins their hands.*

Lord. F. And stop my breath, if ever I was better pleased since my first entrance into human nature.

Sir C. How now, my lord! what, throw up the cards before you have lost the game.

Lord F. Look you, Charles, 'tis true I did design to have played with her alone: but he that will keep well with the ladies, must sometimes be content to make one at a pool with them; and since I know I must engage her in my turn, I don't see any great odds in letting him take the first game with her.

Sir C. Wisely considered, my lord.

Lady B. And now, Sir Charles——

Sir C. And now, Madam, I'll save you the trouble of a long speech; and, in one word, confess that every thing that I have done in regard to you this day was purely artificial—I saw there was no way to secure you to my Lord Morelove, but by alarming your pride with the danger of losing him: and since the success must have by this time convinced you, that in love nothing is more ridiculous than an over-acted aversion, I am sure you wont take it ill, if we at last congratulate your good-nature, by heartily laughing at the fright we had put you in: ha, ha, ha!

Lady E. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady B. Why—well I declare it now, I hate you worse than ever.

Sir C. Ha, ha, ha! And was it afraid they would take its love from it—Poor Lady Betty! ha, ha!

Lady E. My dear, I beg your pardon; but it is impossible not to laugh when one is so heartily pleased.

Lord F. Really, Madam, I am afraid the humour of the company will draw me into your displeasure too; but if I were to expire this moment, my last breath would positively go out with a laugh. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady B. Nay, I have deserved it all, that's the truth on't—but I hope, my lord, you were not in this design against me.

Lord M. As a proof, Madam, I am inclined never to deceive you more—I do confess I had my share in it.

Lady B. You do, my lord—then I declare it

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was a design, one or other—the best carried on that ever I knew in my life; and (to my shame I own it) for aught I know, the only thing that could have prevailed upon my temper; 'twas a foolish pride that has cost me many a bitten lip to support it—I wish we don't both repent, my lord.

Lord M. Don't you repent without me, and we never shall.

Sir C. Well, Madam, now the worst that the world can say of your past conduct, is, that my lord had constancy and you have tried it.

Enter a SERVANT *to* LORD MORELOVE.

Serv. My lord, Mr. le Fevre's below, and desires to know what time your lordship will please to have the music begin.

Lord M. Sir Charles, what say you? will you give me leave to bring them hither?

Sir C. As the ladies think fit, my lord.

Lady B. Oh! by all means, 'twill be better here, unless we could have the Terrace to ourselves.

Lord M. Then, pray desire them to come hither immediately.

Serv. Yes, my lord. [*Exit* SERV.

Enter LADY GRAVEAIRS.

Sir C. Lady Graveairs!

Lady G. Yes, you may well start! but don't suppose I am now come, like a poor tame fool, to upbraid your guilt; but, if I could, to blast you with a look.

Sir C. Come, come, you have sense,—don't expose yourself—you are unhappy, and I own myself the cause,—the only satisfaction I can offer you, is to protest no new engagement takes me from you; but a sincere reflection of the long neglect, and injuries I have done the best of wives; for whose amends and only sake I now must part with you, and all the inconvenient pleasures of my life.

Lady G. Have you then fallen into the low contempt of exposing me, and to your wife too.

Sir C. 'Twas impossible; without it, I could never be sincere in my conversion.

Lady G. Despicable!

Sir C. Do not think so—for my sake I know she'll not reproach you—nor by her carriage ever let the world perceive you have wronged her.——My dear——

Lady E. Lady Graveairs, I hope you'll sup with us.

Lady G. I cannot refuse so much good company, Madam.

Sir C. You see the worst of her resentment—In the mean time, don't endeavour to be her friend, and she'll never be your enemy.

Lady G. I am unfortunate——'tis what my folly has deserved, and I submit to it.

Lord M. So, here is the music.

Lady E. Come, ladies, shall we sit?

SONG.

Sabina, with an angel's face,
By love ordain'd for joy,
Seems of the Siren's cruel race,
To charm and then destroy.

With all the arts of look and dress,
She fans the fatal fire;
Through pride mistaken oft for grace,
She bids the swains expire.

The god of love enraged to see
The nymph defy his flame,
Pronounced his merciless decree
Against the haughty dame.

Let age, with double speed, o'ertake her,
Let love the room of pride supply;
And when the lovers all forsake her,
A spotless virgin let her die.

SIR CHARLES *comes forward with* LADY EASY.

Sir C. Now my dear, I find my happiness grow fast upon me; in all my past experience of the sex, I found, even among the better sort, so much of folly, pride, malice, passion, and irresolute desire, that I concluded thee but of the foremost rank, and, therefore, scarce worthy my concern: but thou hast stirred me with so severe a proof of thy exalted virtue, it gives me wonder equal to my love—If, then, the unkindly thought of what I have been, hereafter shall intrude upon thy growing quiet, let this reflection teach thee to be easy:

Thy wrongs, when greatest, most thy virtue proved;
And, from that virtue found, I blush'd and truly loved. [*Exeunt omnes.*

EPILOGUE

CONQUEST and freedom, are, at length our own,
False fears of slavery no more are shown;
Nor dread of paying tribute to a foreign throne.
All stations now the fruits of conquest share,
Except (if small with great things may compare,)
Th' oppress'd condition of the labouring player.
We're still in fears (as you of late in France)
Of the despotic power of song and dance:
For while subscription, like a tyrant reigns,
Nature's neglected, and the stage in chains,
And English actors slaves to swell the French-man's gains.
Like Æsop's crow, the poor, out-witted stage,
That lived on wholesome plays i' the latter age,
Deluded once to sing, even justly served,
Let fall her cheese to the Fox mouth, and starved:
O that our judgment, as your courage has
Your fame extended, would our cause,
That nothing English would submit to foreign laws:

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If we but live to see that joyful day,
Then of the English stage revived we may,
As of your honour now, with proper application, say.
So when the Gallic Fox, by fraud of peace,
Had lull'd the British Lion into ease,
And saw that sleep composed his couchant head,
He bids him wake, and see himself betray'd
In toils of treacherous politics, around him laid:
Shows him how one close hour of Gallic thought
Retook those towns for which he years had fought.
At this th' indignant savage rolls his fiery eyes,
Dauntless, though blushing at the base surprise.
Pauses awhile——But finds delays are vain:
Compell'd to fight, he shakes his shaggy mane;
He grinds his dreadful fangs; and stalks to Blenheim's plain:
There, with erected crest, and horrid roar, gore,
He furious plunges on, through streams of
And dyes with false Bavarian blood the purple Danube's shore;
In one push'd battle frees the destin'd slaves;
Revives old English honour, and an Empire saves.

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COMUS:

A MASQUE,

IN THREE ACTS.

BY JOHN MILTON.

REMARKS.

THIS Masque was first represented at Ludlow Castle on Michaelmas-day 1634, before the Right Hon. the Earl of Bridgewater, Lord President of Wales: the principal performers were the Lord Brackly, Mr. Thomas Egerton, and the Lady Alice Egerton. In the year 1774, it was abridged, and has ever since been performed as an after-piece at the Theatre Royal in Covent Garden.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

COMUS.
FIRST SPIRIT.
ELDER BROTHER.
YOUNGER BROTHER.
BACCHANALS.

LADY.
EUPHROSYNE.
BACCHANTES.
SABRINA *and* PASTORAL NYMPH.

Bacchanals, Naiads, Spirits, &c.

PROLOGUE.

OUR stedfast Bard, to his own genius true,
Still bade his Muse fit audience find though few;
Scorning the judgment of a trifling age,
To choicer spirits he bequeath'd his page.
He too was scorn'd, and to Britannia's shame
She scarce for half an age knew Milton's name:
But now, his fame by every trumpet blown,
We on his deathless trophies raise our own.
Nor art nor nature did his genius bound;
Heaven, hell, earth, chaos, he survey'd around:
All things his eye, through wit's bright empire thrown,
Beheld, and made what it beheld his own.
Such Milton was: 'tis ours to bring him forth,
And yours to vindicate neglected worth.
Such heaven-taught numbers should be more than read,
More wide the manna through the nation spread.
Like some bless'd spirit he to night descends,
Mankind he visits, and their steps befriends;
Through mazy error's dark perplexing wood
Points out the path of true and real good,
Warns erring youth, and guards the spotless maid
From spell of magic vice by reason's aid.
Attend the strains; and should some meaner phrase
Hang on the style and clog the nobler lays,
Excuse what we with trembling hand supply,
To give his beauties to the public eye:
His the pure essence, ours the grosser mean
Through which his spirit is in action seen.
Observe the force, observe the flame divine
That glows, breathes, acts in each harmonious line.
Great objects only strike the generous heart;
Praise the sublime, o'erlook the mortal part;
Be there your judgment, here your candour shown;
Small is our portion—and we wish 'twere none.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—Discovers a wild Wood.

The first Attendant SPIRIT *enters.*

BEFORE the starry threshold of Jove's court

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My mansion is, where those immortal shapes
Of bright aerial spirits live insphered
In regions mild of calm and serene air,
Above the smoke and stir of this dim spot
Which men call earth, and with low-thoughted care
Confined and pester'd in this pinfold here
Strive to keep up a frail and feverish being,
Unmindful of the crown that virtue gives,
After this mortal change, to her true servants
Amongst the enthroned gods on sainted seats.
Yet some there are that by due steps aspire
To lay their just hands on that golden key
That opes the palace of Eternity;
To such my errand is; and but for such
I would not soil these pure ambrosial weeds
With the rank vapours of this sin-worn mould.
But whence yon slanting stream of purer light,
Which streaks the midnight gloom, and hither darts
Its beamy point? Some messenger from Jove
Commission'd to direct or share my charge,
And if I ken him right a spirit pure
As treads the spangled pavement of the sky,
The gentle Philadel: but swift as thought
He comes——

The second Attending SPIRIT *descends.*

Declare on what strange errand bent
Thou visitest this clime to me assign'd,
So far remote from thy appointed sphere.
2d Spirit. On no appointed task thou seest me now;
But, as returning from Elysian bowers,
(Whither from mortal coil a soul I wafted,)
Along this boundless sea of waving air
I steer'd my flight, betwixt the gloomy shade
Of these thick boughs thy radiant form I spied,
Gliding as streams the moon through dusky clouds;
Instant I stoop'd my wing, and downward sped
To learn thy errand, and with thine to join
My kindred aid, from mortals ne'er withheld
When virtue on the brink of peril stands.
1st Spirit. Then mark th' occasion that demands it here,
Neptune, I need not tell, besides the sway
Of every salt flood and each ebbing stream,
Took in by lot, 'twixt high and nether Jove,
Imperial rule of all the sea girt isles
That, like to rich and various gems, inlay
The unadorned bosom of the deep;
Which he, to grace his tributary gods,
By course commits to several government,
And gives them leave to wear their sapphire crowns,
And wield their little tridents; but this isle,
The greatest and the best of all the main,
He quarters to his blue-hair'd deities;
And all this track that fronts the falling sun
A noble peer of mickle trust and power
Has in his charge, with temper'd awe to guide
An old and haughty nation proud in arms.
2d Spirit. Does any danger threat his legal sway
From bold sedition or close ambush'd treason?
1st Spirit. No danger thence; but to his lofty seat,
Which borders on the verge of this wild vale,
His blooming offspring, nursed in princely lore,
Are coming to attend their father's state
And new-entrusted sceptre, and their way
Lies through the perplex'd path of this drear wood,
The nodding horror of whose shady brows
Threats the forlorn and wandering passenger;
And here their tender age might suffer peril,
But that by quick command from sovereign Jove
I was despatch'd for their defence and guard.
2d Spirit. What peril can their innocence assail
Within these lonely and unpeopled shades?
1st Spirit. Attend my words. No place but harbours danger;
In every region virtue finds a foe.
Bacchus, that first from out the purple grape
Crush'd the sweet poison of misused wine,
After the Tuscan mariners transform'd,
Coasting the Tyrrhene shore as the winds listed,
On Circe's island fell: (who knows not Circe,
The daughter of the Sun, whose charmed cup
Whoever tasted lost his upright shape,
And downward fell into a groveling swine?)
This nymph, that gazed upon his clustering locks,
With ivy berries wreathed, and his blithe youth,
Had by him, ere he parted thence, a son
Much like his father, but his mother more,
Whom therefore she brought up and Comus named.
2d Spirit. Ill omen'd birth to Virtue and her sons!
1st Spirit. He, ripe and frolic of his full grown age,
Roving the Celtic and Iberian fields,
At last betakes him to this ominous wood,
And in thick shelter of black shades imbower'd
Excels his mother at her mighty art,
Offering to every weary traveller
His orient liquor in a crystal glass
To quench the drought of Phœbus, which as they taste,
(For most do taste through fond intemperate thirst)
Soon as the potion works, their human countenance,
Th' express resemblance of the gods, is changed
Into some brutish form of wolf or bear,
Or ounce or tiger, hog or bearded goat,
All other parts remaining as they were
Yet, when he walks his tempting rounds, the sorcerer
By magic power their human face restores
And outward beauty to delude the sight.
2d Spirit. Lose they the memory of their former state?
1st Spirit. No, they (so perfect is their misery)
Not once perceive their foul disfigurement,
But boast themselves more comely than before;
And all their friends and native home forget,
To roll with pleasure in a sensual sty.
2d Spirit. Degrading fall! from such a dire distress
What pain too great our mortal charge to save?
1st Spirit. For this, when any favour'd of high Jove
Chances to pass through this adventurous glade,
Swift as the sparkle of a glancing star
I shoot from heaven to give him safe convoy,
As now I do; and opportune thou com'st
To share an office which thy nature loves.

This be our task; but first I must put off
These my sky robes spun out of Iris' woof,
And take the weeds and likenes of a swain
That to the service of this house belongs,
Who with soft pipe and smooth-ditty'd song
Well knows to still the wild winds when they roar,
And hush the waving woods; nor of less faith,
And in this office of his mountain watch
Likeliest and nearest to the present aid
Of this occasion. Veil'd in such disguise,
Be it my care the sever'd youths to guide
To their distress'd and lonely sister; thine
To cheer her footsteps through the magic wood.
Whatever blessed spirit hovers near,
On errands bent to wandering mortal good,
If need require him summon to thy side;
Unseen of mortal eye such thoughts inspire,
Such heaven-born confidence, as need demands
In hour of trial.

2d Spirit. Swift as winged winds
To my glad charge I fly. [*Exit.*

1st Spirit.——I'll wait a while
To watch the sorcerer, for I hear the tread
Of hateful steps: I must be viewless now.

COMUS *enters with a charming rod in one hand, his glass in the other; with him a rout of* MEN *and* WOMEN *dressed as Bacchanals; they come in making a riotous and unruly noise, with torches in their hands.*

Comus. The star that bids the shepherd fold,
Now the top of heaven doth hold.
And the gilded car of day
His glowing axle doth allay
In the steep Atlantic stream;
And the slope sun his upward beam
Shoots against the dusky pole,
Pacing toward the other goal
Of his chamber in the east;
Mean-while welcome joy and feast.

SONG.

Now Phœbus sinketh in the west,
Welcome song, and welcome jest,
Midnight shout and revelry,
Tipsy dance and jollity:
Braid your locks with rosy twine,
Dropping odours, dropping wine.

Rigour now is gone to bed,
And Advice with scrupulous head,
Strict Age and sour Severity,
With their grave saws in slumber lie.

We, that are of purer fire,
Imitate the starry choir,
Who in their nightly watchful spheres,
Lead in swift round the months and years.
The sounds and seas, with all their finny drove,
Now to the moon in wavering morrice move.
And on the tawny sands and shelves,
Trip the pert Fairies and the dapper Elves.

SONG.—*By a Woman.*

By dimpled brook, and fountain brim,
The Wood-nymphs, deck'd with daisies trim,
Their merry wakes and pastimes keep;
What has night to do with sleep?

Night has better sweets to prove;
Venus now wakes and wakens love:
Come, let us our rites begin,
'Tis only day-light that makes sin.

Comus. Hail, goddess of nocturnal sport,
Dark-veil'd Cotytto!—to whom the secret flame
Of midnight torches burn. Mysterious dame!
That ne'er art call'd but when the dragon-womb
Of Stygian darkness spits her thickest gloom,
And makes one blot of all the air,
Stay thy cloudy ebon chair,
Wherein thou rid'st with Hecat', and befriend
Us thy vow'd priests, till utmost end
Of all thy dues be done, and none left out;
Ere the blabbing eastern scout,
The nice morn, on th' Indian steep
From her cabin loop-hole peep,
And to the tell-tale Sun descry
Our conceal'd solemnity.

SONG.—*By* COMUS *and Woman.*

From tyrant laws and customs free,
We follow sweet variety;
By turns we drink, and dance, and sing,
Love for ever on the wing.

Why should niggard rules control
Transports of the jovial soul?
No dull stinting hour we own,
Pleasure counts our time alone.

Comus. Come, knit hands, and beat the ground
In a light fantastic round.

A Dance.

Break off, break off; I feel the different pace
Of some chaste footing near about this ground.
Run to your shrouds within these brakes and trees;
Our number may affright. Some virgin sure
(For so I can distinguish by mine art)
Benighted in these woods. Now to my charms,
And to my wily trains. I shall ere long
Be well stock'd with as fair a herd as grazed
About my mother Circe. Thus I hurl
My dazzling spells into the spungy air,
Of power to cheat the eye with blear illusion,
And give it false presentiments, lest the place
And my quaint habits breed astonishment,
And put the damsel to suspicious flight;
Which must not be, for that's against my course.
I under fair pretence of friendly ends,
And well-placed words of glozing courtesy,
Baited with reasons not unplausible,
Wind me into the easy hearted man,
And hug him into snares. When once her eye
Hath met the virtue of this magic dust,
I shall appear some harmless villager
Whom thrift keeps up about his country gear.
But here she comes; I fairly step aside
And hearken if I may her business hear.

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Enter the LADY.

Lady. This way the noise was, if mine ear be true, [sound
My best guide now: methought it was the
Of riot and ill-managed merriment;
Such as the jocund flute or gamesome pipe
Stirs up among the loose unletter'd hinds,
When, for their teeming flocks and granges full, [Pan,
In wanton dance they praise the bounteous
And thank the gods amiss. I should be loath
To meet the rudeness and swill'd insolence
Of such late rioters; yet, oh, where else
Shall I inform my unacquainted feet
In the blind mazes of this tangled wood?

Comus. [*Aside*.] I'll ease her of that care, and be her guide.

Lady. My brothers, when they saw me weary'd out
With this long way, resolving here to lodge
Under the spreading favour of these pines,
Stepp'd, as they said to the next thicket side
To bring me berries of such cooling fruit
As the kind-hospitable woods provide.
They left me then when the gray-hooded Even,
Like a sad votarist in palmer's weeds,
Rose from the hindmost wheels of Phœbus' wain; [back,
But where they are, and why they come not
Is now the labour of my thoughts: 'tis likeliest
They had engaged their wandering steps too
This is the place as well as I may guess, [far.
Whence, even now, the tumult of loud mirth
Was rife, and perfect in my listening ear,
Yet nought but single darkness do I find.
What might this be? A thousand fantasies
Begin to throng into my memory,
Of calling shapes and beckoning shadows dire
And aery tongues, that syllable men's names
On sands, and shores, and desert wildernesses
These thoughts may startle well, but not astound
The virtuous mind, that ever walks attended
By a strong siding champion, Conscience.
Oh! welcome pure-eyed Faith, white-handed Hope,
Thou hovering angel, girt with golden wings,
And thou unblemish'd form of Chastity!
I see you visibly, and now believe,
That he, the supreme Good (to whom all things ill
Are but as slavish officers of vengeance)
Would send a glistering guardian, if need were,
To keep my life and honour unassail'd.
Was I deceived, or did a sable cloud
Turn forth her silver lining on the night?
I did not err; there does a sable cloud
Turn forth her silver lining on the night,
And cast a gleam over this tufted grove.
I cannot halloo to my brothers, but
Such noise as I can make to be heard farthest
I'll venture, for my new enliven'd spirits
Prompt me, and they perhaps are not far off.

SONG.

Sweet Echo, sweetest nymph! that livest
Within thy airy cell, [unseen
By slow Mæander's margent green,
And in the violet embroider'd vale,
Where the lovelorn nightingale
Nightly to thee her sad song mourneth well,
Canst thou not tell me of a gentle pair
That likest thy Narcissus are?
Oh! if thou have
Hid them in some flowery cave,
Tell me but where, [Sphere!
Sweet queen of parly, daughter of the
So may'st thou be translated to the skies,
And give surrounding grace to all heaven's harmonies.

Comus. [*Aside*.] Can any mortal mixture of earth's mould
Breathe such divine enchanting ravishment?
Sure something holy lodges in that breast,
And with these raptures moves the vocal air
To testify his hidden residence:
How sweetly did they float upon the wings
Of silence through the empty-vaulted night,
At every fall smoothing the raven down
Of darkness till it smiled! I have oft heard
My mother Circe, with the Sirens three,
Amidst the flowery-kirtled Naiades,
Culling their potent herbs and baleful drugs,
Who, as they sung, would take the prison'd soul
And lap it in Elysium: Scylla wept,
And chid her barking waves into attention,
And fell Charybdis murmur'd soft applause;
Yet they in pleasing slumber lull'd the sense,
And sweet in madness robb'd it of itself?
But such a sacred and home felt delight,
Such sober certainty of waking bliss,
I never heard till now.—I'll speak to her
And she shall be my queen.—Hail, foreign wonder! [breed,
Whom certain these rough shades did never
Unless the goddes that in rural shrine,
Dwell'st here with Pan or Silvan, by bless'd song
Forbidding every bleak unkindly fog
To touch the prosperous growth of this tall wood.

Lady. Nay, gentle shepherd! ill is lost that praise
That is address'd to unattending ears:
Not any boast of skill, but extreme shift
How to regain my sever'd company,
Compell'd me to awake the courteous Echo,
To give me answer from her mossy couch.

Comus. What chance, good lady, hath bereft you thus?

Lady. Dim darkness and this leafy labyrinth.

Comus. Could that divide you from near-ushering guides?

Lady. They left me weary on a grassy turf.

Comus. By falsehood or discourtesy, or why?

Lady. To seek i' th' valley some cool friendly spring.

Comus. And left your fair side all unguarded, Lady?

Lady. They were but twain, and purposed quick return.

Comus. Perhaps forestalling night prevented them?

Lady. How easy my misfortune is to hit!

Comus. Imports their loss beside the present need?

Lady. No less than if I should my brothers lose.

Comus. Were they of manly prime or youthful bloom?

Lady. As smooth as Hebe's their unrazor'd lips.

Comus. Two such I saw what time the labour'd ox
In his loose traces from the furrow came,
And the swink't hedger at his supper sat;
I saw them under a green mantling vine,
That crawls along the side of yon small hill,

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Plucking ripe clusters from the tender shoots:
Their port was more than human; as they [stood,
I took it for a fairy vision
Of some gay creatures of the element,
That in the colours of the rainbow live,
And play i' the plighted clouds. I was awe struck, [seek,
And as I pass'd I worshipp'd: if those you
It were a journey like the path to heaven
To help you find them.

Lady. Gentle villager, [place?
What readiest way would bring me to that

Comus. Due west it rises from this shrubby point.

Lady. To find out that, good shepherd, I suppose,
In such a scant allowance of star-light,
Would overtask the best land-pilot's art,
Without the sure guess of well-practised feet.

Comus. I know each lane and every alley green,
Dingle or bushy dell, of this wide wood,
And every bosky bourn from side to side,
My daily walks and ancient neighbourhood;
And if your stray attendants be yet lodged,
Or shroud within these limits, I shall know
Ere morrow wake, or the low-roosted lark
From her thatch'd pallat rouse: if otherwise,
I can conduct you, Lady, to a low
But loyal cottage, where you may be safe
Till farther quest.

Lady. Shepherd, I take thy word,
And trust thy honest offer'd courtesy,
Which oft is sooner found in lowly sheds
With smoky rafters, than in tap'stry halls
And courts of princes, where it first was named,
And yet is most pretended. In a place
Less warranted than this, or less secure,
I cannot be, that I should fear to change it.
Eye me, bless'd Providence, and square my trial
To my proportion'd strength.—Shepherd, lead on. [*Exeunt.*

Enter COMUS's *Crew from behind the trees.*

SONG.—*By a Man.*

Fly swiftly, ye minutes! till Comus receive
The nameless soft transports that beauty can give; [prove,
The bowl's frolic joys let him teach her to
And she in return yield the raptures of love.
Without love and wine, wit and beauty are vain,
All grandeur insipid, and riches a pain,
The most splendid palace grows dark as the grave:
Love and wine give, ye gods, or take back what you gave.

Chorus. Away, away, away,
To Comus' court repair;
There night outshines the day,
There yields the melting fair.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter the two BROTHERS.

E. Bro. Unmuffle, ye faint stars! and thou, fair moon!
That wont'st to love the traveller's benison,
Stoop thy pale visage through an amber cloud,
And disinherit Chaos, that reigns here
In double night of darkness and of shades;
Or if your influence be quite damm'd up
With black usurping mists, some gentle taper,
Though a rush candle, from the wicker-hole
Of some clay habitation, visit us
With thy long levell'd rule of streaming light,
And thou shalt be our star of Arcady,
Or Tyrian Cynosure.

Y. Bro. Or, if our eyes
Be barr'd that happiness, might we but hear
The folded flocks penn'd in their wattled cotes,
Or sound of pastoral reed with oaten stops,
Or whistle from the lodge, or village cock
Count the night-watches to his feathery dames,
'Twould be some solace yet, some little cheering,
In this close dungeon of innumerous boughs.
But oh! that hapless virgin, our lost sister,
Where may she wander now, whither betake her
From the chill dew, amongst rude burs and thistles?
Perhaps some cold bank is her bolster now,
Or 'gainst the rugged bark of some broad elm
Leans her unpillow'd head, fraught with sad fears:
What if in wild amazement and affright!
Or, while we speak, within the direful grasp
Of savage hunger or of savage heat?

E. Bro. Peace, brother; be not over exquisite
To cast the fashion of uncertain evils;
For, grant they be so, while they rest unknown
What need a man forestal his date of grief,
And run to meet what he would most avoid?
Or if they be but false alarms of fear,
How bitter is such self-delusion!
I do not think my sister so to seek,
Or so unprincipled in virtue's book,
And the sweet peace that goodness bosoms ever,
As that the single want of light and noise
(Not being in danger, as I trust she is not)
Could stir the constant mood of her calm thoughts,
And put them into misbecoming plight.
Virtue could see to do what virtue would
By her own radiant light, though sun and moon
Were in the flat sea sunk; and Wisdom's self
Oft seeks to sweet retired solitude,
Where with her best nurse, Contemplation,
She plumes her feathers and lets grow her wings,
That in the various bustle of resort
Were all so ruffled, and sometimes impair'd.
He, that has light within his own clear breast,
May sit i' th' centre and enjoy bright day;
But he, that hides a dark soul and foul thoughts,
Benighted walks under the mid-day sun!
Himself is his own dungeon.

Y. Bro. 'Tis most true
That musing Meditation most affects
The pensive secrecy of desert cell,
Far from the cheerful haunt of men and herds,
And sits as safe as in a senate house;
For who would rob a hermit of his weeds,
His few books, or his beads, or maple dish,
Or do his gray hairs any violence;
But Beauty, like the fair Hesperian tree
Laden with blooming gold, had need the guard
Of dragon watch with unenchanted eye,
To save her blossoms, and defend her fruit

From the rash hand of bold Incontinence.
You may as well spread out the unsunn'd heaps
Of miser's treasure by an outlaw's den
And tell me it is safe, as bid me hope
Danger will wink on opportunity,
And let a single helpless maiden pass
Uninjured in this wild surrounding waste.
Of night or loneliness it recks me not;
I fear the dread events that dog them both,
Lest some ill-greeting touch attempt the person
Of our unowned sister.

E. Bro. I do not, brother,
Infer as if I thought my sister's state
Secure, without all doubt or controversy;
Yet where an equal poise of hope and fear
Does arbitrate th' event, my nature is,
That I incline to hope rather than fear,
And gladly banish squint suspicion.
My sister is not so defenceless left
As you imagine; she has a hidden strength
Which you remember not.

Y. Bro. What hidden strength
Unless the strength of Heaven? if you mean that.

E. Bro. I mean that too; but yet a hidden strength,
Which if Heaven gave it, may be term'd her own;
'Tis chastity, my brother, chastity:
She that has that is clad in complete steel,
And like a quiver'd nymph with arrows keen
May trace huge forests and unharbour'd heaths,
Infamous hills and sandy perilous wilds,
Where through the sacred rays of chastity
No savage fierce, bandit or mountaineer,
Will dare to soil her virgin purity;
Yea, there where very desolation dwells,
By grots and caverns shagg'd with horrid shades,
She may pass on with unblench'd majesty,
Be it not done in pride or in presumption.
Some say no evil thing that walks by night
In fog or fire, by lake or moorish fen,
Blue meagre hag, or stubborn unlaid ghost,
That breaks his magic chains at curfew time,
No goblin, or swart Fairy of the mine,
Hath hurtful power o'er true Virginity.
Do you believe me yet, or shall I call
Antiquity from the old schools of Greece
To testify the arms of Chastity?
Hence had the huntress Dian her dread bow,
Fair silver-shafted queen, for ever chaste,
Wherewith she tamed the brinded lioness
And spotted mountain pard, but set at nought
The frivolous bolt of Cupid: gods and men
Fear'd her stern frown, and she was Queen o' th' Woods.
What was the snaky-headed Gorgon shield
That wise Minerva wore, unconquer'd virgin?
Wherewith she freezed her foes to congeal'd stone,
But rigid looks of chaste austerity
And noble grace, that dash'd brute violence
With sudden adoration and blank awe?
So dear to Heaven is saintly chastity,
That, when a soul is found sincerely so,
A thousand livery'd angels lacquey her,
Driving far off each thing of sin and guilt,
And in clear dream and solemn vision
Tell her of things that no gross ear can hear,
Till 'oft converse with heavenly inhabitants
Begin to cast a beam on th' outward shape
The unpolluted temple of the mind,
And turn it by degrees to the soul's essence,
Till all be made immortal.
But when lust
By unchaste looks, loose gestures, and foul talk,
But most by lewd and lavish act of sin,
Lets in defilement to the inward parts,
The soul grows clotted by contagion,
Imbodies and imbrutes, till she quite lose
The divine property of her first being.
Such are those thick and gloomy shadows damp
Oft seen in charnel vaults and sepulchres,
Lingering and sitting by a new-made grave,
As loath to leave the body that it loved,
And link'd itself in carnal sensuality
To a degenerate and degraded state.

Y. Bro. How charming is divine philosophy!
Not harsh and crabbed, as dull fools suppose,
But musical as is Apollo's lute,
And a perpetual feast of nectar'd sweets,
Where no crude surfeit reigns.

E. Bro.——List, list! I hear
Some far off halloo break the silent air.

Y. Bro. Methought so too; what should it be?

E. Bro. For certain
Either some one like us night-founder'd here,
Or else some neighbour woodman, or at worst
Some roving robber calling to his fellows.

Y. Bro. Heaven keep my sister! Again! again! and near!
Best draw and stand upon our guard.

E. Bro: I'll halloo;
If he be friendly he comes well; if not,
Defence is a good cause and Heaven be for us.

Enter 1st Attendant SPIRIT, *habited like a Shepherd.*

Y. Bro. That halloo I should know—What are you? speak. [else.
Come not too near; you fall on iron stakes

1st Sprit. What voice is that? my young lord? speak again.

Y. Bro. O brother, 'tis my father's shepherd sure.

E. Bro. Thrysis? whose artful strains have oft delay'd
The huddling brook to hear his madrigal,
And sweeten'd every musk-rose of the dale,
How cam'st thou here, good swain? has any ram [dam,
Slipp'd from the fold, or young kid lost his
Or straggling wether the pent flock forsook?
How couldst thou find this dark sequester'd nook!

1st Spirit. O my loved master's heir, and his next joy!
I came not here on such a trivial toy
As a stray'd ewe, or to pursue the stealth
Of pilfering wolf: not all the fleecy wealth
That doth enrich these downs is worth a thought
To this my errand, and the care it brought.
But oh! where is my virgin lady? where is she?
How chance she is not in your company?

E. Bro. To tell thee sadly, Shepherd, without blame
Or our neglect we lost her as we came.

1st Spirit. Ah me! unhappy! then my fears are true.

E. Bro. What fears, good Thrysis! pr'ythee briefly show?

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1st Spirit. I'll tell ye: 'tis not vain, nor fabulous,
(Though so esteem'd by shallow ignorance)
What the sage poets, taught by the heavenly Muse,
Story'd of old in high immortal verse,
Of dire Chimeras, and enchanted isles,
And rifted rocks, whose entrance leads to hell;
For such there be; but unbelief is blind.
E. Bro. Proceed, good Shepherd I am all attention.
1st Spirit. Within the navel of this hideous wood,
Immured in cypress shades, a sorcerer dwells,
Of Bacchus and of Circe born, great Comus,
Deep skill'd in all his mother's witcheries,
And wanton as his father:
And here to every thirsty wanderer
By sly enticements gives his baneful cup,
With many murmurs mix'd, whose pleasing poison
The visage quite transforms of him that drinks,
And the inglorious likeness of a beast
Fixes instead, unmoulding reason's mintage
Character'd in the face. This have I learn'd
Tending my flock hard by, i' th' hilly crofts
That brow this bottom glade, whence night by night
He and his monstrous rout are heard to howl
Like stabled wolves or tigers at their prey,
Doing abhorred rites to Hecate
In their obscured haunts and inmost bowers.
Yet have they many baits and guileful spells,
And beauty's tempting semblance can put on,
T' inveigle and invite th' unwary sense
Of them that pass unweeting by the way.
But hark! the beaten timbrels jarring sound
And wild tumultuous mirth proclaim their presence;
Onward they move; and see a blazing torch
Gleams through the shade, and this way guides their steps.
Let us withdraw a while and watch their motions. [*They retire.*

Enter COMUS's *Crew revelling, and by turns caressing each other, till they observe the Two* BROTHERS; *then the Elder* BROTHER *advances and speaks.*

E. Bro. What are you, speak, that thus in wanton riot
And midnight revelry, like drunken Bacchanals,
Invade the silence of these lonely shades?
1st Wom. Ye godlike youths! whose radiant forms excel
The blooming grace of Maia's winged son,
Bless the propitious star that led you to us;
We are the happiest of the race of mortals,
Of freedom, mirth, and joy, the only heirs;
But you shall share them with us; for this cup,
This nectar'd cup, the sweet assurance gives
Of present, and the pledge of future bliss.
[*She offers them the cup which they both put by.*

SONG.—*By a Man.*

By the gaily circling glass
We can see how minutes pass,
By the hollow cask are told
How the waning night grows old.
Soon, too soon, the busy day
Drives us from our sport and play:
What have we with day to do?
Sons of Care, 'twas made for you.

E. Bro. Forbear, nor offer us the poison'd sweets
That thus have render'd thee thy sex's shame,
All sense of honour banish'd from thy breast.

SONG.

Fame's an echo, prattling double,
An empty, airy, glittering bubble;
A breath can swell, a breath can sink it,
The wise not worth their keeping think it.

Why then, why such toil and pain,
Fame's uncertain smiles to gain?
Like her sister Fortune blind,
To the best she's oft unkind,
And the worst her favour find.

E. Bro. By her own sentence Virtue stands absolved,
Nor asks an echo from the tongue of men
To tell what hourly to herself she proves.
Who wants his own no other praise enjoys;
His ear receives it as a fulsome tale
To which his heart in secret gives the lie:
Nay, slander'd innocence must feel a peace,
An inward peace, which flatter'd guilt ne'er knew.
1st Wom. Oh! how unseemly shows in blooming youth
Such gray severity!——But come with us,
We to the bower of bliss will guide your steps; [sheds
There you shall taste the joys that Nature
On the gay spring of life, youth's flowery prime,
From morn to noon, from noon to dewy eve
Each rising hour by rising pleasures mark'd.

SONG.—*By a Woman in a pastoral habit.*

Would you taste the noon tide air,
To yon fragrant bower repair,
Where woven with the poplar bough
The mantling vine will shelter you.

Down each side a fountain flows,
Tinkling, murmuring, as it goes,
Lightly o'er the mossy ground,
Sultry Phœbus scorching round.

Round the languid herds and sheep
Stretch'd o'er the sunny hillocks sleep,
While on the hyacinth and rose
The fair does all alone repose.

All alone——and in her arms
Your breast may beat to love's alarms,
Till bless'd and blessing you shall own
The joys of love are joys alone.

E. Bro. How low sinks beauty when by vice debased!
How fair that form if virtue dwelt within!
But from this shameless advocate of shame
To me the warbled song harsh discord grates.
Y. Bro. Short is the course of every lawless pleasure;
Grief like a shade on all its footsteps waits,
Scarce visible in joy's meridian height,
But downward as its blaze declining speeds
The dwarfish shadow to a giant spreads.

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1st Wom. No more; these formal maxims misbecome you;
They only suit suspicious shrivell'd Age.

SONG.—*By a Man and two Women.*

Live and love, enjoy the fair,
Banish sorrow, banish care;
Mind not what old dotards say;
Age has had his share of play,
But youth's sport begins to-day.

From the fruits of sweet delight:
Let not scare-crow Virtue fright:
Here in Pleasure's vine-yard we
Rove like birds from tree to tree,
Careless, airy, gay, and free.

E. Bro. How can your impious tongues profane the name
Of sacred Virtue, and yet promise pleasure
In lying songs of vanity and vice?
From virtue sever'd pleasure frenzy grows,
The gay delirium of the feverish mind,
And always flies at reason's cool return.
1st Wom. Perhaps it may; perhaps the sweetest joys
Of love itself from passion's folly spring;
But say, does wisdom greater bliss bestow?
E. Bro. Alike from love's and pleasure's path you stray,
In sensual folly blindly seeking both,
Your pleasure riot, lust your boasted love.
Capricious, wanton, bold, and brutal, lust
Is meanly selfish, when resisted cruel,
And like the blast of pestilential winds
Taints the sweet bloom of Nature's fairest forms;
But love, like odorous Zephyr's grateful breath,
Repays the flower that sweetness which it borrows;
Uninjuring, uninjured, lovers move
In their own sphere of happiness content,
By mutual truth avoiding mutual blame.
But we forget: who hears the voice of Truth
In noisy riot and intemperance drown'd?
Thrysis, be then our guide; we'll follow thee,
And some good angel bear a shield before us!
1st Wom. Come, come, my friends, and partners of my joys,
Leave to these pedant youths their bookish dreams;
Poor blinded boys, by their blind guides misled!
A beardless Cynic is the shame of nature,
Beyond the cure of this inspiring cup;
And my contempt, at best, my pity, moves.
Away, nor waste a moment more about them.

CHORUS.

Away, away, away,
To Comus' court repair,
There night outshines the day,
There yields the melting fair.
[*Exit singing.*

E. Bro. She's gone! may scorn pursue her wanton art,
And all the painted charms that vice can wear.
Yet oft o'er credulous youth such Sirens triumph,
And lead their captive sense in chains as strong
As links of adamant. Let us be free,
And, to secure our freedom, virtuous.
Y. Bro. But should our helpless sister meet the rage
Of this insulting troop, what could she do?
What hope, what comfort, what support were left?
1st Spirit. She meets not them; but yet, if right I guess,
A harder trial on her virtue waits.
E. Bro. Protect her Heaven! But whence this sad conjecture?
1st Spirit. This evening late, by then the chewing flocks
Had ta'en their supper on the savoury herb
Of knot-grass dew-besprent, and were in fold,
I sat me down to watch upon a bank
With ivy canopy'd, and interwove
With flaunting honeysuckle, and began,
Wrapp'd in a pleasing fit of melancholy,
To meditate my rural minstrelsy,
Till fancy had her fill; but ere a close,
The wonted roar was up amidst the woods,
And fill'd the air with barbarous dissonance,
At which I ceased, and listen'd them a while.
Y. Bro. What followed then? O! if our helpless sister—
1st Spirit. Straight an unusual stop of sudden silence
Gave respite to the drowsy-flighted steeds
That draw the litter of close curtain'd Sleep.
At last a soft and solemn-breathing sound
Rose like a steam of rich distill'd perfumes,
And stole upon the air, that even Silence
Was took ere she was aware, and wish'd she might
Deny her nature, and be never more,
Still to be so displaced. I was all ear,
And took in strains that might create a soul
Under the ribs of Death—but oh! ere long
Too well I did perceive it was the voice
Of my most honour'd lady, your dear sister.
Y. Bro. O my foreboding heart! too true my fears.
1st Spirit. Amazed I stood, harrow'd with grief and fear,
And O! poor helpless nightingale, thought I,
How sweet thou sing'st, how near the deadly snare!
Then down the lawns I ran with headlong haste,
Through paths and turnings often trod by day,
Till, guided by my ear, I found the place
Where the damn'd wizard hid in sly disguise,
(For so by certain signs I knew) had met
Already, ere my best speed to prevent,
The aidless innocent lady, his wish'd prey,
Who gently ask'd if he had seen such two,
Supposing him some neighbour villager.
Longer I durst not stay, but soon I guess'd
Ye were the two she meant; with that I sprung
Into swift flight till I had found you here;
But farther know I not.
Y. Bro. O night and shades!
How are ye join'd with hell in triple knot
Against th' unarm'd weakness of one virgin,
Alone and helpless! Is this the confidence
You gave me, brother?
E. Bro. Yes, and keep it still,
Lean on it safely; not a period
Shall be unsaid for me. Against the threats

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Of malice or of sorcery, or that power,
Which erring men call Chance, this I hold firm,
Virtue may be assail'd but never hurt,
Surprised by unjust force but not enthrall'd;
Yea, even that which mischief meant most harm
Shall in the happy trial prove most glory:
But evil on itself shall back recoil,
And mix no more with goodness; when at last
Gather'd like scum, and settled to itself,
It shall be in eternal restless change,
Self-fed and self-consumed. If this fail,
The pillar'd firmament is rottenness,
And earth's base built on stubble. But, come, let's on;
Against th' opposing will and arm of Heaven
May never this just sword be lifted up;
But for that damn'd magician, let him be girt
With all the grisly legions that troop
Under the sooty flag of Acheron,
Harpies and Hydras, or all the monstrous forms
'Twixt Africa and Inde, I'll find him out,
And force him to restore his purchase back
Or drag him by the curls to a foul death,
Cursed as his life.

1st Spirit. Alas! good ventrous youth,
I love thy courage yet, and bold emprise;
But here thy sword can do thee little stead:
Far other arms, and other weapons must
Be those that quell the might of hellish charms.
He with his bare wand can unthread thy joints,
And crumble all thy sinews.

E. Bro. Why, pr'ythee, shepherd,
How durst thou then thyself approach so near,
As to make this relation?

1st Spirit. A shepherd lad,
Of small regard to see to, yet well skill'd
In every virtuous plant and healing herb,
That spreads her verdant leaf to the morning ray,
Has shown me simples of a thousand names,
Telling their strange and vigorous faculties.
Among the rest a small unsightly root,
But of divine effect, he cull'd me out;
And bade me keep it as of sovereign use
'Gainst all enchantment, mildew, blast, or damp,
Or ghastly fury's apparition.
I pursed it up. If you have this about you,
(As I will give you when you go) you may
Boldly assault the necromancer's hall;
Where if he be, with dauntless hardihood
And brandish'd blade rush on him, break his glass,
And shed the luscious liquor on the ground;
But seize his wand, though he and his cursed crew
Fierce sign of battle make, and menace high,
Or, like the sons of Vulcan, vomit smoke,
Yet will they soon retire, if he but shrink.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—Opens and discovers a magnificent Hall in COMUS's *Palace, set off with all the gay decorations proper for an ancient banquetting room.* COMUS *and Attendants stand on each side of the* LADY, *who is seated in an enchanted chair; and by her looks and gestures expresses great signs of uneasiness and melancholy.*

Comus. Hence, loathed melancholy,
Of Cerberus and blackest midnight born,
In Stygian cave forlorn,
'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks, and sights unholy,
Find out some uncouth cell,
Where brooding darkness spreads his jealous wings,
And the night-raven sings;
There, under ebon shades, and low-brow'd rocks,
As ragged as thy locks,
In dark Cimmerian desert ever dwell.
But come, thou goddess fair and free,
In Heaven yclep'd Euphrosyné,
And by men, heart-easing Mirth,
Whom lovely Venus at a birth,
With two sister Graces more,
To ivy-crowned Bacchus bore.
Haste thee, nymph, and bring with thee
Jest and youthful jollity,
Quips and cranks, and wanton wiles,
Nods, and becks, and wreathed smiles,
Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
And love to live in dimple sleek;
Sport, that wrinkled care derides,
And Laughter, holding both his sides,
Come, and trip it as you go,
On the light fantastic toe;
And in thy right hand lead with thee
The mountain-nymph, sweet Liberty.

[*Whilst these lines are repeating, enter a Nymph representing* EUPHROSYNE, *or Mirth; who advances to the* LADY, *and sings the following song.*

SONG.

Come, come, bid adieu to fear,
Love and Harmony live here;
No domestic jealous jars,
Buzzing slanders, wordy wars,
In my presence will appear;
Love and harmony reign here.
Sighs to amorous sighs returning,
Pulses beating, bosoms burning,
Bosoms with warm wishes panting,
Words to speak those wishes wanting,
Are the only tumults here,
All the woes you need to fear;
Love and harmony reign here.

Lady. How long must I, by magic fetters chain'd
To this detested seat, hear odious strains
Of shameless folly which my soul abhors?

Comus. Ye sedge-crown'd Naiades, by twilight seen
Along Mæander's mazy border green,
At Comus' call appear in all your azure sheen,

[*He waves his Wand, the Naiads enter, and range themselves in order to dance.*

Now softly slow let Lydian measures move,
And breathe the pleasing pangs of gentle love.

[*The Naiads dance a slow dance expressive of the passion of Love.*

[*After this dance the pastoral Nymph advances slow, with a melancholy and desponding air, to the side of the stage, and repeats, by way of soliloquy, the first six lines, and then sings the ballad. In the mean time she is observed by* EUPHROSYNE, *who by her gesture expresses to the audience her different sentiments*

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of the subject of her complaint, suitably to the character of their several songs.

RECITATIVE.

How gentle was my Damon's air!
Like sunny beams his golden hair,
His voice was like the nightingale's,
More sweet his breath than flowery vales,
How hard such beauties to resign!
And yet that cruel task is mine!

A BALLAD.

On every hill, in every grove,
Along the margin of each stream,
Dear conscious scenes of former love,
I mourn, and Damon is my theme.
The hills, the groves, the streams remain,
But Damon there I seek in vain.

Now to the mossy cave I fly,
Where to my swain I oft have sung,
Well pleased the browsing goats to spy,
As o'er the airy steep they hung.
The mossy cave, the goats remain,
But Damon there I seek in vain.

Now through the winding vale I pass,
And sigh to see the well-known shade;
I weep, and kiss the bended grass,
Where love and Damon fondly play'd,
The vale, the shade, the grass remain,
But Damon there I seek in vain.

From hill, from dale, each charm is fled,
Groves, flocks, and fountains please no more,
Each flower in pity droops its head,
All nature does my loss deplore.
All, all reproach the faithless swain,
Yet Damon still I seek in vain.

RECITATIVE.—*By* EUPHROSYNE.

Love, the greatest bliss below,
How to taste few women know;
Fewer still the way have hit
How a fickle swain to quit.
Simple nymphs, then learn of me,
How to treat inconstancy.

BALLAD.

The wanton god, that pierces hearts
Dips in gall his pointed darts:
But the nymph disdains to pine,
Who bathes the wound with rosy wine.

Farewell lovers, when they're cloy'd;
If I am scorn'd because enjoy'd.
Sure the squeamish fops are free
To rid me of dull company.

They have charms whilst mine can please;
I love them much, but more my ease;
Nor jealous fears my love molest,
Nor faithless vows shall break my rest.

Why should they e'er give me pain.
Who to give me joy disdain?
All I hope of mortal man,
Is to love me whilst he can.

Comus. Cast thine eyes around, and see
How from every element
Nature's sweets are cull'd for thee,
And her choicest blessings sent.

Fire, water, earth, and air, combine
To compose the rich repast,
Their aid the distant seasons join
To court thy smell, thy sight, thy taste.
Hither summer, autumn, spring,
Hither all your tributes bring,
All on bended knee be seen
Paying homage to your queen.

[*After this they put on their chaplets and prepare for the feast: while* COMUS *is advancing with his cup, and one of his attendants offers a chaplet to the* LADY, *(which she throws on the ground with indignation) the preparation for the feast is interrupted by lofty and solemn music from above, whence the second Attendant* SPIRIT *enters gradually in a splendid machine, repeating the following lines to the* LADY, *and sings, remaining still invisible to* COMUS *and his crew.*

From the realms of peace above,
From the source of heavenly love,
From the starry throne of Jove,
Where tuneful Muses in a glittering ring
To the celestial lyre's eternal string
Patient Virtue's triumph sing;
To these dim labyrinths where mortals stray,
Mazed in passion's pathless way,
To save thy purer breast from spot and blame
Thy guardian Spirit came.

SONG.

Nor on beds of fading flowers,
Shedding soon their gaudy pride;
Nor with swains in Syren bowers,
Will true pleasure long reside.

On awful virtue's hill sublime,
Enthroned sits th' immortal fair;
Who wins her height must patient climb,
The steps are peril, toil, and care.

So from the first did Jove ordain
Eternal bliss for transient pain.

[*Exit the* SPIRIT, *the music playing loud and solemn.*

Lady. Thanks, heavenly songster! whoso'er thou art,
Who deign'st to enter these unhallow'd walls,
To bring the song of virtue to mine ear!
O cease not, cease not the melodious strain,
Till my rapt soul high on the swelling note
To Heaven ascend——far from these horrid fiends;

Comus. Mere airy dreams of air-bred people these?
Who look with envy on more happy man,
And would decry the joys they cannot taste.
Quit not the substance for a stalking shade
Of hollow virtue, which eludes the grasp.
Drink this, and you will scorn such idle tales.

[*He offers the cup, which she puts by, and attempts to rise.*

Nay, lady, sit; if I but wave this wand,
Your nerves are all bound up in alabaster,
And you a statue: or, as Daphne was,
Root-bound, that fled Apollo.

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Lady. Fool, do not boast;
Thou canst not touch the freedom of my mind
With all thy charms, although this corporal rind
Thou hast immanacled, while Heaven sees good.
Comus. Why are you vex'd, lady? why do you frown?
Here dwell no frowns nor anger; from these gates
Sorrow flies far. See, here be all the pleasures
That fancy can beget on youthful thoughts,
When the fresh blood grows lively, and returns
Brisk as the April buds in primrose season.
And first behold this cordial julep here,
That flames and dances in his crystal bounds,
With spirits of balm and fragrant syrups mix'd:
Not that Nepenthes, which the wife of Thone
In Egypt gave to Jove-born Helena,
Is of such power to stir up joy as this,
To life so friendly, or so cool to thirst.
Lady. Know, base deluder, that I will not taste it.
Keep thy detested gifts for such as these.
[*Points to his Crew.*

SONG.—*By a Man.*

Mortals, learn your lives to measure,
Not by length of time but pleasure;
Soon your spring must have a fall;
Losing youth, is losing all:
Then you'll ask, but none will give,
And may linger, but not live.

Comus. Why should you be so cruel to yourself
And to those dainty limbs, which Nature lent
For gentle usage and soft delicacy?
But you invert the covenants of her trust,
And harshly deal like an ill borrower,
With that which you received on other terms,
Scorning the unexempt condition,
By which all human frailty must subsist.
Refreshment after toil, ease after pain;
That have been tired all day without repast,
And timely rest have wanted. But, fair virgin,
This will restore all soon.
Lady. 'Twill not, false traitor!
'Twill not restore the truth and honesty
That thou hast banish'd from thy tongue with lies.
Was this the cottage and the safe abode,
Thou told'st me of? Hence with thy brew'd enchantments.
Hast thou betray'd my credulous innocence
With vizor'd falsehood, and base forgery?
And wouldst thou seek again to trap me here
With liquorish bates, fit to ensnare a brute?
Were it a draught for Juno when she banquets,
I would not taste thy treasonous offering—None,
But such as are good men, can give good things;
And that which is not good is not delicious
To a well-governed, and wise appetite.
Comus. O, foolishness of men! that lend their ears
To those budge doctors of the Stoic fur,
And fetch their precepts from the Cynic tub,
Praising the lean and sallow abstinence.
Wherefore did nature pour her bounties forth
With such a full and unwithdrawing hand,
Covering the earth with odours, fruits, and flocks,
Thronging the seas with spawn innumerable,
But all to please and sate the curious taste;
And set to work millions of spinning worms,
That in their green shops weave the smooth-hair'd silk,
To deck her sons; and, that no corner might
Be vacant of her plenty, in her own loins
She hatch'd th' all-worshipp'd ore, and precious gems
To store her children with; if all the world
Should in a pet of temperance feed on pulse,
Drink the clear stream, and nothing wear but frieze,
Th' All-giver would be unthank'd, would be unpraised,
Not half his riches known, and yet despised,
And we should serve him as a grudging master,
As a penurious niggard of his wealth,
And live like Nature's bastards, not her sons;
Who would be quite surcharged with her own weight,
And strangled with her waste fertility.
Lady. I had not thought to have unlock'd my lips
In this unhallow'd air, but that this juggler
Would think to charm my judgment, as mine eyes,
Obtruding false rules, prank'd in reason's garb.
I hate when vice can bolt her arguments,
And virtue has no tongue to check her pride.
Impostor, do not charge most innocent Nature,
As if she would her children should be riotous
With her abundance. She, good cateress,
Means her provision only to the good,
That live according to her sober laws,
And holy dictate of spare Temperance.
If every just man, that now pines with want,
Had but a moderate and beseeming share
Of that which lewdly-pamper'd Luxury
Now heaps upon some few with vast excess,
Nature's full blessings would be well dispensed
In unsuperfluous even proportion,
And she no whit encumber'd with her store;
And then the Giver would be better thank'd,
His praise due paid. For swinish Gluttony
Ne'er looks to Heaven amidst his gorgeous feast,
But with besotted, base ingratitude
Crams, and blasphemes his feeder. Shall I go on?
Or have I said enough?
Comus. Enough to show
That you are cheated by the lying boasts
Of starving pedants, that affect a fame
From scorning pleasures, which they cannot reach.

EUPHROSYNE *sings.*

Preach not to me your musty rules,
Ye drones that mould in idle cell;
The heart is wiser than the schools,
The senses always reason well.

If short my span, I less can spare
To pass a single pleasure by;
An hour is long, if lost in care;
They only live, who life enjoy.

Comus. These are the maxims of the truly wise,

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Of such as practise what they preach to others.
Here are no hypocrites, no grave dissemblers;
Nor pining grief, nor eating cares approach us;
Nor sighs, nor murmurs—but of gentle Love,
Whose woes delight; what must his pleasures then?

EUPHROSYNE *sings.*

Ye Fauns, and ye Dryads, from hill, dale, and grove,
Trip, trip it along, conducted by Love;
Swiftly resort to Comus' gay court,
And in various measures show Love's various sport.

Enter the Fauns and Dryads, and attend to the following directions. The tune is played a second time, to which they dance.

Now lighter and gayer, ye tinkling strings, sound;
Light, light in the air, ye nimble nymphs, bound.
Now, now with quick feet the ground beat, beat, beat;
Now with quick feet the ground beat, beat, beat, &c.

Now cold and denying,
Now kind and complying,
Consenting, repenting,
Disdaining, complaining,
Indifference now feigning.
Again with quick feet the ground beat, beat, beat. [*Exeunt Dancers.*

Comus. List, Lady, be not coy, and be not cozen'd
With that same vaunted name Virginity.
Beauty is nature's coin, must not be hoarded,
But must be current, and the good thereof
Consists in mutual and partaken bliss,
Unsavoury in th' enjoyment of itself:
If you let slip time, like a neglected rose,
It withers on the stalk with languish'd head.
Beauty is nature's brag, and must be shown
In courts, at feasts, and high solemnities,
Where most may wonder at the workmanship.
It is for homely features to keep home,
They had their name thence: Coarse complexions
And cheeks of sorry grain, will serve to ply
The sampler, and to tease the housewife's wool.
What need a vermeil tinctured lip for that,
Love-darting eyes, or tresses like the morn?
There was another meaning in these gifts;
Think what, and be advised: you are but young yet;
This will inform you soon.
Lady. To him that dares
Arm his profane tongue with contemptuous words
Against the sun-clad power of chastity,
Fain would I something say, yet to what purpose?
Thou hast nor ear, nor soul to apprehend;
And thou art worthy that thou shouldst not know
More happiness than this thy present lot.
Enjoy your dear wit, and gay rhetoric,
That has so well been taught her dazzling fence:
Thou art not fit to hear thyself convinced,
Yet should I try the uncontrolled worth
Of this pure cause would kindle my rapt spirits
To such a flame of sacred vehemence,
That dumb things would be moved to sympathize,
And the brute earth would lend her nerves, and shake,
Till all thy magic structures, rear'd so high,
Were shatter'd into heaps o'er thy false head.
Comus. She fables not, I feel that I do fear
Her words set off by some superior power;
And though not mortal, yet a cold shuddering dew
Dips me all o'er, as when the wrath of Jove
Speaks thunder, and the chains of Erebus,
To some of Satan's crew. I must dissemble,
And try her yet more strongly—Come, no more,
This is mere moral babble, and direct
Against the canon laws of our foundation;
I must not suffer this, yet 'tis but the lees
And settlings of a melancholy blood;
But this will cure all straight; one sip of this
Will bathe the drooping spirits in delight,
Beyond the bliss of dreams. Be wise and taste.—

The BROTHERS *rush in with swords drawn, wrest the glass out of his hand, and break it against the ground; his rout makes signs of resistance, but are all driven in.*

Enter the 1*st* SPIRIT.

1*st Spirit.* What, have you let the false enchanter 'scape?
O, ye mistook, you should have snatch'd his wand
And bound him fast; without his rod reversed,
And backward mutters of dissevering power,
We cannot free the lady, that sits here
In stony fetters fix'd, and motionless.
Yet stay, be not disturb'd; now I bethink me,
Some other means I have, which may be used,
Which once of Melibœus old I learn'd,
The soothest shepherd that ere piped on plains: [swain,
I learn'd them then, when with my fellow
The youthful Lycidas, his flocks I fed.
There is a gentle nymph not far from hence,
Sabrina is her name, a virgin pure,
That sways the Severn stream;
And, as the old swain said, she can unlock
The clasping charm, and thaw the numbing spell,
If she be right invoked in warbled song;
For maidenhood she loves, and will be swift
To aid a virgin, such as was herself.
And see the swain himself in season comes.

Enter the 2*d* SPIRIT.

Haste, Lycidas, and try thy tuneful strain,
Which from her bed the fair Sabrina calls.

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SONG.—*By* 2d SPIRIT.

Sabrina fair,
Listen where thou art sitting
Under the glassy, cool, translucent wave,
In twisted braids of lilies knitting
The loose train of thy amber-dropping hair;
Listen for dear honour's sake,
Goddess of the silver lake,
Listen and save.

SABRINA *rises and sings.*

By the rushy-fringed bank,
Where grows the willows and the osier dank,
My sliding chariot stays,
Thick set with agate and the azure sheen
Of Turkish blue, and emerald green,
That in the channel strays;
Whilst from off the waters fleet
Thus I set my printless feet,
O'er the cowslip's velvet head,
That bends not as I tread;
Gentle swain, at thy request
I am here.

RECITATIVE.—2d SPIRIT.

Goddess dear,
We implore thy powerful hand
To undo the charmed band
Of true virgin here distress'd,
Through the force and through the wile,
Of unbless'd enchanter vile.

RECITATIVE.—SABRINA.

Shepherd 'tis my office best
To help ensnared chastity;
Brightest lady, look on me;
Thus I sprinkle on thy breast
Drops, that from thy fountain pure
I have kept, of precious cure;
Thrice upon thy finger's tip,
Thrice upon thy ruby lip;
Next this marble venom'd seat,
Smear'd with gums of glutinous heat,
I touch with chaste palms moist and cold;
Now the spell hath lost his hold;
And I must haste, ere morning hour,
To wait in Amphitrite's bower.

[SABRINA *descends, and the* LADY *rises out of her seat; the* BROTHERS *embrace her tenderly.*

E. Bro. I oft have heard, but ne'er believed till now,
There are, who can by potent magic spells
Bend to their crooked purpose nature's laws,
Blot the fair moon from her resplendent orb,
Bid whirling planets stop their destined course,
And through the yawning earth from Stygian gloom
Call up the meagre ghost to walks of light:
It may be so——for some mysterious end!
Y. Bro. Why did I doubt? Why tempt the wrath of heaven
To shed just vengeance on my weak distrust?
Here spotless innocence has found relief,
By means as wondrous as her strange distress.
E. Bro. The freedom of the mind, you see, no charm,
No spell can reach; that righteous Jove forbids.
Lest man should call his frail divinity
The slave of evil or the sport of chance.
Inform us, Thyrsis, if for this thine aid,
We aught can pay that equals thy desert.

1st SPIRIT *discovering himself.*

1st Spirit. Pay it to Heaven! There my mansion is.
But when a mortal, favour'd of high Jove,
Chances to pass through yon adventurous glade,
Swift as the sparkle of a glancing star
I shoot from heaven to give him safe convoy.
That lent you grace to escape this cursed place;
To heaven, that here has tried your youth,
Your faith, your patience, and your truth,
And sent you through these hard essays
With a crown of deathless praise.

Then the two first SPIRITS *advance and speak alternately the following lines, which Milton calls epilogizing.*

To the ocean now I fly,
And those happy climes that lie
Where day never shuts his eye,
Up in the broad fields of the sky;
There I suck the liquid air,
All amidst the gardens fair
Of Hesperus, and his daughters three,
That sing about the golden tree.

Along the crisped shades and bowers
Revels the spruce and jocund Spring;
The Graces and the rosy-bosom'd hours
Thither all their bounties bring;
There eternal summer dwells.
And the west-winds with musky wing
About the cedarn alleys fling
Nard and Cassia's balmy smells.

Now my task is smoothly done,
I can fly, or I can run,
Quickly to the green earth's end,
Where the bow'd welkin slow doth bend;
And from thence can soar as soon
To the corners of the moon.
Mortals that would follow me,
Love Virtue, she alone is free:
She can teach you how to climb
Higher than the sphery chime;
Or, if Virtue feeble were,
Heaven itself would stoop to her.

CHORUS.

Taught by virtue, you may climb
Higher than the sphery chime;
Or, if Virtue feeble were,
Heaven itself would stoop to her.

EPILOGUE.

SPOKEN BY

EUPHROSYNE, WITH A WAND AND CUP.

Some critic, or I'm much deceived, will ask,
What means this wild, this allegoric Masque?

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Beyond all bounds of truth this author shoots;
Can wands or cups transform men into brutes?
'Tis idle stuff!—And yet I'll prove it true;
Attend; for sure I mean it not of you.
The mealy fop, that tastes my cup may try,
How quick the change from beau to butterfly,
But o'er the insect should the brute prevail,
He grins a monkey with a length of tail.
One stroke of this,* as sure as Cupid's arrow,
Turns the warm youth into a wanton sparrow.
Nay the cold prude becomes a slave to love,
Feels a new warmth, and cooes a billing dove.

* The Wand.

The sly coquet, whose artful tears beguile
Unwary hearts, weeps a false crocodile.
Dull poring pedants, shock'd at truth's keen light,
Turn moles, and plunge again in friendly night;
Misers grow vultures, of rapacious mind,
Or more than vultures, they devour their kind;
Flatterers cameleons, creeping on the ground,
With every changing colour changing round.
The party fool, beneath his heavy load,
Drudges a driven ass through dirty road.
While guzzling sots, their spouses say, are hogs;
And snarling critics, authors swear, are dogs.
But to be grave, I hope we've proved at least,
All vice is folly, and makes man a beast.

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THE ORPHAN OF CHINA:

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY ARTHUR MURPHY, ESQ.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	DRURY-LANE.
TIMURKAN, Emperor of the Tartars,	*Mr. Howard.*
OCTAR, a Tartar General,	*Mr. Bransby.*
ZAMTI, a Mandarine,	*Mr. Garrick.*
ETAN, educated as his Son,	*Mr. Mossop.*
HAMET, a youthful Captive,	*Mr. Holland.*
MORAT, a faithful friend of Zamti,	*Mr. Burton.*
MIRVAN, a Chinese in the Tartar's service, secretly a friend of Zamti,	*Mr. Davies.*
ORASMING, ZIMVENTI, } Two Conspirators,	*Mr. Packer.* *Mr. Austin.*
MANDANE, Zamti's wife,	*Mrs. Yates.*

Messenger, Guards, &c.

SCENE.—Pekin, Capital of China.

PROLOGUE.

ENOUGH of Greece and Rome. The exhausted store
Of either nation now can charm no more:
Even adventitious helps in vain we try,
Our triumphs languish in the public eye;
And grave processions, musically slow,
Here pass unheeded—as a Lord Mayor's show.
On eagle wings the poet of to-night
Soars for fresh virtues to the source of light,
To China's eastern realms: and boldly bears
Confucius' morals to Britannia's ears.
Accept th' imported boon; as echoing Greece
Received from wandering chiefs her golden fleece;
Nor only richer by the spoils become,
But praise th' adventurous youth, who brings them home.
One dubious character, we own, he draws,
A patriot zealous in a Monarch's cause!
Nice is the task the varying hand to guide,
And teach the blending colours to divide;
Where, rainbow-like, th' encroaching tints invade shade.
Each other's bounds, and mingle light with
If then, assiduous to obtain his end,
You find too far the subject's zeal extend;
If undistinguish'd loyalty prevails
Where nature shrinks, and strong affection fails,
On China's tenets charge the fond mistake,
And spare his error for his virtue's sake.
From nobler motives our allegiance springs,
For Britain knows no Right Divine in Kings.
From Freedom's choice that boasted right arose, flows.
And through each line from freedom's choice it
Justice, with Mercy join'd, the throne maintains;
And in his people's hearts our Monarch reigns.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Enter MANDANE *and* MIRVAN.

Man. No, never; Mirvan, never—still this heart

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Must throb with ceaseless wo—All gracious Heaven!
Will not this palace, drench'd in gore; the crown
Of China's kings fix'd on the Tartar's brow;
Will not a tract of twenty years in bondage!
Ah! will not these suffice, without a fresh cause
Of bitter anguish in Mandane's breast?—
Mir. Better suppress these unavailing tears,
This fruitless flood of grief.
Man. It will not be——
Even 'midst the horrors of this dismal hour,
When fate has all transferr'd from lost Cathai
To vile barbarian hands; in such an hour,
This heart, revolting from the public cause,
Bleeds from a private source; bleeds for the woes
That hang o'er Zamti's house.——
Mir. Alas! Mandane,
Amidst the general wreck, who does not feel
The keen domestic pang?
Man. Yes, all.—We all
Must feel the kindred touch; daily the cries
Of widows, orphans, father, son, and brother,
In vain are sent to heaven; the wasteful rage
Of these barbarians—these accursed invaders—
Burns with increasing fire; the thunder still
Rolls o'er our heads, threatening with hideous crash
To fall at once, and bury us in ruin.
Mir. And quickly fall it must!—the hand of Heaven
Weighs this great empire down.
Man. Nay, tax not Heaven!
Almighty Justice never bares its arm
'Gainst innocence and truth. 'Tis Timurkan,
That fell barbarian—that insatiate waster——
May curses blast the Tartar!—he—'tis he
Has bore down all, and still his slaughtering sword
In yonder field of death, where Corea's troops
Made their last stand for Liberty and China,
Crimsons the land with blood. This battle lost,
Oh! then farewell to all!—But, Mirvan, say,
How came the tidings?
Mir. From yon lofty tower,
As my eyes, straining toward the distant plain,
Sent forth an anxious look, through clouds of dust
The savage bands appear'd; the western sun
Gleam'd on their burnish'd helms; and soon a shout
From the glad multitude proclaim'd th' approach
Of Timurkan:—elated with new conquest,
The tyrant comes, and where his wrath will stop
Heaven only knows!——
Man. Oh! there—there lies the thought
At which imagination starts, appall'd
With horror at the scene her busy workings
Have colour'd to my sight—there lies the thought
That wakens all a mother's fears—alas!
I tremble for my son!
Mir. Your son!—Kind Heaven! tears,
Have you not check'd his ardour?—with your
Your soft authority, restrain'd the hero
From the alarms of war?——
Man. Alas, good Mirvan,
Thou little know'st his danger!—but that truth
Must never pass these lips.
Mir. I hope Mandane know
Doubts not my honest zeal—full well you
I bear this tyrant deep and mortal hate;
That under him I list, and wear this garb
In hopes that some occasion may arrive,
When I may strike an unexpected blow,
And do my country right.
Man. Thy loyalty,
Thy truth and honour have been ever spotless
Besides thy wrongs, thy countless wrongs, the wounds
He gave your injured family and name——
Mir. Alas! those wounds must still lie bleeding here,
Untented by the hand of time—Not all
His lenient arts, his favours heap'd upon me,
Shall cool the burning anguish of my soul.
What he, that slew my father!—dragg'd my sister,
Blooming in years, to his detested bed!—
Yes, tyrant, yes: thy unextinguish'd foe
Dwells in this bosom. Surely then to me
Mandane may reveal her griefs—her wrongs
Will add new fuel to my hidden fires,
And make them burn more fiercely.——
Man. Urge no more——
My woes must rest conceal'd—yet should the tyrant
Learn from the captives of yon vanquish'd host.
That China's Orphan breathes the vital air,
And to himself unknown, within his breast
Unconscious bears the generous glowing flame
Of all the virtues of his royal line;
Oh! should they know that the dear youth survives,
That for his righteous cause this war began,
Their fury then would kindle to a blaze,
Might wrap the world in flames, and in the ruin
My blameless son must perish!
Mir. Seek not thus
To multiply the ills that hover round you;
Nor from the stores of busy fancy add
New shafts to fortune's quiver, Zamti's care
Hath still deceived suspicion's wakeful eye;
And o'er the Mandarine his manners pure,
And sacred function, have diffused an air
Of venerable awe, which e'en can teach
These northern foes to soften into men.
Man. Yes, Mirvan, yes—religion wears a mien
In Zamti's person so severely mild,
That the fierce Scythian rests upon his spear,
And wonders what he feels! Such is the charm
Of heart-felt virtue; such is nature's force
That speaks abroad, and in rude northern hearts
Can stamp the image of an awful God.
From that source springs some hope:—Wretch that I am!
Hope idly flutters on my trembling tongue,
While Melancholy, brooding o'er her wrongs,
Lays waste the mind with horror and despair.
—What noise is that?——
Mir. Compose this storm of grief;
In every sound your fancy hears the Tartar—
Your husband this way bends——
Man. Celestial Powers!
What labouring sighs heave in his breast?——what terror
Rolls in the patriot's eye?—haste, Mirvan, hence;
Again look out; gather the flying news,
And let me know each circumstance of ruin.
[*Exit* MIRVAN.

Enter ZAMTI.

Man. Zamti!
Zamti. Mandane!
Man. Ah! what hast thou seen?

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What hast thou heard?—Tell me—has fate decreed
The doom of China?

Zamti. China is no more!——
The eastern world is lost—this mighty empire
Falls with the universe beneath the stroke
Of savage force—falls from its towering hopes;
For ever, ever fallen!

Man. Yet, why, ye Powers!
Why should a tyrant, train'd to lust and murder,
A lawless ravager from savage wilds,
Where cheerful day ne'er dawns, but lowering heaven
For ever rolls a turbulence of clouds;
Why should a monster thus usurp the world,
And trample fair simplicity from ill
Beneath his ruffian feet?

Zamti. Far hence, Mandane,
Those happy days, alas! are fled, when peace
Here nursed her blooming olives, and shed round
Her fostering influence.—In vain the plan
Of sacred laws, by hoary elders taught,
Laws founded on the base of public weal,
Gave lessons to the world. In vain Confucius
Unlock'd his radiant stores of moral truth;
In vain bright science, and each tender muse,
Beam'd every elegance on polish'd life——
Barbarian power prevails. Whate'er our sages taught,
Or genius could inspire, must fade away,
And each fair virtue wither at the blast
Of northern domination.

Man. Fatal day!
More fatal even than that, which first beheld
This race accursed within these palace walls,
Since hope, that balm of wretched minds, is now
Irrevocably lost.——

Zamti. Name not the day,
Which saw this city sack'd—fresh stream my eyes,
Fresh bleeds my heart, whene'er the sad idea
Comes o'er my tortured mind. Why, cruel Powers!
Why in that moment could not Zamti fall?

Man. Thy sanctity, the symbol of thy God,
Made even the conqueror suspend his blow,
And murmur soft humanity. High Heaven
Protected thee for its own great designs;
To save the royal child, the new-born babe,
From the dire slaughter of his ancient line.

Zamti. Yes, my Mandane, in that hour of carnage,
For purposes yet in the womb of time,
I was reserved. I was ordain'd to save
The infant boy; the dear, the precious charge,
The last of all my kings:—full twenty years
I've hid him from the world, and from himself,
And now I swear——Kneel we together here;
While in this dreadful pause our souls renew
Their solemn purpose.—— [*Both kneel.*
Thou all-gracious Being,
Whose tutelary care hath watch'd the fate
Of China's Orphan, who has taught his steps
The paths of safety, still invelope him
In sevenfold night, till your own hour is come;
Till your slow justice see the dread occasion
To rouse his soul, and bid him walk abroad
Vicegerent of your power;—and if thy servant,
Or this his soft associate, e'er defeat
By any word or deed the great design,
Then straight may all your horrible displeasure
Be launch'd upon us from your red right arm,
And in one ruin dash us both together,
The blasted monuments of wrath.

Man. That here
Mandane vows ne'er to betray his cause,
Be it enroll'd in the records of Heaven! [*Both rise.*

Zamti. And now my heart more lightly bears; methinks
With strength redoubled I can meet the shock
Of adverse fate.

Man. And lo! the trial comes——
For see where Etan mourns——See where the youth,
Unknowing of the storm that gathers o'er him,
Brings some new tale of wo.——

Enter ETAN.

Etan. My honour'd father,
And you, my helpless mother,—ah! where now,
Illustrious wretched pair, where will ye fly!
Where will your miseries now find a shelter?

Zamti. In virtue—I and this dear faithful woman—
We ask no more.

Man. Ah! quickly, Etan, say
What means that pallid look? What new event
Brings on the work of fate?

Zamti. Say, does the tyrant
Return unglutted yet with blood?——

Etan. He does!
Even now his triumph moves within the gates
In dread barbaric pomp:—the iron swarms
Of Hyperboreans troop along the streets,
Reeking from slaughter; while, from gazing crowds
Of their dire countrymen, an uproar wild
Of joy ferocious through th' astonish'd air
Howls like a northern tempest: o'er the rest,
Proud in superior eminence of guilt,
The tyrant rides sublime.—Behind his car
The refuse of his sword, a captive train
Display their honest scars, and gnash their teeth
With rage and desperation.——

Man. Cruel fate!

Etan. With these a youth, distinguish'd from the rest,
Proceeds in sullen march. Heroic fire
Glows in his cheek, and from his ardent eye
Beams amiable horror.

Man. What of this youth?

Zamti. Be not alarm'd, Mandane—What of him?

Etan. On him all eyes were fix'd with eager gaze,
As if their spirits, struggling to come forth,
Would strain each visual nerve—while through the crowd
A busy murmur ran—If fame say right,
Beneath that habit lurks a Prince; the last
Of China's race.—The rumour spreads abroad
From man to man; and all with loud acclaim
Denounce their vengeance on him.——

Man. Ha! what say'st thou, Etan?
Heavens, how each blackening hour in deeper horror
Comes charged with wo!

Zamti. It cannot be. Ye vain,
Ye groundless terrors, hence!—— [*Aside.*

Man. My honour'd lord,
Those eyes upturn'd to Heaven, alas! in vain,
Declare your inward conflict——

Zamti. Loved Mandane,
I pr'ythee leave me—but a moment leave me.—
Heed not the workings of a sickly fancy,
Wrought on by every popular report.
Thou know'st, with Morat I convey'd the infant

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Far as the eastern point of Corea's realm;
There, where no human trace is seen, no sound
Assails the ear, save when the foaming surge
Breaks on the shelving beach, that there the youth
Might mock their busy search. Then check thy fears——
Retire, my love, a while; I'll come anon—
And fortify thy soul with firm resolve,
Becoming Zamti's wife.——
Man. Yes, Zamti's wife
Shall never act unworthy of her lord!
Then hence I'll go, and satisfy each doubt
This youthful captive raises in my heart,
Quick panting with its fears. And, O ye Powers!
Protect my son, my husband, and my king!
[*Exit.*
Zamti. Come hither, Etan—thou perceivest the toils
That now encircle me.
Etan. Alas! too well
I see th' impending storm. But surely, Sir,
Should this young captive prove the royal Orphan,
You'll never own th' important truth.
Zamti. Dream not, young man,
To stand secure, yet blooming into life,
While vengeance hovers o'er your father's head.
The stock once fallen, each scion must decay.
Etan. Then let me perish!—Witness for me, Heaven,
Could Etan's fall appease the tyrant's wrath,
A willing victim he would yield his life,
And ask no greater boon of Heaven.
Zamti. This zeal
So fervid in a stranger's cause——
Etan. A stranger!—he!—
My king a stranger!—Sir, you never meant it—
Perhaps you would explore the fiery seeds
Of Etan's temper, ever prone to blaze
At honour's sacred name. Perish the man,
Who, when his country calls him to defend
The rights of human kind, or bravely die,
Who then to glory dead can shrink aghast,
And hold a council with his abject fears!
Zamti. These towerings of the soul, alas! are vain.
I know the Tartar well—should I attempt
By any virtuous fraud to veil the truth,
His lion-rage again shall stalk abroad,
Again shall quaff the blood of innocence;
And for Zaphimri all the poor remains
Of China's matrons, and her hoary sires,
Her blooming virgins, and her lisping babes,
Shall yield their throats to the fell murderer's knife,
And all be lost for ever!
Etan. Then at once
Proclaim him to the world; each honest hand
Will grasp a sword, and 'midst the circling guards,
Reach the usurper's heart—or should they fail,
Should overwhelming bands obstruct the deed,
They'll greatly dare to die!—better to die
With falling Liberty, than basely lead
An ignominious life. Zaphimri lost,
Ne'er shall fair order dawn, but through the land
Slavery shall clank her chains, and violation,
Rapine, and murder riot at the will
Of lust and lawless power.
Zamti. Thou brave young man,
Indulge my fond embrace—thy lovely ardour
It glads me thus to see!—To ease at once
Thy generous fears,—the prince Zaphimri's safe;
Safe in my guardian care.
Etan. This prisoner, Sir,
He does not then alarm you?
Zamti. No! from thence
I've nought to fear.
Etan. Oh! Sir, inform your son
Where is the royal heir?
Zamti. Seek not too soon
To know that truth,—now I'll disclose the work,
The work of vengeance, which my labouring soul
Has long been fashioning. Even at this hour
Stupendous ruin hovers o'er the heads
Of this accursed race.
Etan. Ruin!
Zamti. I'll tell thee——
When Timurkan led forth his savage bands,
Unpeopling this great city, I then seized
The hour, to tamper with a chosen few,
Who have resolved, when the barbarians lie
Buried in sleep and wine, and hotly dream
Their havoc o'er again—then, then, my son,
In one collected blow to burst upon them;
Like their own northern clouds, whose midnight horror
Impending o'er the world, at length breaks forth
In the vaunt lightning's blaze, in storms and thunder
Through all the reddening air, till frighted Nature
Start from her couch, and waken to a scene
Of uproar and destruction.
Etan. Oh! my father,
The glorious enterprize!
Zamti. Mark me, young man.
Seek thou my friends, Orasming and Zimventi:
In the dim holy cloisters of yon temple
Thou'lt find them musing.—Near Osmingti's tomb
I charge they all convene,—and there do thou
Await my coming—bid them ne'er remit
Their high heroic ardour; let them know,
Whate'er shall fall on this old mouldering clay,
The tyrant never shall subdue my mind.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter ZAMTI.

Zamti. Dream on, deluded tyrant! yes, dream on
In blind security!—whene'er high Heaven
Means to destroy, it curses with illusion,
With error of the mind.—Yes, wreak thy fury
Upon this captive youth;—whoe'er he is,
If from his death this groaning empire rise,
Once more itself, resplendent, rich in arts
That humanize the world,—he pays a debt
Due to his king, his country, and his God.
His father,—wheresoe'er he dwell,—in tears
Shall tell the glory on his boy derived;
And even his mother, 'midst her matron shrieks
Shall bless the childbed pang that brought him forth
To this great lot, by fate to few allow'd!——
What wouldst thou, Mirvan?

Enter MIRVAN.

Mir. Eagerly without

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A reverend stranger craves access to Zamti:
His head hoary with age, with galling tears
His eyes suffused; his every look impatience—
Zamti. Give him admittance——
[*Exit* MIRVAN.
How my spirits rush
Tumultuous to my heart—what may this mean?
Lo! where he comes——

Enter MORAT.

Morat. Zamti!——
Zamti. Ha!—through the veil
Of age, that face—that mien—Morat!——
Morat. Oh! Zamti!
Let me once more embrace thee——
Zamti. Good old man! [*They embrace.*
But wherefore art thou here?—what of my boy?
Morat. Ah! what indeed?—Even from the ocean's margin,
Parch'd with the sun, or chill'd with midnight damps,
O'er hills, and rocks, and dreary continents,
In vain I've follow'd——
Zamti. Why didst let him forth?
Morat. Think not thy Morat urged him to the deed.
His valour was the cause; and soon as fame
Proclaim'd the prince alive, the mighty din
Of preparation through all Corea's realm
Alarm'd his breast—indignant of control
He burst his covert, and now, hapless youth—
Zamti. Ah!—dead!—in battle fallen!——
Morat. Alas! even now
He drags the conqueror's chain.
Zamti. Mandane then
May still embrace her son!—My boy may live
To know the sweets of freedom ere he die.
Morat. Alas! the measure of your woes is full!
Unconscious of our frauds, the tyrant thinks
The prince his prisoner in your son.
Zamti. Ah! Morat!
Morat. Wild through the streets the foe calls out on Zamti.
Thee they pronounce the author of this fraud;
And on your Hamet threaten instant vengeance.
Zamti. There was but this—but this, ye cruel Powers,
And this you've heap'd upon me. Was it not
Enough to tear him from his mother's arms—
Doom'd for his prince to wander o'er the world? [eyes,
—Alas! what needed more!—Fond foolish
Stop your unbidden gush—tear, tear me piecemeal—
—No, I will not complain—but whence on him
Could that suspicion glance?
Morat. This very morn,
Ere yet the battle join'd, a faithful messenger,
Who through the friendly gloom of night had held [camp,
His darkling way, and pass'd the Tartar's
Brought me advices from the Corean chief,
That soon as Hamet join'd the warlike train,
His story he related. Straight the gallant leader
With open arms received him—knew him for thy son,
In secret knew him, nor reveal'd he aught
That touch'd his birth. But still the busy voice
Of Fame, increasing as she goes, through all the ranks
Babbled abroad each circumstance. By thee
How he was privately convey'd—sent forth
A tender infant to be rear'd in solitude,
A stranger to himself!—The warriors saw
With what a graceful port he moved in arms,
An early hero!—deem'd him far above
The common lot of life—deem'd him Zaphimri,
And all with reverential awe beheld him.
This, this, my Zamti, reach'd the tyrant's ear,
And rises into horrid proof.
Zamti. If so,
Oh! what a sacrifice must now be made!
[*Aside.*
Morat. But when the secret shall be known—
Zamti. Oh! Morat!
Does thy poor bleeding country still remain
Dear to thy heart?—Say, dost thou still revere
That holy Power above, Supreme of beings,
Mistaken by the Bonzée, whom our fathers
Worshipp'd in happier days?
Morat. He—only he
For twenty years hath given me strength in exile.
Zamti. Then bending here, before his awful throne,
Swear, what I now unfold, shall ever lie
In sacred silence wrapp'd.
Morat. I swear!
Zamti. Now mark me——
Morat—my son—[*Turning aside.*]—Oh! cruel, cruel task, [break!
To conquer nature while the heart-strings
Morat. Why heave those sighs? and why that burst of grief?
Zamti. My son—his guiltless blood—I cannot speak! [*Bursts into tears.*
Morat. Ha!—Wilt thou shed his blood?
Zamti. Thou wretched father!——
[*Half aside.*
Morat. Oh! had you known the virtues of the youth,
His truth, his courage, his enlighten'd mind—
Zamti. I pr'ythee urge no more—here nature's voice
Speaks, in such pleadings:—such reproaches, Morat,
—Here in my very heart—give woundings here,
Thou can'st not know, and only parents feel!
Morat. And wilt thou, cruel in thy tears——
Zamti. Nay cease,
In pity to a father, cease—Think, Morat—
Think of Zaphimri!
Morat. Ah! how fares the prince?
Zamti. He fares, my Morat, like a god on earth,
Unknowing his celestial origin:
Yet quick, intense, and bursting into action;
His great heart labouring with—he knows not what—
Prodigious deeds!—Deeds, which ere long shall rouse,
Astonish, and alarm the world.
Morat. What mean
Those mystic sounds?
Zamti. Revenge, conquest, and freedom!—
Morat. Conquest and freedom!
Zamti. Ay! conquest and freedom!
The midnight hour shall call a chosen band
Of hidden patriots forth; who, when the foe
Sinks down in drunken revelry, shall pour
The gather'd rage of twenty years upon him,
And vindicate the eastern world.
Morat. By Heaven!
The news revives my soul.
Zamti. And canst thou think,
To save one vulgar life, that Zamti now
Will mar the vast design? No; let him bleed,

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Let my boy bleed!—in such a cause as this
I can resign my son—with tears of joy
Resign him!—and one complicated pang
Shall wrench him from my heart.——
The conqueror comes! [*Warlike music within.*
This is no hour for parlying—Morat, hence,
And leave me to my fix'd resolve.
Morat. Yet think,
Think of some means to save your Hamet.
Zamti. Oh!
It cannot be—the soul of Timurkan
Is bold and stirring: when occasion calls,
He springs aloft, like an expanding fire,
And marks his way with ruin. Now he knows
Zaphimri lives, his fear will make him daring
Beyond his former crimes—for joy and riot
Which this day's triumph brings, remorseless rage
And massacre succeed—and all our hopes
Are blasted for an unimportant boy.
[*A second flourish.*
Morat. That nearer sound proclaims his dread approach.
Yet once more, Zamti, think——
Zamti. No more—I'll send
Those shall conduct thee where Orasming lives.
There dwell unseen of all. But, Morat, first
Seek my Mandane. Heavens! how shall I bear
Her strong impetuosity of grief,
When she shall know my fatal purpose? Thou
Prepare her tender spirit; soothe her mind,
And save, oh! save me from that dreadful conflict! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—Two large Folding-gates in the back-scene are burst open by the Tartars.

Enter TIMURKAN, *with his train.*

Timur. Hail to this regal dome, this gorgeous palace!
Where this inventive race have lavish'd all
Their elegance:—ye gay apartments, hail!
Beneath your storied roof, where mimic life
Glows to the eye, and at the painter's touch
A new creation lives along the walls;
Once more receive a conqueror, arrived
From rougher scenes, where stern rebellion dared
Draw forth his phalanx; till this warlike arm
Hurl'd desolation on his falling ranks,
And now the monster, in yon field of death
Lies overwhelm'd in ruin.
Octar. There he fell,
No more to stalk thy realm: the eastern world,
From this auspicious day, beneath your feet
Lies bound in adamantine chains.
Timur. Thus, Octar,
Shall Timurkan display his conquering banners, [Tanais
From high Samarcand's walls, to where the
Devolves his icy tribute to the sea.
Octar. But first this captive prince!—
Timur. Yes, Octar, first
Zaphimri gluts my rage—bring him before us—first
We'll crush the seeds of dark conspiracy;
For Zamti—he, that false insidious slave,
Shall dearly pay his treasons.
Octar. Zamti's crimes
'Twere best to leave unpunished:—versed in wiles
Of sly hypocrisy, he wins the love
Of the deluded multitude. 'Twould seem,
Should we inflict that death his frauds deserve,
As if we meant destruction to their faith:
When a whole people's minds are once inflamed
For their religious rights, their fury burns
With rage more dreadful, as the source is holy.
Timur. Octar, thou reason'st right:—henceforth my art
To make this stubborn race receive the yoke,
Shall be by yielding to their softer manners,
Their vesture, laws, and customs: thus to blend [ple.
And make the whole one undistinguish'd peo-
The boy comes forth in sullen mood—what passions
Swell in his breast in vain!——

Enter HAMET, *in Chains.*

Thou art the youth,
Who mow'd our battle down, and flesh'd your sword
In many a slaughter'd Tartar.
Hamet. True; I am.
Timur. Too well I mark'd thy rage, and saw thee hew [plain.
A wasteful passage through th' embattled
Hamet. Then be thou witness for me, in that hour
I never shunn'd your thickest war; and if
In yonder field, where my poor countrymen
In mangled heaps lie many a rood extended,
Kind fate had doom'd me to a noble fall,
With this right arm I earn'd it.
Timur. Say, what motive
Unsheath'd thy rebel blade, and bade thee seek
These wars?
Hamet. The love of honourable deeds,
The groans of bleeding China, and the hate
Of tyrants.
Timur. Ha!—take heed, rash youth—I see
This lesson has been taught thee. Octar, haste,
Seek me the Mandarine: let him forthwith
Attend me here. [*Exit* OCTAR.] Now tremble at my words!
Thy motive to these wars is known—thou art Zaphimri.
Hamet. I Zaphimri!
Timur. False one, yes:
Thou art Zaphimri—thou!—whom treacherous guile
Stole from my rage, and sent to distant wilds,
Till years and horrid counsel should mature thee
For war and wild commotion.
Hamet. I the prince!
The last of China's race! Nay mock not majesty,
Nor with the borrow'd robes of sacred kings
Dress up a wretch like me—Were I Zaphimri,
Think'st thou thy trembling eye could bear the shock [it?
Of a much-injured king? Couldst thou sustain
Say, couldst thou bear to view a royal orphan,
Whose father, mother, brother, sisters, all
Thy murderous arm hath long since laid in dust?
Whose native crown on thy ignoble brow
Thou dar'st dishonour?—whose wide-wasted country
Thy arms have made a wilderness?

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Timur. I see
Thou hast been tutor'd in thy lone retreat
By some sententious pedant. Soon these vain,
These turgid maxims shall be all subdued
By thy approaching death.
Hamet. Let death come on:
Guilt, guilt alone shrinks back appall'd—the brave
And honest still defy his dart;—the wise
Calmly can eye his frown;—and misery
Invokes his friendly aid to end her woes.
Timur. Thy woes, presumptuous youth, with all my fears,
Shall soon lie buried.

Enter ZAMTI.

Now, pious false one, say, who is that youth?
Zamti. His air, his features, and his honest mien
Proclaim all fair within. But, mighty Sir,
I know him not.
Timur. Take heed, old man, nor dare,
As thou dost dread my power, to practise guile
Beneath a mask of sacerdotal perfidy:
Priestcraft, I think, calls it a pious fraud.
Zamti. Priestcraft and sacerdotal perfidy
To me are yet unknown. Religion's garb
Here never serves to consecrate a crime:
We have not yet, thank Heaven, so far imbibed
The vices of the north!
Timur. Thou vile impostor!
Avow Zaphimri, whom thy treacherous arts
Conceal'd from justice; or else desolation
Again shall ravish this devoted land.
Zamti. Alas! full well thou know'st that arm already
Hath shed all royal blood.
Timur. Traitor, 'tis false!
By thee, vile slave, I have been wrought to think
The hated race destroy'd: thy artful tale
Abused my credulous ear. But know, at length
Some captive slaves, by my command impal'd,
Have own'd the horrid truth;—have own'd they fought
To seat Zaphimri on the throne of China.
Hear me, thou froward boy;—dar'st thou be honest,
And answer who thou art?
Hamet. Dare I be honest?
I dare!—a mind grown up in native honour
Dares not be otherwise—then if thy troops
Ask from the lightning of whose blade they fled,
Tell them 'twas Hamet's.
Zamti. 'Tis—it is my son!—— [*Aside*.
My boy—my Hamet!——
Timur. Where was your abode?
Hamet. Far hence remote, in Corea's happy realm
Where the first beams of day with orient shore
Blushes
Tinge the salt wave: there on the sea-beat
A cavern'd rock yielded a lone retreat
To virtuous Morat.
Zamti. Oh! ill-fated youth! [*Aside*.
Hamet. The pious hermit in that moss-grown dwelling,
Found an asylum from heart-piercing woes,
From slavery, and that restless din of arms
With which thy fell ambition shook the world.
There too the sage nurtured my greener years;
With him and contemplation have I walk'd
The paths of wisdom: what the great Confucius
Of moral beauty taught, whate'er the wise,
Still wooing knowledge in her secret haunts,
Disclosed of Nature to the sons of men,
My wondering mind has heard:—but above all,
The hermit taught me the most useful science,
That noble science to be brave and good.
Zamti. Oh! lovely youth!—at every word he utters,
A soft effusion mix'd of grief and joy
Flows o'er my heart! [*Aside*.
Timur. Who, said he, was your father?
Hamet. My birth the pious sage—I know not why— [tell,
Still wrapp'd in silence; and when urged to
He only answer'd that a time might come,
I should not blush to know my father.
Timur. Now
With truth declare, hast thou ne'er heard of Zamti?
Hamet. Of Zamti!—Oft enraptured with his name,
My heart has glow'd within me as I heard
The praises of the godlike man.
Timur. Thou slave, [*To* ZAMTI.
Each circumstance arraigns thy guilt!
Hamet. Oh! Heavens!
Can that be Zamti?
Timur. Yes, that is the traitor.
Hamet. Let me adore his venerable form,
Thus on my knees adore——
Zamti. I cannot look upon him,
Lest tenderness dissolve my feeble powers,
And wrest my purpose from me—— [*Aside*.
Timur. Hence, vain boy!
Thou specious traitor!—thou false hoary moralist! [*To* ZAMTI.
Confusion has o'erta'en thy subtle frauds.
To make my crown's assurance firm, that none
Hereafter shall aspire to wrench it from me,
Now own your fancied king; or, by yon heaven,
To make our vengeance sure, through all the east
Each youth shall die, and carnage thin mankind,
Till in the general wreck your boasted orphan
Shall undistinguish'd fall. Thou know'st my word
Is fate. Octar, draw near—when treason lurks,
Each moment's big with danger—thou observe
These my commands——
[*Talks apart to* OCTAR.
Zamti. Now virtuous cruelty repress my tears!
Cease your soft conflict, Nature? Hear me Tartar:
That youth—his air—his every look unmans me quite.
Timur. Wilt thou begin, dissembler?
Zamti. Down, down, down——
It must be so, or all is lost—That youth,
I've dealt by him—as every king could wish
In a like case his faithful subjects would.
Timur. Dost thou then own it? Triumph, Timurkan,
And in Zaphimri's grave lie hush'd my fears!
Brave Octar, let the victim straight be led
To yonder sacred fane: there, in the view
Of my rejoicing Tartars, the declining sun
Shall see him offered to our living Lama,
For this day's conquest:—thence a golden train

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Of radiant years shall mark my future sway.
[*Exit.*

Zamti. Flow, flow, my tears, and ease this aching breast!

Hamet. Nay, do not weep for me, thou good old man.
If it will close the wounds of bleeding China,
That a poor wretch like me must yield his life,
I give it freely. If I am a king,
Though sure it cannot be, what greater blessing
Can a young prince enjoy, than to diffuse,
By one great act, that happiness on millions,
For which his life should be a round of care?
Come, lead me to my fate.
[*Exit, with* OCTAR, &c.

Zamti. Hold, hold, my heart!
My gallant generous youth! Mandane's air,
His mother's dear resemblance rives my soul.

Man. [*Within.*] Oh! let me fly, and find the barbarous man!——
Where—where is Zamti?

Zamti. Ha! 'tis Mandane——
Wild as the winds, the mother all alive
In every heart-string, the forlorn one comes
To claim her boy!

Enter MANDANE.

Man. And can it then be true!
Is human nature exiled from thy breast?
Art thou indeed so barbarous?

Zamti. Loved Mandane,
Fix not your scorpions here; a bearded shaft
Already drinks my spirits up.

Man. I've seen
The trusty Morat—Oh! I've heard it all!—
He would have shunn'd my steps; but what can 'scape
The eye of tenderness like mine?

Zamti. By Heaven
I cannot speak to thee!

Man. Think'st thou those tears,
Those false, those cruel tears, will choke the voice
Of a fond mother's love, now stung to madness?
Oh! I will rend the air with lamentations,
Root up this hair, and beat this throbbing breast,
Turn all connubial joys to bitterness,
To fell despair, to anguish and remorse,
Unless my son——

Zamti. Thou ever faithful woman,
Oh! leave me to my woes!

Man. Give me my child,
Thou worse than Tartar! give me back my son!
Oh! give him to a mother's eager arms,
And let me strain him to my heart!

Zamti. Heaven knows
How dear my boy is here—But our first duty
Now claims attention—to our country's love
All other tender fondnesses must yield:—
—I was a subject ere I was a father.

Man. You were a savage bred in Scythian wilds,
And humanizing pity never reach'd
Your heart—Was it for this—oh!—thou unkind one!
Was it for this—oh! thou inhuman father!
You wooed me to your nuptial bed!—so long
Have I then clasp'd thee in these circling arms,
And made this breast your pillow?—Cruel, say,
Are these your vows?—are these your fond endearments?
Nay, look upon me—if this wasted form,
These faded eyes have turn'd your heart against me,
With grief for you I wither'd in my bloom.

Zamti. Why wilt thou pierce my heart?

Man. Alas! my son,
Have I then bore thee in these matron arms,
To see thee bleed?—Thus dost thou then return?
This could your mother hope when first she sent
Her infant exile to a distant clime?
Ah! could I think thy early love of fame
Would urge thee to this peril?—thus to fall,
By a stern father's will—by thee to die!—
From thee, inhuman, to receive his doom!—
—Murder'd by thee!—Yet hear me, Zamti, hear me—
Thus on my knees—I threaten now no more—
'Tis Nature's voice that pleads—Nature alarm'd,
Quick, trembling, wild, touch'd to her inmost feeling,
When force would tear her tender young ones from her.

Zamti. Nay, seek not with enfeebling fond ideas
To swell the flood of grief—it is in vain—
He must submit to fate!

Man. Barbarian! no— [*She rises hastily.*
He shall not die—rather—I prithee, Zamti,
Urge not a grief distracted woman:—Tremble
At the wild fury of a mother's love!

Zamti. I tremble rather at a breach of oaths.
But thou break thine—bathe your perfidious hands
In this life-blood—betray the righteous cause
Of all our sacred kings.

Man. Our kings!—our kings!—
What are the scepter'd rulers of the world?—
Form'd of one common clay, are they not all
Doom'd with each subject, with the meanest slave,
To drink the cup of human wo?—alike
All levell'd by affliction?—Sacred kings!—
'Tis human policy sets up their claim—
Mine is a mother's cause——mine is the cause
Of husband, wife, and child;—those tenderest ties!
Superior to your right divine of kings!——

Zamti. Then go, Mandane—thou once faithful woman,
Dear to this heart in vain; go, and forget
Those virtuous lessons, which I oft have taught thee,
In fond credulity, while on each word
You hung enamour'd,—Go, to Timurkan
Reveal the awful truth.—Be thou spectatress
Of murder'd majesty.—Embrace your son,
And let him lead in shame and servitude
A life ignobly bought.—Then let those eyes,
Those faded eyes, which grief for me hath dimm'd,
With guilty joy re-animate their lustre,
To brighten slavery, and beam their fires
On the fell Scythian murderer.

Man. And is it thus,
Thus is Mandane known?—My soul disdains
The vile imputed guilt,—no—never—never—
Still am I true to fame. Come lead me hence,
Where I may lay down life to save Zaphimri,
—But save my Hamet too.—Then, then you'll find
A heart beats here, as warm and great as thine.

Zamti. Then make with me one strong, one glorious effort,
And rank with those, who, from the first of time,
In Fame's eternal archives stand revered,

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For conquering all the dearest ties of Nature,
To serve the general weal.
Man. That savage virtue
Loses with me its horrid charms.—I've sworn
To save my king.—But should a mother turn
A dire assassin?—oh! I cannot bear
The piercing thought!—Distraction, quick distraction,
Will seize my brain.—Think thou behold'st my Hamet,
The dear, the lovely youth, my blooming hero!
Think thou behold'st him—See! my child!—my child!
By guards surrounded, a devoted victim!—
Barbarian, hold!—ah! see, he dies!—he dies!— [*She faints into* ZAMTI's *arms.*
Zamti. Where is Arsace!—Fond maternal love
Shakes her weak frame—

Enter ARSACE.

Quickly, Arsace, help
This ever-tender creature.—Wandering life
Rekindles in her cheek.—Soft, lead her off
To where the fanning breeze in yonder bower
May woo her spirits back.—Propitious Heaven!
Pity the woundings of a father's heart!
Pity my strugglings with this best of women!
Support our virtue!—kindle in our souls
A ray of your divine enthusiasm;
Such as inflames the patriot's breast, and lifts
Th' impassion'd mind to that sublime of virtue,
That even on the rack it feels the good,
Which, in a single hour, it works for millions,
And leaves the legacy to after times!
[*Exit, leading off* MANDANE.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Temple. Several Tombs up and down the Stage.

Enter MORAT.

Morat. This is the place—these the long winding isles,
The solemn arches, whose religious awe
Attunes the mind to melancholy musing,
Such as befits free men reduced to slaves.—
Here Zamti meets his friends——amid these tombs,
Where lie the sacred manes of our kings,
They pour their orisons——hold converse here
With the illustrious shades of murder'd heroes,
And meditate a great revenge——[*A groan is heard.*]—a groan!
The burst of anguish from some care-worn wretch [Zamti!
That sorrows o'er his country——ha! 'tis

ZAMTI *comes out of a Tomb.*

Zamti. Who's he that seeks these mansions of the dead?
Morat. The friend of Zamti and of China.
Zamti. Morat!
Come to my arms, thou good, thou best of men——
I have been weeping o'er the sacred reliques
Of a dear murder'd king—Where are our friends?
Hast seen Orasming?
Morat. Through these vaults of death
Lonely he wanders, plunged in deep despair.
Zamti. Hast thou not told him?—hast thou nought reveal'd
Touching Zaphimri?
Morat. There I wait thy will——
Zamti. Oh! thou art ever faithful!—on thy lips
Sits pensive Silence, with her hallow'd finger,
Guarding the pure recesses of thy mind.——
But, lo! they come.

Enter ORASMING, ZIMVENTI, *and others.*

Zamti. Droop ye, my gallant friends?
Oras. Oh! Zamti, all is lost!—Our dreams of liberty
Are vanished into air.—Nought now avails
Integrity of life—Even Heaven, combined
With lawless might, abandon us and virtue.
Zamti. Can your great souls thus shrink within ye? thus
From heroes will ye dwindle into slaves?
Oras. Oh! could you give us back Zaphimri!—then [ror.
Danger would smile, and lose its face of hor-
Zamti. What—would his presence fire ye?
Oras. 'Twould, by Heaven!
Zim. This night should free us from the Tartar's yoke.
Zamti. Then mark the care of the all gracious gods! [hold,
This youthful captive, whom in chains they
Is not Zaphimri.——
Oras. } Not Zaphimri!
Zim. }
Zamti. No!
Unconscious of himself, and to the world unknown,
He walks at large among us.
Oras. Heavenly Powers!——
Zamti. This night, my friends, this very night to rise
Refulgent from a blow, that frees us all—
From the usurper's fate!——the first of men,
Deliverer of his country!
Oras. Mighty Gods!
Can this be possible?
Zamti. It is most true.
I'll bring him to ye straight——What ho!——come forth——
[*Calling to* ETAN *within the Tomb.*
You seem transfix'd with wonder—oh! my friends,
Watch all the motions of your rising spirit,
Direct your ardour, when anon you hear
What fate, long pregnant with the vast event,
Is labouring into birth.
Etan. [*Comes out of the Tomb.*] Each step I move
A deeper horror sits on all the tombs:
Each shrine, each altar seems to shake, as if
Conscious of some important crisis.
Zamti. Yes;
A crisis, great indeed, is now at hand!
Heaven holds its golden balance forth, and weighs
Zaphimri's and the Tartar's destiny,
While hovering angels tremble round the beam.—
Hast thou beheld that picture?
Etan. Fix'd attention
Hath paused on every part; yet still to me
It shadows forth the forms of things unknown;
All imagery obscure, and wrapp'd in darkness.
Zamti. That darkness my informing breath shall clear,

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As morn dispels the night. Lo! here display'd
This mighty kingdom's fall.——
Etan. Alas! my father,
At sight of these sad colourings of wo,
Our tears will mix with honest indignation.
Zamti. Nay, but survey it closer—see that child,
That royal infant, the last sacred relict
Of China's ancient line——see where a mandarine
Conveys the babe to his wife's fostering breast,
There to be nourish'd in an humble state;
While their own son is sent to climes remote;
That, should the dire usurper e'er suspect
The Prince alive, he in his stead might bleed,
And mock the murderer's rage.
Etan. Amazement thrills
Through all my frame, and my mind, big with wonder,
Feel's every power suspended!
Zamti. Rather say
That strong imagination burns within thee—
Dost thou not feel a more than common ardour?—
Etan. By Heaven my soul dilates with some new impulse; [hour
Some strange inspired emotion——Would the
Of fate were come!——this night my dagger's hilt
I'll bury in the tyrant's heart.
Zamti. Wilt thou?
Etan. By all the mighty dead, that round us lie,
By all who this day groan in chains, I will.
Zamti. And when thou dost—then tell him 'tis the prince
That strikes.
Etan. The prince's wrongs shall nerve my arm
With tenfold rage. [arm
Zamti. Nay, but the prince himself?
Etan. What says my father?
Zamti. Thou art China's Orphan;
The last of all our kings—no longer Etan,
But now Zaphimri!
Zaph. Ha!
Oras. O wondrous hand
Of Heaven!
Zaph. A crowd of circumstances rise——
Thy frequent hints obscure——thy pious care
To train my youth to greatness—Lend your aid
To my astonish'd powers, that feebly bear
This unexpected shock of royalty!
Zamti. Thou noble youth, now put forth all your strength,
And let Heaven's vengeance brace each sinew.
Zaph. Vengeance! [soul.—
That word has shot its lightning through my
But tell me, Zamti—still 'tis wonder all—
Am I indeed the Royal Orphan!
Zamti. Thou——
Thou art the king, whom, as my humble son,
I've nurtured in humanity and virtue.
Thy foes could never think to find thee here,
Even in the lion's den; and therefore here
I've fix'd thy safe asylum, while my son
Hath dragg'd his life in exile.—Oh! my friends,
Morat will tell you all—each circumstance.
Meantime——there is your king!
[*All kneel to him.*
Oras. } Long live the father of the East-
Zim. } ern World!
Zamti. Sole governor of earth!——
Zaph. All ruling powers!
Is then a great revenge for all the wrongs
Of bleeding China—are the fame and fate
Of all posterity included here
Within my bosom? [*They all rise.*
Zamti. Yes; they are:—the shades
Of your great ancestors now rise before thee,
Heroes and demi-gods:—Aloud they call
For the fell Tartar's blood.
Zaph. Oh! Zamti! all
That can alarm the powers of man, now stirs
In this expanding breast——
Zamti. Anon to burst
With hideous ruin on the foe.—My gallant heroes,
Are our men station'd at their post?
Oras. They are.
Zamti. Is every gate secured?
Oras. All safe.
Zamti. The signal fix'd?
Oras. It is.—Will Mirvan join us?
Zamti. Doubt him not.
In bitterness of soul he counts his wrongs,
And pants for vengeance—would have join'd ye here,
But favour'd as he is, his post requires him
About the Tartar's person. The assault begun,
He'll turn his arms upon th' astonish'd foe
And add new horrors to the wild commotion.
Zaph. Now bloody spoiler, now thy hour draws nigh,
And ere the dawn thy guilty reign shall end.
Zamti. How my heart burns within me!—Oh! my friends,
Call now to mind the scene of desolation,
Which Timurkan, in one accursed hour,
Heap'd on this groaning land!—Even now, I see
The savage bands, o'er reeking hills of dead,
Forcing their rapid way.—I see them urge
With rage unhallow'd to this sacred temple,
Where good Osmingti, with his queen and children,
Fatigued the gods averse. See where Arphisa,
Rending the air with agonizing shrieks,
Tears her dishevell'd hair:—then, with a look
Fix'd on her babes, grief chokes its passage up,
And all the feelings of a mother's breast
Throbbing in one mix'd pang, breathless she faints
Within her husband's arms. Adown his cheek,
In copious streams fast flow'd the manly sorrow, [offspring,
While clustering round his knee his little
In tears all-eloquent, with arms outstretch'd,
Sue for parental aid.——
Zaph. Go on—the tale
Will fit me for a scene of horror.
Zamti. Oh! my prince, [still
The charge, which your great father gave me
Sounds in my ear. Ere yet the foe burst in,
Zamti, said he—Ah! that imploring eye!
That agonizing look!—
Preserve my little boy, my cradled infant—
Shield him from ruffians—train his youth to virtue:—
Virtue will rouse him to a great revenge;
Or failing, virtue shall still make him happy.
He could no more—the cruel spoiler seized him, [king—
And dragg'd my king—my ever honour'd
The father of his people—basely dragg'd him
By his white reverend locks, from yonder altar,
Here—on the blood-stain'd pavement; while the queen,

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And her dear foudlings, in one mangled heap,
Died in each other's arms!
Zaph. Revenge! revenge! [him,
With more than lion's nerve I'll spring upon
And at one blow relieve the groaning world.
Let us this moment carry sword and fire
To yon devoted walls, and whelm him down
In ruin and dismay.
Zamti. Zaphimri, no.
By rashness you may mar a noble cause.
To you my friends, I render up my charge—
To you I give your king. Farewell, my sovereign!——
Zaph. Thou good, thou godlike man!—a thousand feelings
Of warmest friendship—all the tendencies
Of heart-felt gratitude are struggling here,
And fain would speak to thee, my more than father!—
Farewell!—sure we shall meet again!
Zamti. We shall——
Zaph. Farewell!—Zamti, farewell!—[*Embraces him.*]—Orasming, now
The noblest duty calls us. Now remember
We are the men, whom from all human kind
Our fate hath now selected, to come forth
Asserters of the public weal;—to drench our swords
In the oppressor's heart;—to do a deed
Which Heaven, intent on its own holy work,
Shall pause with pleasure to behold.
[*Exit, with Conspirators.*
Zamti. May the Most High
Pour down his blessings on him! and anon,
In the dead waste of night, when awful Justice [heaps
Walks with her crimson steel o'er slaughter'd
Of groaning Tartars, may he then direct
His youthful footsteps through the paths of peril!
Oh may he guide the horrors of the storm,
An angel of your wrath, to point your vengeance [enough,
On every guilty head! Then—then, 'twill be
When you have broken the oppressor's rod,
Your reign will then be manifest—Mankind will see
That truth and goodness still obtain your care—— [*A dead march.*
What mean those deathful sounds?—Again!—They lead [Heavens!
My boy to slaughter!—Oh!—look down, ye
Look down propitious!—Teach me to subdue
That nature which ye gave!—— [*Exit.*

A dead March. Enter HAMET, OCTAR, *Guards*, &c.

Octar. Here let the victim fall, and with his blood
Wash his forefathers' tomb. Here ends the hated race— [main,
The eastern world through all her wide do-
Shall then submissive feel the Scythian yoke.
And yield to Timurkan.
Hamet. [*Standing by the Tomb.*] Where is the tyrant? I would have him see,
With envy see, th' unconquer'd power of virtue;
How it can calmly bleed, smile on his racks,
And with strong pinion soar above his power,
To regions of perennial day.
Octar. The father
Of the whole eastern world shall mark thee well, [corse
When at to-morrow's dawn thy breathless
Is borne through all our streets for public view.
It now befits thee to prepare for death.
Hamet. I am prepared. I have no lust or rapine,
No murders to repent of. Undismay'd
I can behold all-judging Heaven, whose han
Still compassing its wondrous ends, by means
Inextricable to all mortal clue,
Hath now inclosed me in its awful maze.
Since 'tis by your decree that thus beset
Th' inexorable angel hovers o'er me,
Be your great bidding done!
Octar. The sabre's edge
Thirsts for his blood—then let its lightning fall
On his aspiring head. [*Guards seize* HAMET.
Man. [*Within.*] Off—set me free!—inhuman, barbarous ruffians!——
Octar. What means that woman with dishevell'd hair,
And wild extravagance of wo?
Man. My griefs
Scorn all restraint—I must—I will have way!

She enters, and throws herself on her knees.

Me—me—on me convert your rage—plunge deep,
Deep in this bosom your abhorred steel,
But spare his precious life!
Octar. Hence, quickly bear
This wild, this frantic woman.
Man. Never, never——
You shall not force me hence. Here will I cling
Fast to the earth, and rivet here my hands,
In all the fury of the last despair!
He is my child!——my dear, dear son!
Octar. How, woman!
Saidst thou your son?
Man. Yes, Octar, mine;—my son,
My boy—my Hamet! [*She rises, and embraces him.*] Let my eager love
Fly all unbounded to him—oh! my child!—my child!
Octar. Suspend the stroke, ye ministers of death,
Till Timurkan hear of this new event.
Mean time, thou, Mirvan, speed in quest of Zamti,
And let him answer here this wondrous tale.
[*Exit.*
Mir. The time demands his presence; or despair
May wring each secret from her tender breast.
[*Aside*
And then our glorious, fancied pile of freedom,
At one dire stroke, shall tumble into nought.
[*Exit.*
Man. Why did'st thou dare return!—ah, rather
Did'st thou so long defer, with every grace,
And every growing virtue, thus to raise
Your mother's dear delight to rapture?
Hamet. Lost
In the deep mists of darkling ignorance,
To me my birth's unknown—but sure that look,
Those tears, those shrieks, that animated grief
Defying danger, all declare th' effect
Of Nature's strugglings in a parent's heart.
Then let me pay my filial duty here,
Kneel to her native dignity, and pour
In tears of joy the transport of a son!
Man. Thou art, thou art my son!—thy father's face,

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His every feature, blooming in his boy!
Oh! tell me, tell me all—how hast thou lived
With faithful Morat?—how did he support
In dreary solitude thy tender years?—
How train thy growing mind?—oh! quickly tell me, [tongue!
Oh! tell me all, and charm me with thy
Hamet. Mysterious Powers! have I then lived to this,
In th' hour of peril thus to find a parent,
In virtue firm, majestic in distress,
At length to feel unutterable bliss
In her dear circling arms—— [*They embrace.*

Enter TIMURKAN, OCTAR, *&c.*

Timur. Where is this wild
Outrageous woman, who with headlong grief
Suspends my dread command?—Tear them asunder—
Send her to some dark cell to rave and shriek
And dwell with madness—and let instant death [me.
Leave that rash youth a headless trunk before
Man. Now by the ever-burning lamps that light
Our holy shrines, by great Confucius' altar,
By the prime source of life, and light, and being,
That is my child, the blossom of my joys!
Send for his cruel father—he—'tis he
Intends a fraud—he, for a stranger's life,
Would yield his offspring to the cruel axe,
And rend a wretched mother's brain with madness!

Enter ZAMTI.

Zamti. Sure the sad accents of Mandane's
Struck on my frighted sense! [voice
Timur. Once more, thou slave!
Who is that stubborn youth?
Zamti. Alas! what needs
This iteration of my griefs?
Man. Oh! horror!—horror!
Thou marble-hearted father!—'tis your child,
And wouldst thou see him bleed?
Zamti. On him!—on him
Let fall your rage, and ease my soul at once
Of all its fears!
Man. Oh! my devoted child!——
[*She faints.*
Hamet. Support her, Heaven! support her tender frame!—— [here
Now, tyrant, now I beg to live—[*Kneels.*] lo!
I plead for life;—not for the wretched boon
To breathe the air, which thy ambition taints;—
But oh! to ease a mother's pains;—for her,
For that dear object—oh! let me live for her!
Timur. Now by the conquests this good sword has won,
In her wild vehemence of grief I hear
The genuine voice of Nature.
Man. [*Recovering.*] Ah!——where is he?
He is my son!—my child!—and not Zaphimri!—— [hard,
Oh! let me clasp thee to my heart!——thy
Thy cruel father shall not tear thee from me!
Timur. Hear me, thou frantic mourner, dry those tears—
Perhaps you still may save this darling son.
Man. Ah! quickly name the means!
Timur. Give up your king,
Your phantom of a king, to sate my vengeance.
Hamet. Oh! my much honour'd mother, never hear
The base, the dire proposal?—let me rather
Exhaust my life-blood at each gushing vein.
Mandane then—then you may well rejoice
To find your child—then you may truly know
The best delight a mother's heart can prove,
When her son dies with glory.
Timur. Curses blast
The stripling's pride——
[*Talks apart with* OCTAR.
Zamti. Ye venerable host,
Ye mighty shades of China's royal line,
Forgive the joy that mingles with my tears,
When I behold him still alive!—Propitious Powers!
You never meant entirely to destroy
This bleeding country, when your kind indulgence
Lends us a youth like him.
Oh! I can hold no more—let me infold
That lovely ardour in his father's arms—
My brave——my generous boy!——
[*Embraces him.*
Timur. Dost thou at length
Confess it, traitor?
Zamti. Yes, I boast it, tyrant;
Boast it to thee—to earth and heaven I boast,
This—this is Zamti's son!
Hamet. At length the hour,
The glorious hour is come, by Morat promised,
When Hamet shall not blush to know his father. [*Kneels to him.*
Zamti. Oh! thou intrepid youth!—what bright reward
Can your glad sire bestow on such desert?
The righteous gods and your own inward feelings
Shall give the sweetest retribution.——Now,
Mandane, now my soul forgives thee all,
Since I have made acquaintance with my son:
Thy lovely weakness I can now excuse;
But oh! I charge thee by a husband's right—
Timur. A husband's right!—a traitor has no right——
Society disclaims him—Woman, hear——
Mark well my words—Discolour not thy soul
With the black hue of crimes like his—renounce
All hymeneal vows, and take again [arms,
Your much-loved boy to his fond mother's
While justice whirls that traitor to his fate.
Man. Thou vile adviser!—what, betray my lord, [wife!
My honour'd husband?——Turn a Scythian
Forget the many years of fond delight,
In which my soul ne'er knew decreasing love,
Charm'd with his noble, all-accomplish'd mind?
No, tyrant, no!——with him I'll rather die;
With him in ruin more supremely bless'd,
Than guilt triumphant on its throne.
Zamti. Now then,
Inhuman Tartar, I defy thy power.
Lo! here, the father, mother, and the son!
Try all your tortures on us—here we stand
Resolved to leave a tract of bright renown
To mark our beings—all resolved to die
The votaries of honour!——
Timur. Then die ye shall—what ho!—guards, seize the slaves,
Deep in some baleful dungeon's midnight gloom
Let each apart be plunged—and Etan too——

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Let him be forthwith found—he too shall share
His father's fate.
Mir. Be it my task, dread Sir,
To make the rack ingenious in new pains,
Till even cruelty almost relent
At their keen, agonizing groans.
Timur. Be that,
Mirvan, thy care. Now, by the immortal Lama,
I'll wrest this mystery from them—else the dawn
Shall see me up in arms—'gainst Corea's chief
I will unfurl my banners—his proud cities
Shall dread my thunder at their gates, and mourn [plains
Their smoking ramparts—o'er his verdant
And peaceful vales I'll drive my warlike car,
And deluge all the east with blood. [*Exit.*
Octar. Mirvan, do thou bear hence those miscreant slaves.
Thou, Zamti, art my charge.
[*Laying hold of him.*
Zamti. Willing I come—— [*Shakes him off.*
The steady mind can scorn your mansions drear,
And brighten horror with its noon-tide ray.
Mandane, summon all thy strength. My son,
Thy father doubts not of thy fortitude.
[*Exit, guarded by* OCTAR.
Man. Allow me but one last embrace——
[*To the Guards.*
Hamet. Oh! mother,
Would I could rescue thee!
Man. Lost, lost again!
Hamet. Inhuman, bloody Tartars!
Oh! farewell!——[*Both together*
[*Exeunt, on different sides.*

ACT IV.

*SCENE I.—A Prison.—*HAMET *in chains.*

Enter ZAPHIMRI, *disguised in a Tartar Dress with* MIRVAN.

Mir. There stretch'd at length on the dank ground he lies,
Scorning his fate. Your meeting must be short.
Zaph. It shall—
Mir. And yet I tremble for th' event:——
Why wouldst thou venture to this place of danger?
Zaph. And canst thou deem me then so mean of spirit,
To dwell secure in ignominious safety;
With cold insensibility to wait
The lingering hours—with coward patience wait them,
Deliberating on myself, while ruin
Nods over Zamti's house?
Mir. Yet whilst thou'rt here,
Thy fate's suspended on each dreadful moment.
Zaph. I will hold converse with him, even though death
Were arm'd against the interview.——
[*Exit* MIRVAN.
Hamet. [*Still on the ground.*]—What wouldst thou, Tartar?
Zaph. Rise, noble youth, no vulgar errand mine—
Hamet. [*Comes forward.*] Now speak thy purpose.
Zaph. Under this disguise——
Hamet. If under that disguise, a murderer's dagger
Thirst for my blood—thus I can meet the blow.
[*Throwing himself open.*
Zaph. No ruffian's purpose lurks within this bosom. [stabber
To these lone walls, where oft the Scythian
With murderous stride hath come: these walls that oft
Have seen th' assassin's deeds—I bring a mind
Firm, virtuous, upright. Under this vile garb,
Lo! here a son of China. [*Opens his dress.*
Hamet. Yes, thy garb
Denotes a son of China; and those eyes
Roll with no black intent.—Say on——
Zaph. Inflamed with admiration of heroic deeds,
I come to seek acquaintance with the youth,
Who for his king would bravely die!
Hamet. Say then,
Dost thou applaud the deed?
Zaph. By Heaven I do.
Yes, virtuous envy rises in my soul—
Thy ardour charms me, and even now I pant
To change conditions with thee.——
Hamet. Then my heart
Accepts thy proffer'd friendship. In a base,
A prone, degenerate age, when foreign force
And foreign manners have o'erwhelm'd us all,
And sunk our native genius—thou retainest
A sense of ancient worth. But wherefore here,
To this sad mansion, this abode of sorrow,
Comest thou to know a wretch that soon must die?
Zaph. By Heaven, thou shalt not die—I come to speak
The gladsome tidings of a happier fate.
—By me Zaphimri sends——
Hamet. Zaphimri sends!
Kind Powers! Where is the king?
Zaph. His steps are safe;
Unseen as is the arrow's path. By me he says,
He knows, he loves, he wonders at thy virtue.
By me he swears, rather than thou shouldst fall,
He will emerge from dark obscurity,
And greatly brave his fate.
Hamet. Ha!—die for me!
For me, ignoble in the scale of being!
An unimportant wretch! Whoe'er thou art,
I pr'ythee, stranger, bear my answer back—
Oh! tell my sovereign that here dwells a heart
Superior to all peril. When I fall,
A worm—an insect dies!—But in his life
Are wrapp'd the glories of our ancient line
The liberties of China! Then let him
Live for his people—be it mine to die.
Zaph. Can I bear this, ye Powers, and not dissolve
In tears of gratitude and love? [*Aside.*
Hamet. Why streams [groan?
That flood of grief?—and why that stifled
Through the dark mist his sorrow casts around him, [youth,
He seems no common man. Say, generous
Who, and what art thou?
Zaph. Who and what am I?
Thou lead'st me to a precipice, from whence
Downward to look, turns wild the mad'ning brain,
Scared at th' unfathomable deep below.
Who, and what am I?—Oh! the veriest wretch
That ever yet groan'd out his soul in anguish!

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One lost, abandon'd, hopeless, plunged in wo
Beyond redemption's aid.——To tell thee all
In one dire word, big with the last distress,
In one accumulated term of horror—
Zaphimri!——
Hamet. Said'st thou!——
Zaph. He!—that fatal wretch,
Exalted into misery supreme.
Oh! I was happy, while good Zamti's son
I walk'd the common tracts of life, and strove
Humbly to copy my imagined sire.
But now——
Hamet. Yes now—if thou art he—as sure
'Tis wondrous like—raised to a state, in which
A nation's happiness on thee depends——
Zaph. A nation's happiness!—There, there I bleed!
There are my pangs! For me this war began,
For me hath purple slaughter drench'd yon fields; [chains—
I am the cause of all. I forged those
For Zamti and Mandane too—Oh! Heavens!—
Them have I thrown into a dungeon's gloom.
These are the horrors of Zaphimri's reign.
—I am the tyrant!——I ascend the throne
By trampling on the neck of innocence—
By base ingratitude!—by the vile means
Of selfish cowardice, that can behold
Thee, and thy father, mother, all in chains,
All lost, all murder'd, that I thence may rise
Inglorious to a throne!
Hamet. Alas! thy spirit,
Thy wild disorder'd fancy pictures forth
Ills that are not——or, being ills, not worth
A moment's pause.
Zaph. Not ills? Thou canst not mean it.
Oh! I'm environ'd with the worst of woes!
The angry Fates, amidst their hoards of vengeance, [me
Had nought but this—they meant to render
Peculiarly distress'd. Tell me, thou gallant youth—
A soul like thine knows every fine emotion—
Is there a nerve, in which the heart of man
Can prove such torture, as when thus it meets
Unequall'd friendship, honour, truth, and love,
And no return can make!——Oh! 'tis too much,
Ye mighty Gods, too much—thus, thus to be
A feeble prince, a shadow of a king,
Without the power to wreak revenge on guilt,
Without the power of doing Virtue right!
Hamet. That power will come.
Zaph. But when?—when thou art lost,
When Zamti and Mandane are destroy'd.
Oh! for a dagger's point, to plunge it deep,
Deep in this—ha!—deep in the tyrant's heart!
Hamet. There your revenge should point. For that great deed
Heaven hath watch'd all thy ways; and wilt thou now
With headlong rage spurn at its guardian care,
Nor wait the movements of eternal justice?
Zaph. Ha!—whither has my frenzy stray'd? Yes, Heaven
Has been all-bounteous. Righteous Powers!
To you my orisons are due—But oh!
Complete your goodness:—save this valiant youth; [will,
Save Zamti's house; and then—if such your
That from the Tartar's head my arm this night
Shall grasp the crown of China—teach me then
To bear your dread vicegerency—I stand
Resign'd to your high will.
Hamet. And Heaven, I trust,
Will still preserve thee; in its own good time
Will finish its decrees.
Zaph. Yes, Hamet, yes;
A gleam of hope remains. Should Timurkan
Defer his murder to the midnight hour,
Then will I come, then burst these guilty walls, [dom.
Rend those vile manacles, and give thee free-
Hamet. Oh! no—you must not risk.
Zaph. A band of heroes
For this are ready; honourably leagued
To vindicate their rights. Thy father's care
Plann'd and inspired the whole. Among the troops,
Nay in his very guards, there are not wanting
Some gallant sons of China, in that hour,
Who will discover their long-pent-up fury,
And deal destruction round.
Hamet. What—all convened,
And every thing disposed?
Zaph. Determined!—Now
In silent terror all intent they stand,
And wait the signal in each gale that blows.
Hamet. Why didst thou venture forth?
Zaph. What, poorly lurk
While my friends die!—that thought—but, generous youth, [thought
I'll not think meanly of thee—No—that
Is foreign to my heart.
Hamet. But think, my prince,
On China's wrongs, thy dying heroes' groans;
Think on thy ancestors.
Zaph. My ancestors!
What is't to me a long-descended line,
A race of worthies, legislators, heroes,
Unless I bring their virtues too? No more—
Thy own example fires me. Near this place
I'll take my stand, and watch their busy motions,
Until the general roar; then will I come,
And arm thee for th' assault.
Hamet. Oh! if thou dost,
Yet once again I'll wield the deathful blade,
And bear against the foe.
Zaph. Yes, thou and I
Will rush together through the paths of death,
Mow down our way, and with sad overthrow
Pursue the Tartar—like two rushing torrents,
That from the mountain's top, 'midst roaring caves,
'Midst rocks and rent up trees, foam headlong down,
And each depopulates his way.——
[*A flourish of trumpets.*
Hamet. What means
That sudden and wild harmony?
Zaph. Even now
The conqueror, and his fell barbaric rout,
For this day's victory indulge their joy;
Joy soon to end in groans—for all conspires
To forward our design—and lo! the lights
That whilom blazed to heaven, now rarely seen,
Shed a pale glimmer, and the foe secure
Sinks down in deep debauch; while all awake, [work
The Genius of this land broods o'er the
Of justice and revenge,
Hamet. Oh! revel on,
Still unsuspecting plunge in guilty joy,
And bury thee in riot!
Zaph. Ne'er again
To wake from that vile trance—for ere the dawn,
Detested spoiler, thy hot blood shall smoke
On the stain'd marble, and thy limbs abhorr'd
I'll scatter to the dogs of China.

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Enter MIRVAN.

Mir. Break off your conference—Octar this way comes.
Zaph. This garb will cloak me from each hostile eye;
Thou need'st not fear detection.

Enter OCTAR.

Mir. There's your prisoner.
[*Pointing to* HAMET.
Octar. Lead him to where Mandane's matron grief
Rings through yon vaulted roof.
Hamet. Oh! lead me to her!
Let me give balm to her afflicted mind,
And soften anguish in a parent's breast.
[*Exit with* MIRVAN.
Zaph. What may this mean? I dread some lurking mischief.
[*Exit on the opposite side.*
Octar. When the boy clings around his mother's heart
In fond endearment, then to tear him from her,
Will once again awaken all her tenderness,
And in her impotence of grief, the truth
At length will burst its way. But Timurkan
Impatient comes.

Enter TIMURKAN.

Octar. Thus with disorder'd looks,
Why will my sovereign shun the genial ban-
To seek a dungeon's gloom? [quet,
Timur. Oh! valiant Octar,
A more than midnight gloom involves my soul.
Hast thou beheld this stubborn Mandarine?
Octar. I have; and tried by every threat-en'd vengeance
To bend his soul: unconquer'd yet by words,
He smiles contempt; as if some inward joy,
Like the sun, labouring in a night of clouds,
Shot forth its gladdening unresisted beams,
Cheering the face of wo.
Timur. What of Mandane?
Octar. At first with tears and bitter lamentations
She call'd on Hamet lost; but when I urged,
She still might save her boy, and save herself,
Would she but give Zaphimri to your wrath,
Her tears forgot to flow; her voice, her look,
Her colour sudden changed, and all her form
Enlarging with th' emotions of her soul,
Grew vaster to the sight. With blood-shot eyes
She cast a look of silent indignation,
Then turn'd in sullen mood away.
Timur. Perdition
O'erwhelm her pride!
Octar. Might I advise you, Sir,
An artful tale of love should softly glide
To her afflicted soul—a conqueror's sighs
Will waft a thousand wishes to her heart,
Till female vanity aspire to reach
The eastern throne; and when her virtue melts
In the soft tumult of her gay desires,
Win from her every truth, then spurn to shame
The weak, deluded woman.
Timur. Octar, no:
I cannot stoop with love-sick adulation
To thrill in languishing desire, and try
The hopes, the fears, and the caprice of love.
Inured to rougher scenes, far other arts
My mind employ'd: to sling the well-stored quiver
Over this manly arm, and wing the dart
At the fleet rein-deer, sweeping down the vale
Or up the mountain, straining every nerve;
To vault the neighing steed, and urge his course
Swifter than whirlwinds; through the ranks of war [gore:
To drive my chariot-wheels, smoking with
These are my passions, this my only science,
Above the puling sicknesses of love.
Bring that vile slave the hoary priest, before me. [*Exit* OCTAR.
Timur. By Heaven, their fortitude erects a fence [far
To shield them from my wrath, more powerful
Than their high-boasted wall, which long hath stood [thunder,
The shock of time, of war, of storms, and
The wonder of the world!
What art thou, virtue, who canst thus inspire
This stubborn pride, this dignity of soul,
And still unfading, beauteous in distress,
Canst taste of joys my heart hath never known?

Enter ZAMTI, *in Chains.*

Mark me, thou traitor, thy detested sight
Once more I brook, to try if yet the sense
Of deeds abhorr'd as thine, has touch'd your soul.
Or clear this mystery, or by yonder heaven
I'll hunt Zaphimri to his secret haunt,
Or spread a general carnage round the world.
Zamti. Thy rage is vain—far from thy ruthless power
Kind Heaven protects him, till the awful truth
In some dread hour of horror and revenge
Shall burst like thunder on thee.
Timur. Ha! beware—
Nor rouse my lion-rage—yet, ere 'tis late,
Repent thee of thy crimes.
Zamti. The crime would be
To yield to thy unjust commands. But know,
A louder voice than thine forbids the deed;
The voice of all my kings! forth from their tombs
Even now they send a peal of groans to Heaven, [up,
Where all thy murders are long since gone
And stand in dread array against thee.
Timur. Murders!
Ungrateful Mandarine! Say, did not I,
When civil discord lighted up her brand,
And scatter'd wide her flames—when fierce contention
'Twixt Xohohamti and Zaphimri's father
Sorely convulsed the realm—did not I then
Lead forth my Tartars from their northern frontier,
And bid fair order rise?
Zamti. Bid order rise!
Hast thou not smote us with a hand of wrath?
By thee each art has died, and every science
Gone out at thy fell blast. Art thou not come
To sack our cities, to subvert our temples,
The temples of our gods, and with the worship,
The monstrous worship of your living Lama,
Profane our holy shrines?
Timur. Peace, insolent!
Nor dare with horrid treason to provoke
The wrath of injured majesty.
Zamti. Yes, tyrant,
Yes, thou hast smote us with a hand of wrath;
Full twenty years has smote us; but at length

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Will come the hour of Heaven's just visitation,
When thou shalt rue—hear me, thou man of blood— [rage
Yes, thou shalt rue the day, when thy fell
Imbrued those hands in royal blood. Now tremble—
The arm of the Most High is bared against thee— [doom
And see!—the hand of fate describes thy
In glaring letters on yon rubied wall!
Each gleam of light is perish'd out of heaven,
And darkness rushes o'er the face of earth.
Timur. Think'st thou, vile slave, with visionary fears
I e'er can shrink appall'd? Thou moon-struck seer?
No more I'll bear this mockery of words:
Or straight resolve me, or by hell and vengeance,
Unheard-of torment waits thee.
Zamti. Know'st thou not
I offer'd up my boy? and after that,
After that conflict, think'st thou there is aught
Zamti has left to fear?——
Timur. Yes, learn to fear
My will, my sovereign will, which here is law,
And treads upon the neck of slaves.
Zamti. Thy will
The law in China! Ill-instructed man!
Now learn an awful truth——Though ruffian power
May for a while suppress all sacred order,
And trample on the rights of man, the soul,
Which gave our legislation life and vigour,
Shall still subsist, above the tyrant's reach:—
The spirit of the laws can never die.
Timur. I'll hear no more. What ho!

Enter OCTAR *and Guards*.

Bring forth Mandane——
Ruin involves ye all—this very hour
Shall see your son impal'd: yes, both your [sons.
Let Etan be brought forth.
Octar. Etan, my liege,
Is fled for safety.
Timur. Thou pernicious slave! [*To* ZAMTI.
Him too wouldst thou withdraw from justice?—him
Wouldst thou send hence to Corea's realm to brood [powers
O'er some new work of treason? By the
Who feel a joy in vengeance, and delight
In human blood, I will unchain my fury
On all, who trace Zaphimri in his years;
But chief on thee and thy devoted race.

Enter MANDANE *and* HAMET. MIRVAN *guarding them*, &c.

Woman, attend my words—instant reveal
This dark conspiracy, and save thyself.
If wilful thou wilt spurn the joys that woo thee,
The rack shall have its prey.
Man. It is in vain.
I tell thee, Homicide, my soul is bound
By solemn vows; and wouldst thou have me break
What angels wafted on their wings to heaven?
Timur. Renounce your rash resolves, nor court destruction.
Man. Goddess of vengeance, from your realms above,
Where near the throne of the Most High thou dwell'st, [der,
Insphered in darkness, amidst hoards of thun-
Serenely dreadful, till dire human crimes
Provoke thee down; now, on the whirlwind's wing [bolts
Descend, and with your flaming sword, your
Red with almighty wrath, let loose your rage,
And blast this vile seducer in his guilt.
Timur. Blind frantic woman!—think on your loved boy.
Man. That tender struggle's o'er—if he must die,
I'll greatly dare to follow.
Timur. Then forthwith
I'll put thee to the proof—Drag forth the boy
To instant death—— [*They seize* HAMET.
Hamet. Come on then——Lead me hence
To some new world where justice reigns, for here
Thy iron hand is stretch'd o'er all.
[*Exit, guarded.*
Timur. Quick, drag him forth.
Man. Now by the Powers above, by every
Of humanizing pity, seize me first; [tie
Oh! spare my child, and end his wretched mother!
Timur. Thou plead'st in vain.

Enter a MESSENGER *in haste*.

Mess. Etan, dread Sir, is found.
Zamti. Ah! China totters on the brink of ruin! [*Aside.*
Timur. Where lurk'd the slave?
Mess. Emerging from disguise,
He rush'd amid the guards that led forth Hamet:
Suspend the stroke, he cried: then craved admittance
To your dread presence, on affairs, he says,
Of highest import to your throne and life.
Zamti. Ruin impends. [*Aside.*] Heed not an idle boy.—— [*To* TIMURKAN.
Timur. Yes, I will see him: bring him straight before me.
Zamti. Angels of light, quick on the rapid wing
Dart from the throne of grace, and hover round him!

Enter ZAPHIMRI, *Guards following him*.

Timur. Thou comest on matters of importance deep
Unto my throne and life——
Zaph. I do.——This very hour
Thy death is plotting.
Timur. Ha!——by whom?
Zaph. Zaphimri!
Zamti. What means my son!——
Timur. Quick, give him to my rage,
And mercy shall to thee extend.
Zaph. Think not
I meanly come to save this wretched being.
Pity Mandane—save her tender frame!—
[*Kneels.*
Pity that youth!—oh! save that godlike man!
Zamti. Wilt thou dishonour me, degrade thyself,
Thy native dignity, by basely kneeling.
Quit that vile posture.
Timur. Rash intruder, hence.——
[*To* ZAMTI

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Hear me, thou strippling;—or unfold thy tale,
Or by yon heaven they die—Wouldst thou appease my wrath,
Bring me Zaphimri's head.
Zaph. Will that suffice?
Zamti. Oh! Heavens! [*Aside.*
Timur. It will——
Zaph. Then take it, tyrant.
[*Rising up, and pointing to himself.*
Zamti and Hamet. Ah!——
Zaph. I am Zaphimri—I your mortal foe!
Zamti. Now by yon Heaven, it is not——
Zaph. Here——strike here——
Since nought but royal blood can quench thy thirst, [lives.
Unsluice these veins—but spare their matchless
Timur. Wouldst thou deceive me too?
Zamti. He would——
Zaph. No——here,
Here on his knees, Zaphimri begs to die.
Zamti. Oh! horror, 'tis my son!—by great Confucius,
That is my Etan, my too generous boy,
That fain would die to save his aged sire!
Man. Alas! all's ruin'd—freedom is no more! [*Aside.*
Zaph. Yet hear me, Tartar—hear the voice of truth—
I am your victim—by the gods, I am.
[*Laying hold of* TIMURKAN.
Timur. Thou early traitor!—by your guilty sire
Train'd up in fraud—no more these arts prevail.
My rage is up in arms, ne'er to know rest,
Until Zaphimri perish.—Off, vile slave!——
This very moment sweep them from my sight.
Man. Alas! my husband—Oh! my son—my son!
Zamti. May all the host of Heaven protect him still!
[*Exeunt* ZAMTI *and* MANDANE, *guarded by* OCTAR, *&c.*

ZAPHIMRI, *struggling with* TIMURKAN, *on his knees.*

Zaph. Ah! yet withhold—in pity hold a moment—
I am Zaphimri—I resign my crown——
Timur. Away, vain boy! Go see them bleed; behold
How they will writhe in pangs: pangs doom'd for thee,
And every strippling through the East. Vile slave, away!
[*Breaks from him, and exit.*

ZAPHIMRI, *lying on the ground; Officers and Guards behind him.*

Zaph. Oh! cruel!——yet a moment—barbarous Scythians!
Wilt thou not open, earth, and take me down,
Down to thy caverns of eternal darkness,
From this supreme of wo? Here will I lie,
Here on thy flinty bosom—with this breast
I'll harrow up my grave, and end at once
This powerless wretch—this ignominious king!
And sleeps almighty Justice? Will it not
Now waken all its terrors?—arm yon band
Of secret heroes with avenging thunder?
By Heaven that thought [*Rising.*] lifts up my kindling soul [friends,
With renovated fire. [*Aside.*] My glorious
(Who now convene big with your country's fate)
When I am dead—oh! give me just revenge!
Let not my shade rise unatoned amongst ye;
Let me not die inglorious; make my fall,
With some great act of yet unheard-of vengeance,
Resound throughout the world; that farthest Scythia
May stand appall'd at the huge distant roar
Of one vast ruin tumbling on the heads
Of this fell tyrant, and his hated race.
[*Exit, guarded.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—The Palace.

Enter OCTAR, ZAMTI *and* MANDANE *following him.*

Zamti. Why dost thou lead us to this hated mansion?
Must we again behold the tyrant's frown?
Thou know'st our hearts are fix'd.
Octar. The war of words
We scorn again to wage: thither ye come
Beneath a monarch's eye to meet your doom.
The rack is now preparing; Timurkan
Shall soon behold your pangs, and count each groan
Even to the fullest luxury of vengeance.
Guard well that passage: [*To the Guards within.*]—see these traitors find
No means of flight; while to the conqueror
I hasten, to receive his last commands.
[*Exit on the opposite side.*
Zamti. Thou ever faithful creature!——
Man. Canst thou, Zamti,
Still call me faithful? By that honour'd name
Wilt thou call her, whose mild maternal love
Hath overwhelm'd us all?
Zamti. Thou art my wife,
Whose matchless excellence, even in bondage,
Hath cheer'd my soul; but now thy every charm,
By virtue waken'd, kindled by distress
To higher lustre, all my passions beat
Unutterable gratitude and love.
And must—oh! cruel!—must I see thee bleed?
Man. For me death wears no terror on his brow.
Full twenty years hath this resounding breast
Been smote with these sad hands; these haggard eyes [band—
Have seen my country's fall; my dearest hus-
My son—my king—all in the Tartar's hands:
What then remains for me? Death—only death.
Zamti. Ah! can thy tenderness endure the pangs
Inventive cruelty even now designs?——
Must this fair form—this soft perfection bleed?
Thy decent limbs be strain'd with cruel cords
To glut a ruffian's rage?——
Man. Alas! this frame,
This feeble texture never can sustain it.
But this—this I can bear—— [*Shows a dagger*
Zamti. Ha!
Man. Yes!——this dagger!
Do thou but lodge it in this faithful breast,
My heart shall spring to meet thee.
Zamti. Oh!——
Man. Do thou,
My honour'd lord, who taught me every virtue
Afford this friendly, this last human office,
And teach me how to die.
Zamti. Oh! never——never

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Hence let me bear this fatal instrument.
[*Takes the dagger.*
What, to usurp the dread prerogative
Of life and death, and measure out the thread
Of our own beings!—'tis the coward's act,
Who dares not to encounter pain and peril.
Be that the pratice of th' untutor'd savage;
Be it the practice of the gloomy North.
Man. Must we then wait a haughty tyrant's nod,
The vassals of his will?—No—let us rather
Nobly break through the barriers of this life,
And join the beings of some other world,
Who'll throng around our greatly daring souls,
And view the deed with wonder and applause.
Zamti. Distress too exquisite!—Ye holy powers,
If aught below can supersede your law,
And plead for wretches, who dare, self-impell'd,
Rush to your awful presence;—oh!—it is not
When the distemper'd passions rage, when pride
Is stung to madness, when ambition falls
From his high scaffolding;—oh! no. If aught
Can justify the blow, it is when virtue
Has nothing left to do; when liberty
No more can breathe at large; 'tis with the groans
Of our dear country when we dare to die.
Man. Then here, at once, direct the friendly steel.
Zamti. One last adieu!—now!—ah! does this become
Thy husband's love?—thus with uplifted blade
Can I approach that bosom-bliss, where oft
With other looks than these—oh! my Mandane!
I've hush'd my cares within thy sheltering arms?
Man. Alas! the loves that hover'd o'er our pillows
Have spread their pinions, never to return,
And the pale fates surround us!——
Then lay me down in honourable rest:
Come, as thou art, all hero, to my arms,
And free a virtuous wife.
Zamti. It must be so.
Now then prepare thee——My arm flags and droops,
Conscious of thee in every trembling nerve.
[*Dashes down the dagger.*
By Heaven, once more I would not raise the point
Against that hoard of sweets, for endless years
Of universal empire.
Man Ha! the fell ministers of wrath—and yet
They shall not long insult us in our woes.
Myself will still preserve the means of death.
[*Takes up the dagger.*

Enter TIMURKAN *and* OCTAR.

Timur. Now then, detested pair, your hour is come—
Drag forth these slaves to instant death and torment.
I hate this dull delay: I burn to see them
Gasping in death, and weltering in their gore.
Man. Zamti, support my steps—with thee to die
Is all the boon Mandane now would crave.
[*Exeunt* MANDANE *and* ZAMTI.
Timur. Those rash, presumptuous boys, are they brought forth?
Octar. Mirvan will lead the victims to their fate.
Timur. And yet what boots their death?—the Orphan lives,
And in this breast fell horror and remorse
Must be the dire inhabitants.—Oh! Octar,
These midnight visions shake my inmost soul!
Octar. And shall the shadowings of a feverish brain
Disturb a conqueror's breast?——
Timur. Octar, they've made
Such desolation here—'tis drear and horrible!
On yonder couch, soon as sleep closed my eyes,
All that yon mad enthusiastic priest
In mystic rage denounced, rose to my view;
And ever and anon a livid flash,
From conscience shot, show'd to my aching sight
The colours of my guilt——
Billows of blood were round me; and the ghosts,
The ghosts of heroes, by my rage destroy'd,
Came with their ghastly orbs, and streaming wounds; [claim
They stalk'd around my bed;—with loud ac-
They call'd Zaphimri! 'midst the lightning's blaze
Heaven roll'd consenting thunders o'er my head;
Straight from his covert the youth sprung upon me, [down,
And shook his gleaming steel—he hurl'd me
Down, headlong down the drear——hold, hold! where am I?——
Oh! this dire whirl of thought—my brain's on fire!
Octar. Compose this wild disorder of thy soul.
Your foes this moment die.

Enter MIRVAN.

Timur. What wouldst thou, Mirvan?
Mir. Near to the eastern gate, a slave reports,
As on his watch he stood, a gleam of arms
Cast a dim lustre through the night, and straight
The steps of men thick sounded in his ear:
In close array they march'd.
Timur. Some lurking treason!——
What, ho! my arms—ourself will sally forth.
Mir. My liege, their scanty and rash-levied crew
Want not a monarch's sword—the valiant Octar, [them.
Join'd by yon faithful guard, will soon chastise
Timur. Then be it so—Octar, draw off the guard,
And bring their leaders bound in chains before me. [*Exit* OCTAR.
Mir. With sure conviction we have further learn'd
The long-contended truth—Etan's their king—
The traitor Zamti counted but one son;
And him he sent far hence to Corea's realm,
That should it e'er be known the prince survived,
The boy might baffle justice.
Timur. Ha! this moment
Ourself will see him fall.
Mir. Better, my liege,
At this dead hour you sought repose—mean time [foes
Justice on him shall hold her course. Your
Else might still urge that you delight in blood.

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The semblance of humanity will throw
A veil upon ambition's deeds—'tis thus
That mighty conquerors thrive;—and even vice,
When it would prosper, borrows virtue's mien.
Timur. Mirvan, thou counsell'st right: beneath a show
Of public weal we lay the nations waste.
And yet these eyes shall never know repose,
Till they behold Zaphimri perish. Mirvan,
Attend me forth.
Mir. Forgive, my sovereign liege,
Forgive my over-forward zeal——I knew
It was not fitting he should breathe a moment: [victim,
The truth once known, I rush'd upon the
And with this sabre cleft him to the ground.
Timur. Thanks to great Lama!—treason is no more,
And their boy king is dead. Mirvan, do thou
This very night bring me the stripling's head.
Soon as the dawn shall purple yonder east,
Aloft in air all China shall behold it,
Parch'd by the sun, and weltering to the wind:
Haste, Mirvan, haste, and sate my fondest wish.
Mir. This hour approves my loyalty and truth. [*Exit*.
Timur. Their deep laid plot hath miss'd its aim, and Timurkan
May reign secure. No longer horrid dreams
Shall hover round my couch: the prostrate world [sway.
Henceforth shall learn to own my sovereign

Enter MIRVAN.

Well, Mirvan, hast thou brought the wish'd-for pledge?
Mir. My liege, I fear 'twill strike thy soul with horror!
Timur. By Heaven the sight will glad my longing eyes,
Oh! give it to me!——

Enter ZAPHIMRI; *a Sabre in his hand, and plants himself before the Tyrant.*

Ha! then all is lost.
Zaph. Now bloody Tartar, now then know Zaphimri.
Timur. Accursed treason!—To behold thee thus
Alive before me, blasts my aching eye-balls:
My blood forgets to move; each power dies in me.
Zaph. Well may'st thou tremble, well may guilt like thine
Shrink back appall'd;—for now avenging Heaven
In me sends forth its ministers of wrath,
To deal destruction on thee.——
Timur. Treacherous slave!
'Tis false!—with coward-art, a base assassin,
A midnight ruffian on my peaceful hour
Secure thou com'st, thus to assault a warrior
Thy heart could never dare to meet in arms.
Zaph. Not meet thee, Tartar?—ha!—in me thou seest
One on whose head unnumber'd wrongs thou'st heap'd; [Yes,
Else could I scorn thee, thus defenceless.—
By all my great revenge, could bid thee try each shape,
Assume each horrid form, come forth array'd
In all the terrors of destructive guilt;——
But now a dear, a murder'd father calls;
He lifts my arm to rivet thee to earth,
Th' avenger of mankind.
Mir. Fall on, my prince.
Timur. By Heaven, I'll dare thee still. Resign it, slave,
Resign thy blade to nobler hands.
[*Snatches* MIRVAN's *sabre*.
Mir. Oh! horror!
What ho! bring help!—Let not the fate of China
Hang on the issue of a doubtful combat.
Timur. Come on, presumptuous boy!
Zaph. Inhuman regicide!
Now, lawless ravager, Zaphimri comes
To wreak his vengeance on thee.
[*Exeunt fighting*.
Mir. Oh! nerve his arm, ye Powers, and guide each blow!

Enter HAMET.

Mir. See there!—behold—he darts upon his prey.—
Zaph. [*Within*.] Die, bloodhound, die!
Timur. [*Within*.] May curses blast my arm
That fail'd so soon!——
Hamet. The Tartar drops his point.
Zaphimri now——
Timur. [*Within*.]—Have mercy!—mercy!—oh!—
Zaph. [*Within*.] Mercy was never thine.—This, fell destroyer,
This, for a nation's groans!——
Mir. The monster dies;
He quivers on the ground. Then let me fly
To Zamti and Mandane with the tidings,
And call them back to liberty and joy.
[*Exit* MIRVAN.

Enter ZAPHIMRI.

Zaph. Now, Hamet, now oppression is no more: [blood.
This smoking blade hath drunk the tyrant's
Hamet. China again is free! There lies the corse
That breathed destruction to the world.
Zaph. Yes, there,
Tyrannic guilt, behold thy fatal end,
The wages of thy sins.

Enter MORAT.

Morat. Where is the king?
Revenge now stalks abroad. Our valiant leaders,
True to the destined hour, at once broke forth
From every quarter on th' astonish'd foe:
Octar is fallen; all cover'd o'er with wounds
He met his fate; and still the slaughtering sword
Invades the city, sunk in sleep and wine.
Zaph. Lo! Timurkan lies levell'd with the dust!
Send forth, and let Orasming straight proclaim
Zaphimri king—my subjects' rights restored.
[*Exit* MORAT.
Now, where is Zamti? where Mandane?—ha!
What means that look of wan despair?

Enter MIRVAN.

Mir. Oh! dire mischance!

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While here I trembled for the great event,
The unrelenting slaves, whose trade is death,
Began their work. Nor piety, nor age,
Could touch their felon-hearts; they seized on Zamti,
And bound him on the wheel. All frantic at the sight,
Mandane plunged a poniard in her heart,
And at her husband's feet expired.

Hamet. Oh! Heavens!
My mother!——

Zaph. Fatal rashness!——Mirvan, say,
Is Zamti too destroy'd?

Mir. Smiling in pangs,
We found the good, the venerable man:
Released from anguish, with what strength remain'd,
He reach'd the couch where lost Mandane lay;
There threw his mangled limbs; there, clinging to the body,
Prints thousand kisses on her clay-cold lips,
And pours his sad lamentings, in a strain
Might call each pitying angel from the sky,
To sympathize with human wo.

[*The great folding doors open in the back Scene.*

Zaph. And see,
See on that mournful bier he clasps her still;
Still hangs upon each faded feature; still
To her deaf ear complains in bitter anguish.
Heart-piercing sight!

Hamet. Oh! agonizing scene!

[*The corpse is brought forward,* ZAMTI *lying on the couch, and clasping the dead body.*

Zamti. Ah! stay, Mandane stay!—yet once again
Let me behold the day-light of thy eyes!——
Gone, gone—for ever, ever gone! Those orbs
That ever gently beam'd, must dawn no more!

Zaph. Are these our triumphs?—these our promised joys?

Zamti. The music of that voice recalls my soul.

[*Rises from the body, and runs eagerly to embrace* ZAPHIMRI; *his strength fails him, and he falls at his feet.*

My prince my king!

Zaph. Soft, raise him from the ground.

Zamti. Zaphimri!—Hamet too!—Oh! bless'd event! [prince—
I could not hope such tidings.—Thee, my
Thee too, my son—I thought ye both destroy'd.
My slow remains of life cannot endure
These strong vicissitudes of grief and joy.
And there—oh! Heaven!—see there, there lies Mandane!

Hamet. How fares it now, my father?

Zamti. Lead me to her——
Is that the ever dear, the faithful woman!
Is that my wife?——And is it thus at length,
Thus do I see thee, then, Mandane?—Cold,
Alas! death cold——
Cold is that breast, where virtue from above
Made its delighted sojourn, and those lips
That utter'd heavenly truth—pale!—pale!—dead, dead! [*Sinks on the body.*
Pray ye entomb me with her!

Zaph. Then take, ye Powers, then take your conquests back;
Zaphimri never can survive——

Zamti. [*Raising himself.*] I charge thee live:
A base desertion of the public weal
Can ne'er become a king.—Alas! my son——
(By that dear tender name if once again
Zamti may call thee)—tears will have their way!
Forgive this flood of tenderness: my heart
Melts even now! Thou noble youth, this is
The only interview we e'er shall have.

Zaph. And will ye then, inexorable Powers
Will ye then tear him from my aching heart?

Zamti. The moral duties of the private man
Are grafted in thy soul—oh! still remember,
The mean immutable of happiness,
Or in the vale of life, or on a throne,
Is virtue. Each bad action of a king
Extends beyond his life, and acts again
Its tyranny o'er ages yet unborn.
To error mild, severe to guilt, protect
The helpless innocent; and learn to feel
The best delight of serving human kind.
Be these, my prince, thy arts; be these thy cares,
And live the father of a willing people.

Hamet. Oh! cruel!—see—ah! see!—he dies!—his lips
Tremble in agony—his eye balls glare!—
A death-like paleness spreads o'er all his face!

Zaph. Is there no help to save so dear a life?

Zamti. It is too late—I die—alas! I die!—
Life harrass'd out, pursued with barbarous art,
Through every trembling joint—now fails at once!
Zaphimri—oh: farewell!—I shall not see
The glories of thy reign.—Hamet!—my son—
Thou good young man, farewell!—Mandane, yes, [thus
My soul with pleasure takes her flight, that
Faithful in death, I leave these cold remains
Near thy dear honour'd clay. [*Dies.*

Zaph. And art thou gone,
Thou best of men?—Then must Zaphimri pine
In ever-during grief, since thou art lost;
Since that firm patriot, whose parental care
Should raise, should guide, should animate my virtues,
Lies there a breathless corse.

Hamet. My liege, forbear:
Live for your people; madness and despair
Belongs to woes like mine.

Zaph. Thy woes indeed,
Are deep, thou pious youth—yes, I will live,
To soften thy afflictions; to assuage
A nation's grief, when such a pair expires.
Come to my heart:—in thee another Zamti
Shall bless the realm. Now let me hence to hail
My people with the sound of peace; that done,
To these a grateful monument shall raise,
With all sepulchral honour. Frequent there
We'll offer incense;—there each weeping muse
Shall grave the tributary verse;—with tears
Embalm their memories; and teach mankind,
Howe'er oppression stalk the groaning earth,
Yet Heaven, in its own hour, can bring relief;
Can blast the tyrant in his guilty pride,
And prove the Orphan's guardian to the last.

EPILOGUE.

THROUGH five long acts I've worn my sighing face,
Confined by critic laws to time and place;
Yet that once done, I ramble as I please,
Cry *London Hog;* and whisk o'er land and seas——
Ladies, excuse my dress—'tis true Chinese.
Thus, quit of husband, death and tragic strain,
Let us enjoy our dear small talk again.

How could this bard successful hope to prove?
So many heroes—and not one in love!
No suitor here to talk of flames that thrill;
To say the civil thing——Your eyes so kill!—
No ravisher, to force us——to our will!
You've seen their eastern virtues, patriot passions, [fashions,
And now for something of their taste and
'O Lord! that's charming,"—cries my Lady Fidget,
'I long to know it—Do the creatures visit?
Dear Mrs. Yates, go tell us—Well, how is it?"
First, as to beauty—Set your hearts at rest—
They're all broad foreheads, and pig's eyes at best. [lives!
And then they lead such strange, such formal
—A little more at home than English wives:
Lest the poor things should roam and prove untrue,
They all are crippled in the tiny shoe,
A hopeful scheme to keep a wife from madding! [ding.
—We pinch our feet, and yet are ever gad-
Then they've no cards, no routs, ne'er take their fling,
And pin money is an unheard-of thing!
Then how d'ye think they write—You'll ne'er divine—
From top to bottom down in one straight line.
[*Mimics.*
We ladies, when our flames we cannot smother,
Write letters—from one corner to another.
[*Mimics.*
One mode there is in which both climes agree; [be—
I scarce can tell—'mongst friends then let it
—The creatures love to cheat as well as we.
But bless my wits! I've quite forgot th bard—
A civil soul!—By me he sends this card—
Present respects—to every lady here—
Hopes for the honour—of a single tear.
The critics then will throw their dirt in vain,
One drop from you will wash out every stain.
Acquaints you—(now the man is past his fright) [night.
He holds his rout—and here he keeps his
Assures you all a welcome, kind and hearty,
The ladies shall play crowns—and there's the shilling party.
[*Points to the upper gallery.*

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THE PROVOKED HUSBAND:

OR,

A JOURNEY TO LONDON.

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY SIR JOHN VANBRUGH AND C. CIBBER, ESQ.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LORD TOWNLY.
MR. MANLY.
SIR FRANCIS WRONGHEAD.
SQUIRE RICHARD.
COUNT BASSET.
JOHN MOODY.

LADY TOWNLY.
LADY GRACE.
LADY WRONGHEAD.
MISS JENNY.
MRS. MOTHERLY.
MYRTILLA.
MRS. TRUSTY.

PROLOGUE.

THIS play took birth from principles of truth,
To make amends for errors past of youth.
A bard that's now no more, in riper days,
Conscious, review'd the license of his plays:
And though applause his wanton muse had fired,
Himself condemn'd what sensual minds admired.
At length he own'd, that plays should let you see,
Not only what you are, but ought to be;
Though vice was natural, 'twas never meant
The stage should show it but for punishment.
Warm with that thought his muse once more took flame,
Resolved to bring licentious life to shame.
Such was the piece his latest pen design'd,
But left no traces of his plan behind.
Luxuriant scenes, unpruned, or half-contrived;
Yet, through the mass his native fire survived:
Rough, as rich ore in mines, the treasure lay,
Yet still 'twas rich and forms at length a play;
In which the bold compiler boasts no merit,
But that his pains have saved your scenes of spirit:
Not scenes that would a noisy joy impart,
But such as hush the mind, and warm the heart.
From praise of hands, no sure account he draws,
But fix'd attention is sincere applause:
If then (for hard you'll own the task) his art
Can to these embryon-scenes new life impart,
The living proudly would exclude his lays,
And to the buried bard resigns the praise.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—LORD TOWNLY'S *Apartment.*

Lord T. WHY did I marry?—Was it not evident, my plain, rational scheme of life was impracticable, with a woman of so different a way of thinking!—Is there one article of it that she has not broke in upon?—Yes, let me

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do her justice—her reputation—that—I have no reason to believe is in question—But then how long her profligate course of pleasures may make her able to keep it, is a shocking question! and her presumption while she keeps it—insupportable! for on the pride of that single virtue she seems to lay it down as a fundamental point, that the free indulgence of every other vice this fertile town affords, is the birth-right prerogative of a woman of quality——Amazing! that a creature so warm in the pursuit of her pleasures, should never cast one thought towards her happiness——Thus, while she admits of no lover, she thinks it a greater merit still, in her chastity, not to care for her husband; and while she herself is solacing in one continual round of cards and good company, he, poor wretch, is left at large, to take care of his own contentment—'Tis time, indeed, some care were taken, and speedily there shall be—Yet, let me not be rash—Perhaps, this disappointment of my heart may make me too impatient; and some tempers, when reproached, grow more untractable—Here she comes—Let me be calm awhile.

Enter LADY TOWNLY.

Going out so soon after dinner, Madam?

Lady T. Lard, my lord! what can I possibly do at home?

Lord T. What does my sister, Lady Grace, do at home?

Lady T. Why, that is to me amazing! Have you ever any pleasure at home?

Lord T. It might be in your power, Madam, I confess, to make it a little more comfortable to me.

Lady T. Comfortable! and so, my good lord, you would really have a woman of my rank and spirit stay at home to comfort her husband. Lord, what notions of life some men have!

Lord T. Don't you think, Madam, some ladies' notions are full as extravagant?

Lady T. Yes, my lord, when the tame doves live cooped within the pen of your precepts, I do think 'em prodigious indeed.

Lord T. And when they fly wild about this town, Madam, pray what must the world think of 'em then?

Lady T. Oh, this world is not so ill-bred as to quarrel with any woman for liking it!

Lord T. Nor am I, Madam, a husband so well-bred as to bear my wife's being so fond of it; in short, the life you lead, Madam—

Lady T. Is to me the pleasantest life in the world.

Lord T. I should not dispute your taste, Madam, if a woman had a right to please nobody but herself.

Lady T. Why, whom would you have her please?

Lord T. Sometimes her husband.

Lady T. And don't you think a husband under the same obligation?

Lord T. Certainly.

Lady T. Why, then, we are agreed, my lord—For if I never go abroad, till I am weary of being at home—which you know is the case—is it not equally reasonable, not to come home till one is weary of being abroad?

Lord T. If this be your rule of life, Madam, 'tis time to ask you one serious question.

Lady T. Don't let it be long a coming then——for I am in haste.

Lord T. Madam, when I am serious, I expect a serious answer.

Lady T. Before I know the question?

Lord T. Pshaw!——Have I power, Madam, to make you serious by entreaty?

Lady T. You have.

Lord T. And you promise to answer me sincerely.

Lady T. Sincerely.

Lord T. Now then recollect your thoughts, and tell me seriously why you married me?

Lady T. You insist upon truth, you say?

Lord T. I think I have a right to it.

Lady T. Why, then, my lord, to give you at once a proof of my obedience and sincerity—I think—I married—to take off that restraint that lay upon my pleasures while I was a single woman.

Lord T. How, Madam! is any woman under less restraint after marriage than before it?

Lady T. Oh, my lord, my lord! they are quite different creatures! Wives have infinite liberties in life, that would be terrible in an unmarried woman to take.

Lord T. Name one.

Lady T. Fifty if you please——To begin then,—in the morning—A married woman may have men at her toilet; invite them to dinner; appoint them a party in the stage box at the play; engross the conversation there; call them by their Christian names; talk louder than the players; from thence jaunt into the city; take a frolicsome supper at an India-House; perhaps, in her *gaieté de cœur*, toast a pretty fellow; then clatter again to this end of the town; break with the morning, into an assembly; crowd to the hazard-table; throw a familiar *levant* upon some sharp, lurching man of quality, and if he demands his money, turn it off with a loud laugh, and cry—you'll owe it him, to vex him, ha, ha!

Lord T. Prodigious. [*Aside.*

Lady T. These now, my lord, are some few of the many modish amusements that distinguish the privilege of a wife from that of a single woman.

Lord T. Death, Madam! what law has made these liberties less scandalous in a wife, than in an unmarried woman?

Lady T. Why the strongest law in the world, custom—custom time out of mind, my lord.

Lord T. Custom, Madam, is the law of fools; but it shall never govern me.

Lady T. Nay, then, my lord 'tis time for me to observe the laws of prudence.

Lord T. I wish I could see an instance of it.

Lady T. You shall have one this moment, my lord; for I think when a man begins to lose his temper at home, if a woman has any prudence, why—she'll go abroad till he comes to himself again. [*Going.*

Lord T. Hold, Madam——I am amazed you are not more uneasy at the life you lead. You don't want sense, and yet seem void of all humanity; for, with a blush I say it, I think I have not wanted love.

Lady T. Oh, don't say that, my lord, if you suppose I have my senses.

Lord T. What is it I have done to you? What can you complain of?

Lady T. Oh, nothing in the least! 'Tis true, you have heard me say, I have owed my Lord Lurcher a hundred pounds these three weeks——but what then—a husband is not liable to his wife's debts of honour, you know

——and if a silly woman will be uneasy about money she can't be sued for, what's that to him? As long as he loves her, to be sure, she can have nothing to complain of.

Lord T. By Heaven, if my whole fortune thrown into your lap, could make you delight in the cheerful duties of a wife, I should think myself a gainer by the purchase.

Lady T. That is, my lord, I might receive your whole estate, provided you were sure I would not spend a shilling of it.

Lord T. No, Madam; were I master of your heart, your pleasures would be mine; but, different as they are, I'll feed even your follies, to deserve it——Perhaps you may have some other trifling debts of honour abroad, that keep you out of humour at home——at least it shall not be my fault if I have not more of your company——there, there's a bill of five hundred— and now Madam—

Lady T. And now, my lord, down to the ground I thank you——Now I am convinced, were I weak enough to love this man, I should never get a single guinea from him. [*Aside.*

Lord T. If it be no offence, Madam—

Lady T. Say what you please, my lord; I am in that harmony of spirits it is impossible to put me out of humour.

Lord T. How long, in reason then, do you think that sum ought to last you?

Lady T. Oh, my dear, dear lord! now you have spoiled all again: how is it possible I should answer for an event that so utterly depends upon fortune? But to show you that I am more inclined to get money than to throw it away—I have a strong prepossession, that with this five hundred, I shall win five thousand.

Lord T. Madam, if you were to win ten thousand, it would be no satisfaction to me.

Lady T. Oh, the churl! ten thousand! what not so much as wish I might win ten thousand!—Ten thousand! Oh, the charming sum! what infinite pretty things might a woman of spirit do with ten thousand guineas! O' my conscience, if she were a woman of true spirit—she—she might lose them all again.

Lord T. And I had rather it should be so, Madam, provided I could be sure that were the last you would lose.

Lady T. Well, my lord, to let you see I design to play all the good house-wife I can; I am now going to a party at *quadrille*, only to piddle with a little of it, at poor two guineas a fish, with the Dutchess of Quiteright. [*Exit.*

Lord T. Insensible creature! neither reproaches or indulgence, kindness or severity, can wake her to the least reflection! Continual license has lulled her into such a lethargy of care, that she speaks of her excesses with the same easy confidence, as if they were so many virtues. What a turn has her head taken!—But how to cure it—I am afraid the physic must be strong that reaches her—Lenitives, I see, are to no purpose—take my friend's opinion—Manly will speak freely—my sister with tenderness to both sides. They know my case—I'll talk with them.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Mr. Manly, my lord, has sent to know if your lordship was at home.

Lord T. They did not deny me?

Serv. No, my lord.

Lord T. Very well; step up to my sister, and say, I desire to speak with her.

Serv. Lady Grace is here, my lord. [*Exit* SERV.

Enter LADY GRACE.

Lord T. So, lady fair: what pretty weapon have you been killing your time with?

Lady G. A huge folio, that has almost killed me—I think I have read half my eyes out.

Lord T. Oh! you should not pore so much just after dinner, child.

Lady G. That's true; but any body's thoughts are better always than one's own, you know.

Lord T. Who's there?

Enter SERVANT.

Leave word at the door, I am at home to nobody but Mr. Manly. [*Exit* SERV.

Lady G. And why is he excepted, pray, my lord?

Lord T. I hope, Madam, you have no objection to his company?

Lady G. Your particular orders, upon my being here, look, indeed, as if you thought I had not.

Lord T. And your ladyship's inquiry into the reason of those orders, shows, at least, it was not a matter indifferent to you.

Lady G. Lord, you make the oddest constructions, brother!

Lord T. Look you, my grave Lady Grace—in one serious word—I wish you had him.

Lady G. I can't help that.

Lord T. Ha! you can't help it; ha, ha! The flat simplicity of that reply was admirable.

Lady G. Pooh, you tease one, brother!

Lord T. Come, I beg pardon, child—this is not a point, I grant you, to trifle upon; therefore, I hope you'll give me leave to be serious.

Lady G. If you desire it, brother; though, upon my word, as to Mr. Manly's having any serious thoughts of me—I know nothing of it.

Lord T. Well—— there's nothing wrong in your making a doubt of it. But, in short, I find, by his conversation of late, that he has been looking round the world for a wife; and if you were to look round the world for a husband, he is the first man I would give to you.

Lady G. Then, whenever he makes me any offer, brother, I will certainly tell you of it.

Lord T. Oh! that's the last thing he'll do; he'll never make you an offer, till he's pretty sure it wont be refused.

Lady G. Now you make me curious. Pray, did he ever make any offer of that kind to you?

Lord T. Not directly; but that imports nothing: he is a man too well acquainted with the female world to be brought into a high opinion of any one woman, without some well-examined proof of her merit; yet I have reason to believe, that your good sense, your turn of mind, and your way of life, have brought him to so favourable a one of you, that a few days will reduce him to talk plainly to me; which as yet, notwithstanding our friendship, I have neither declined nor encouraged him to.

Lady G. I am mighty glad we are so near in our way of thinking; for, to tell you the truth, he is much upon the same terms with me: you know he has a satirical turn; but never lashes any folly, without giving due encomiums to its opposite virtue: and, upon such occasions, he is sometimes particular, in turning his com-

pliments upon me, which I don't receive with any reserve, lest he should imagine I take them to myself.

Lord T. You are right, child; when a man of merit makes his addresses, good sense may give him an answer, without scorn or coquetry.

Lady G. Hush! he's here—

Enter MR. MANLY.

Man. My lord, your most obedient.

Lord T. Dear Manly, yours——I was thinking to send to you.

Man. Then, I am glad I am here, my lord—Lady Grace, I kiss your hand—What, only you two! How many visits may a man make, before he falls into such unfashionable company? A brother and sister soberly sitting at home, when the whole town is a gadding! I question if there is so particular a *tête a tête* again, in the whole parish of St. James's.

Lady G. Fy, fy, Mr. Manly! how censorious you are!

Man. I had not made the reflection, Madam; but that I saw you an exception to it——Where's my lady?

Lord T. That, I believe, is impossible to guess.

Man. Then I wont try, my lord—

Lord T. But, 'tis probable I may hear of her, by that time I have been four or five hours in bed.

Man. Now, if that were my case—I believe I—But I beg pardon, my lord.

Lord T. Indeed, Sir, you shall not: you will oblige me if you speak out; for it was upon this head I wanted to see you.

Man. Why, then, my lord, since you oblige me to proceed—if that were my case—I believe I should certainly sleep in another house.

Lady G. How do you mean?

Man. Only a compliment, Madam.

Lady G. A compliment!

Man. Yes, Madam, in rather turning myself out of doors than her!

Lady G. Don't you think that would be going too far?

Man. I don't know but it might, Madam; for, in strict justice, I think she ought rather to go than I.

Lady G. This is new doctrine, Mr. Manly.

Man. As old, Madam, as love, honour, and obey. When a woman will stop at nothing that's wrong, why should a man balance any thing that's right?

Lady G. Bless me! but this is fomenting things—

Man. Fomentations, Madam, are sometimes necessary to dispel tumours: though I do not directly advise my lord to do this—This is only what, upon the same provocation, I would do myself.

Lady G. Ay, ay, you would do! Bachelors' wives, indeed, are finely governed.

Man. If the married men's were as well—I am apt to think we should not see so many mutual plagues taking the air in separate coaches.

Lady G. Well, but suppose it your own case; would you part with your wife, because she now and then stays out in the best company.

Lord T. Well said, Lady Grace! Come, stand up for the privilege of your sex. This is like to be a warm debate. I shall edify.

Man. Madam, I think a wife, after midnight, has no occasion to be in better company than her husband's; and that frequent unreasonable hours make the best company—the worst she can fall into.

Lady G. But if people of condition are to keep company with one another, how is it possible to be done, unless one conforms to their hours?

Man. I can't find that any woman's good breeding obliges her to conform to other people's vices.

Lord T. I doubt, child, here we are got a little on the wrong side of the question.

Lady G. Why so, my lord? I can't think the case so bad as Mr. Manly states it—People of quality are not tied down to the rules of those who have their fortunes to make.

Man. No people, Madam, are above being tied down to some rules, that have fortunes to lose.

Lady G. Pooh! I'm sure, if you were to take my side of the argument, you would be able to say something more for it.

Lord T. Well, what say you to that, Manly?

Man. Why, troth, my lord, I have something to say.

Lady G. Ay! that I should be glad to hear, now.

Lord T. Out with it.

Man. Then, in one word, this, my lord—I have often thought that the misconduct of my lady has, in a great measure been owing to your lordship's treatment of her.

Lady G. Bless me!

Lord T. My treatment!

Man. Ay, my lord, you so idolized her before marriage, that you even indulged her like a mistress after it: in short, you continued the lover, when you should have taken up the husband.

Lady G. Oh, frightful! this is worse than t'other; can a husband love a wife too well?

Man. As easy, Madam, as a wife may love her husband too little.

Lord T. So; you two are never like to agree, I find.

Lady G. Don't be positive, brother—I am afraid we are both of a mind already. [*Aside.*] And do you, at this rate, ever hope to be married, Mr. Manly?

Man. Never, Madam, till I can meet with a woman that likes my doctrine.

Lady G. 'Tis pity but your mistress should hear it.

Man. Pity me, Madam, when I marry the woman that wont hear it.

Lady G. I think, at least, he can't say that's me. [*Aside.*

Man. And so, my lord, by giving her more power than was needful, she has none where she wants it; having such entire possession of you, she is not mistress of herself. And, mercy on us! how many fine women's heads have been turned upon the same occasion!

Lord T. Oh, Manly, 'tis too true! there's the source of my disquiet: she knows, and has abused her power: nay, I am still so weak, (with shame I speak it) 'tis not an hour ago, that in the midst of my impatience, I gave her another bill for five hundred to throw away.

Man. Well, my lord, to let you see I am sometimes upon the side of good-nature, I wont absolutely blame you; for the greater your indulgence, the more you have to reproach her with.

Lady G. Ay, Mr. Manly, here now I begin to come in with you. Who knows, my lord, but you may have a good account of your kindness?

Man. That I am afraid, we had not best depend upon. But since you have had so much patience, my lord, even go on with it a day or two more; and upon her ladyship's next sally, be a little rounder in your expostulations; if that don't work—drop her some cool hints of

a determined reformation, and leave her—to breakfast upon them.

Lord T. You are perfectly right. How valuable is a friend in anxiety!

Man. Therefore, to divert that, my lord, I beg, for the present, we may call another cause.

Lady G. Ay, for goodness' sake, let us have done with this.

Lord T. With all my heart.

Lady G. Have you no news abroad, Mr. Manly?

Man. *A propos*—I have some, Madam; and I believe, my lord, as extraordinary in its kind——

Lord T. Pray, let us have it.

Man. Do you know that your country neighbour, and my wise kinsman, Sir Francis Wronghead, is coming to town with his whole family.

Lord T. The fool! What can be his business here?

Man. Oh! of the last importance, I'll assure you—No less than the business of the nation.

Lord T. Explain.

Man. He has carried his election—against Sir John Worthland.

Lord T. The deuce! What! for—for—

Man. The famous borough of Guzzledown.

Lord T. A proper representative, indeed!

Lady G. Pray, Mr. Manly, don't I know him?

Man. You have dined with him, Madam, when I was last down with my lord, at Bellmont.

Lady G. Was not that he that got a little merry before dinner, and overset the tea-table in making his compliments to my lady?

Man. The same.

Lady G. Pray what are his circumstances? I know but very little of him.

Man. Then he is worth your knowing, I can tell you, madam. His estate, if clear, I believe, might be a good two thousand pounds a-year; though as it was left him, saddled with two jointures, and two weighty mortgages upon it, there is no saying what it is—But that he might be sure never to mend it, he married a profuse young hussy, for love, without a penny of money. Thus, having like his brave ancestors, provided heirs for the family (for his dove breeds like a tame pigeon,) he now finds children and interest-money making such a bawling about his ears, that at last he has taken the friendly advice of his kinsman, the good Lord Danglecourt, to run his estate two thousand pounds more in debt, to put the whole management of what is left into Paul Pillage's hands, that he may be at leisure himself to retrieve his affairs, by being a parliament-man.

Lord T. A most admirable scheme, indeed!

Man. And with this politic prospect, he is now upon his journey to London—

Lord T. What can it end in?

Man. Pooh! a journey into the country again.

Lord T. Do you think he'll stir, till his money is gone; or, at least, till the session is over?

Man. If my intelligence is right, my lord, he wont sit long enough to give his vote for a turnpike.

Lord T. How so?

Man. Oh, a bitter business; he had scarce a vote in the whole town, beside the returning officer. Sir John will certainly have it heard at the bar of the house, and send him about his business again.

Lord T. Then he has made a fine business of it, indeed.

Man. Which, as far as my little interest will go, shall be done in as few days as possible.

Lady G. But why would you ruin the poor gentleman's fortune, Mr. Manly?

Man. No, Madam; I would only spoil his project, to save his fortune.

Lady G. How are you concerned enough to do either?

Man. Why—I have some obligations to the family, Madam? I enjoy, at this time, a pretty estate, which Sir Francis was heir at law to: but—by his being a booby, the last will of an obstinate old uncle gave it to me.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. [*To* MANLY.] Sir, here is one of your servants from your house desires to speak with you.

Man. Will you give him leave to come in, my lord?

Lord T. Sir—the ceremony's of your own making.

Enter MANLY'S *Servant.*

Man. Well, James, what's the matter?

James. Sir, here is John Moody just come to town: he says Sir Francis, and all the family, will be here to-night, and is in a great hurry to speak with you.

Man. Where is he?

James. At our house, Sir; he has been gaping and stumping about the streets in his dirty boots, and asking every one he meets, if they can tell him where he may have a good lodging for a parliament man, till he can hire a handsome house, fit for all his family, for the winter.

Man. I am afraid, my lord, I must wait upon Mr. Moody.

Lord T. Pr'ythee let us have him here; he will divert us.

Man. Oh, my lord, he's such a cub! Not but he's so near common sense, that he passes for a wit in the family.

Lady G. I beg, of all things, we may have him: I am in love with nature, let her dress be never so homely.

Man. Then desire him to come hither, James. [*Exit* JAMES.

Lady G. Pray what may be Mr. Moody's post?

Man. Oh! his *maitre d'hotel*, his butler, his bailiff, his hind, his huntsman, and sometimes—his companion.

Lord T. It runs in my head, that the moment this knight has set him down in the house, he will get up, to give them the earliest proof of what importance he is to the public, in his own country.

Man. Yes, and when they have heard him, he will find, that his utmost importance stands valued at—sometimes being invited to dinner.

Lady G. And her ladyship, I suppose, will

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make as considerable a figure in her sphere, too.

Man. That you may depend upon: for (if I don't mistake) she has ten times more of the jade in her than she yet knows of: and she will so improve in this rich soil in a month, that she will visit all the ladies that will let her into their houses, and run in debt to all the shopkeepers that will let her into their books; in short, before her important spouse has made five pounds by his eloquence at Westminster, she will have lost five hundred at dice and quadrille in the parish of St. James's.

Lord T. So that, by that time he is declared unduly elected, a swarm of duns will be ready for their money; and his worship—will be ready for a gaol.

Man. Yes, yes, that I reckon will close the account of this hopeful journey to London—But see, here comes the fore-horse of the team.

Enter JOHN MOODY.

Oh, honest John!

J. Moody. Ad's waunds and heart, Measter Manly! I'm glad I ha' fun ye. Lawd, lawd, give me a buss! why, that's friendly naw. Flesh! I thought we would never ha' got hither. Well, and how do you do, Measter?—Good lack! I beg pardon for my bawldness—I did not see 'at his honour was here.

Lord T. Mr. Moody, your servant: I am glad to see you in London: I hope all the good family is well.

J. Moody. Thanks be praised, your honour, they are all in pretty good heart; tho'f we have had a power of crosses upo' the road.

Lady G. I hope my lady has had no hurt, Mr. Moody.

J. Moody. Noa, and please your ladyship, she was never in better humour: there's money enough stirring now.

Man. What has been the matter, John?

J. Moody. Why, we came up in such a hurry, you mun think that our tackle was not so tight as it should be.

Man. Come, tell us all——Pray, how do they travel?

J. Moody. Why, i' the awld coach, Measter; and 'cause my lady loves to do things handsome, to be sure, she would have a couple of cart-horses clapt to the four old geldings, that neighbours might see she went up to London in her coach and six; and so Giles Joulter, the ploughman, rides postilion.

Man. Very well! The journey sets out as it should do. [*Aside.*] What, do they bring all the children with them too?

J. Moody. Noa, noa, only the younk 'squoire, and Miss Jenny. The other foive are all out at board, at half-a-crown a head, a week, with John Growse, at Smoke-dunghill farm.

Man. Good again! a right English academy for younger children!

J. Moody. Anon, Sir. [*Not understanding him.*

Lady G. Poor souls! What will become of them?

J. Moody. Nay, nay, for that matter, Madam, they are in very good hands: Joan loves 'um as thof' they were all her own: for she was wet-nurse to every mother's babe of 'um—Ay, ay, they'll ne'er want for a bellyfull there?

Lady G. What simplicity!

Man. The Lud a' mercy upon all good folks! What work will these people make! [*Holding up his hands.*

Lord T. And when do you expect them here, John?

J. Moody. Why, we were in hopes to ha come yesterday, an' it had no' been that th' awld Weazlebelly horse tired: and then we were so cruelly loaden, that the two fore-wheels came crash down at once, in Waggon-rut lane, and there we lost four hours 'fore we could set things to rights again.

Man. So they bring all the baggage with the coach then?

J. Moody. Ay, ay, and good store on it there is—Why, my lady's geer alone were as much as filled four portmantel trunks, beside the great deal box that heavy Ralph and the monkey sit upon behind.

Lord T. Lady G. and Man. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady G. Well, Mr. Moody, and pray how many are there within the coach?

J. Moody. Why, there's my lady, and his worship, and the younk 'squoire, and Miss Jenny, and the fat lapdog, and my lady's maid, Mrs. Handy, and Doll Tripe, the cook, that's all—Only Doll puked a little with riding backward; so they hoisted her into the coach-box, and then her stomach was easy.

Lady G. Oh, I see them! I see them go by me. Ha, ha! [*Laughing.*

J. Moody. Then you mun think, Measter, there was some stowage for the belly as well as the back too; children are apt to be famished upon the road; so we had such cargoes of plum-cake, and baskets of tongues, and biscuits, and cheese, and cold boiled beef—And then, in case of sickness, bottles of cherry brandy, plague water, sack, tent, and strong beer so plenty, as made th' awld coach crack again. Mercy upon them! and send them all well to town, I say.

Man. Ay, and well out on't again, John.

J. Moody. Ods but, Measter! you're a wise man; and for that matter, so am I—Whoam's whoam, I say: I am sure we ha' got but little good e'er sin' we turned our backs on't. Nothing but mischief! Some devil's trick or other plagued us aw' the day lung. Crack, goes one thing! bawnce, goes another! Woa! says Roger—Then, sowse! we are all set fast in a slough. Whaw, cries Miss! Scream, go the maids! and bawl, just as thof' they were stuck. And so, mercy on us! this was the trade from morning to night. But my lady was in such a murrain haste to be here, that set out she would, thof' I told her it was Childermas day.

Man. These ladies, these ladies, John—

J. Moody. Ay, Measter! I ha' seen a little of them: and I find that the best—when she's mended, wont ha' much goodness to spare.

Lord T. Well, said, John. Ha, ha!

Man. I hope at least, you and your good woman agree still.

J. Moody. Ay, ay: much of a muchness. Bridget sticks to me: though as for her goodness—why, she was willing to come to London too—But hauld a bit! Noa, noa, says I; there may be mischief enough done without you.

Man. Why that was bravely spoken, John, and like a man.

J. Moody. Ah, weast heart! were measter but hawf the mon that I am—Ods wookers! thof' he'll speak stautly too, sometimes——But then he canno' hawld it—no, he canno' hawld it.

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Lord T. Lady G. and Man. Ha, ha, ha!

J. Moody. Ods flesh! but I mun hie me whoam; the coach will be coming every hour naw——but measter charged me to find your worship out: for he has hugey business with you: and will certainly wait upon you by that time he can put on a clean neckcloth.

Man. Oh, John! I'll wait upon him.

J. Moody. Why, you wonno' be so kind, wull ye?

Man. If you tell me where you lodge.

J. Moody. Just i' the street next to where your worship dwells, at the sign of the golden ball—It's gold all over; where they sell ribbons and flappits, and other sort of geer for gentlewomen.

Man. A milliner's?

J. Moody. Ay, ay, one Mrs. Motherly.—Waunds, she has a couple of clever girls there, stitching i' th' fore-room.

Man. Yes, yes, she's a woman of good business, no doubt on't—Who recommended that house to you, John?

J. Moody. The greatest good fortune in the world, sure; for as I was gaping about the streets, who should look out at the window there, but the fine gentleman that was always riding by our coach-side at York races—Count—Basset; ay, that's he.

Man. Basset? Oh, I remember! I know him by sight.

J. Moody. Well, to be sure, as civil a gentleman to see to—

Man. As any sharper in town. [*Aside.*

J. Moody. At York, he used to breakfast with my lady every morning.

Man. Yes, yes, and I suppose her ladyship will return his compliment here in town. [*Aside.*

J. Moody. Well, measter—

Lord T. My service to Sir Francis, and my lady, John.

Lady G. And mine, pray, Mr. Moody.

J. Moody. Ay, your honours; they'll be proud on't, I dare say.

Man. I'll bring my compliments myself: so, honest John—

J. Moody. Dear Measter Manly! the goodness of goodness bless and preserve you. [*Exit.*

Lord T. What a natural creature 'tis!

Lady G. Well, I can't but think John, in a wet afternoon in the country, must be very good company.

Lord T. Oh, the tramontane! If this were known at half the quadrille-tables in town, they would lay down their cards to laugh at you.

Lady G. And the minute they took them up again, they would do the same at the losers—But to let you see, that I think good company may sometimes want cards to keep them together; what think you, if we three sat soberly down to kill an hour at ombre?

Man. I shall be too hard for you, Madam.

Lady G. No matter; I shall have as much advantage of my lord as you have of me.

Lord T. Say you so, Madam; have at you then. Here! get the ombre table, and cards. [*Exit.*

Lady G. Come, Mr. Manly—I know you don't forgive me now.

Man. I don't know whether I ought to forgive your thinking so, Madam. Where do you imagine I could pass my time so agreeably?

Lady G. I'm sorry my lord is not here to take his share of the compliment—But he'll wonder what's become of us.

Man. I'll follow in a moment, Madam— [*Exit* Lady G.

It must be so—She sees I love her—yet with what unoffending decency she avoids an explanation! How amiable is every hour of her conduct! What a vile opinion have I had of the whole sex for these ten years past, which this sensible creature has recovered in less than one! Such a companion, sure, might compensate all the irksome disappointments that pride, folly, and falsehood, ever gave me!

Could women regulate like her their lives,
What halcyon days were in the gift of wives!
Vain rovers, then, might envy what they hate;
And only fools would mock the married state.
[*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—Mrs. Motherly's *House.*

Enter Count Basset *and* Mrs. Motherly.

Count B. I tell you there is not such a family in England for you. Do you think I would have gone out of your lodgings for any body that was not sure to make you easy, for the winter.

Moth. Nay, I see nothing against it, Sir, but the gentleman's being a parliament man; and when people may, as it were, think one impertinent, or be out of humour, you know, when a body comes to ask for one's own——

Count B. Pshaw! Pr'ythee never trouble thy head; his pay is as good as the bank—Why, he has above two thousand a year.

Moth. Alas-a-day, that's nothing! your people of ten thousand a year have ten thousand things to do with it.

Count B. Nay, if you are afraid of being out of your money, what do you think of going a little with me, Mrs. Motherly?

Moth. As how?

Count B. Why, I have a game in my hand, in which, if you'll croup me, that is, help me to play it, you shall go five hundred to nothing.

Moth. Say you so?—Why then I go, Sir—and now, pray let's see your game.

Count B. Look you, in one word, my cards lie thus—When I was down this summer at York, I happened to lodge in the same house with this knight's lady that's now coming to lodge with you.

Moth. Did you so, Sir?

Count B. And sometimes had the honour to breakfast, and pass an idle hour with her—

Moth. Very good; and here, I suppose, you would have the impudence to sup and be busy with her.

Count B. Pshaw! pr'ythee hear me.

Moth. Is this your game? I would not give sixpence for it. What! you have a passion for her pin-money—No, no, country ladies are not so flush of it!

Count B. Nay, if you wont have patience—

Moth. One had need to have a good deal, I am sure, to hear you talk at this rate. Is this your way of making my poor niece, Myrtilla, easy?

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Count B. Death! I shall do it still, if the woman will but let me speak—

Moth. Had you not a letter from her this morning?

Count B. I have it here in my pocket—this is it. [*Shows it, and puts it up again.*

Moth. Ay, but I don't find you have made any answer to it.

Count B. How the devil can I, if you wont hear me?

Moth. What, hear you talk of another woman!

Count B. Oh, lud! Oh, lud! I tell you, I'll make her fortune——Ounds, I'll marry her!

Moth. A likely matter! if you would not do it when she was a maid, your stomach is not so sharp set now, I presume.

Count B. Hey-day! why your head begins to turn, my dear! The devil! you did not think I proposed to marry her myself.

Moth. If you don't, who the devil do you think will marry her?

Count B. Why, a fool—

Moth. Humph! there may be sense in that—

Count B. Very good—One for t'other, then; if I can help her to a husband, why should you not come into my scheme of helping me to a wife?

Moth. Your pardon, Sir; ay, ay, in an honourable affair, you know you may command me—But pray, where is this blessed wife and husband to be had?

Count B. Now, have a little patience—You must know then, this country knight and his lady bring up in the coach with them their eldest son and a daughter, to teach them—to wash their faces and turn their toes out.

Moth. Good—

Count B. The son is an unlicked whelp, about sixteen, just taken from school; and begins to hanker after every wench in the family: the daughter, much of the same age; a pert, forward hussy, who, having eight thousand pounds left her by an old doting grandmother, seems to have a devilish mind to be doing in her way too.

Moth. And your design is to put her into business for life?

Count B. Look you, in short, Mrs. Motherly, we gentlemen, whose occasional chariots roll only upon the four aces, are liable, sometimes, you know, to have a wheel out of order; which, I confess, is so much my case at present, that my dapple greys are reduced to a pair of ambling chairmen. Now, if, with your assistance, I can whip up this young jade into a hackney-coach, I may chance, in a day or two after, to carry her, in my own chariot, *en famille*, to an opera. Now, what do you say to me?

Moth. Why, I shall not sleep for thinking of it. But how will you prevent the family smoking your design?

Count B. By renewing my addresses to the mother.

Moth. And how will the daughter like that, think you?

Count B. Very well——whilst it covers her own affair.

Moth. That's true——it must do——but, as you say, one for t'other, Sir; I stick to that——if you don't do my niece's business with the son, I'll blow you with the daughter, depend upon't.

Count B. It's a bet—pay as we go, I tell you; and the five hundred shall be staked in a third hand.

Moth. That's honest——But here comes my niece; shall we let her into the secret?

Count B. Time enough; may be I may touch upon it.

Enter MYRTILLA.

Moth. So niece, are all the rooms done out and the beds sheeted?

Myr. Yes, Madam; but Mr. Moody tells us, the lady always burns wax in her own chamber, and we have none in the house.

Moth. Odso! then I must beg your pardon, Count; this is a busy time, you know. [*Exit.*

Count B. Myrtilla, how dost thou do, child?

Myr. As well as a losing gamester can.

Count B. Why, what have you lost?

Myr. What I shall never recover; and what's worse, you that have won it, don't seem to be much the better for it.

Count B. Why, child, dost thou ever see any body overjoyed for winning a deep stake six months after 'tis over.

Myr. Would I had never played for it!

Count B. Pshaw! hang these melancholy thoughts! we may be friends still.

Myr. Dull ones.

Count B. Useful ones, perhaps—suppose I should help thee to a good husband?

Myr. I suppose you'll think any one good enough, that will take me off o' your hands.

Count B. What do you think of the young country 'squire, the heir of the family that's coming to lodge here?

Myr. How should I know what to think of him?

Count B. Nay, I only give you the hint, child: it may be worth your while, at least to look about you—Hark! what bustle's that without?

Enter MRS. MOTHERLY *in haste.*

Moth. Sir, Sir! the gentleman's coach is at the door; they are all come.

Count B. What, already?

Moth. They are just getting out!—Wont you step and lead in my lady! Do you be in the way, niece; I must run and receive them. [*Exit.*

Count B. And think of what I told you. [*Exit.*

Myr. Ay, ay; you have left me enough to think of as long as I live——A faithless fellow! I am sure I have been true to him; and for that only reason he wants to be rid of me. But while women are weak, men will be rogues; and for a bane to both their joys and ours, when our vanity indulges them in such innocent favours as make them adore us, we can never be well, till we grant them the very one that puts an end to their devotion—But here comes my aunt and the company.

MRS. MOTHERLY *returns, showing in* LADY WRONGHEAD, *led by* COUNT BASSET.

Moth. If your ladyship pleases to walk into this parlour, Madam, only for the present, 'till your servants have got all your things in.

Lady W. Well, dear Sir, this is so infinitely

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obliging——I protest it gives me pain, though, to turn you out of your lodgings thus.

Count B. No trouble in the least, Madam: we single fellows are soon moved: besides, Mrs. Motherly's my old acquaintance, and I could not be her hindrance.

Moth. The Count is so well bred, Madam, I dare say he would do a great deal more to accommodate your ladyship.

Lady W. Oh, dear Madam!—A good, well-bred sort of a woman. [*Apart to the* COUNT.

Count B. Oh, Madam! she is very much among people of quality; she is seldom without them in her house.

Lady W. Are there a good many people of quality in this street, Mrs. Motherly?

Moth. Now your ladyship is here, Madam, I don't believe there is a house without them.

Lady W. I am mighty glad of that; for, really, I think people of quality should always live among one another.

Count B. 'Tis what one would choose, indeed, Madam.

Lady W. Bless me! but where are the children all this while?

Moth. Sir Francis, Madam, I believe is taking care of them.

Sir F. [*Within.*] John Moody! stay you by the coach, and see all our things out—Come, children.

Moth. Here they are, Madam.

Enter SIR FRANCIS, 'SQUIRE RICHARD, *and* MISS JENNY.

Sir F. Well, Count, I mun say it, this was koynd, indeed.

Count B. Sir Francis, give me leave to bid you welcome to London.

Sir F. Psha! how dost do, mon?——Waunds, I'm glad to see thee! a good sort of a house this.

Count B. Is not that Master Richard?

Sir F. Ey, ey, that's young Hopeful—Why dost not baw, Dick?

'Squire R. So I do, feyther.

Count B. Sir, I'm glad to see you—I protest Mrs. Jane is grown so, I should not have known her.

Sir F. Come forward, Jenny.

Jenny. Sure, papa! do you think I don't know how to behave myself?

Count B. If I have permission to approach her, Sir Francis.

Jenny. Lord, Sir! I'm in such a frightful pickle— [*Salute.*

Count B. Every dress that's proper must become you, Madam—you have been a long journey.

Jenny. I hope you will see me in a better to-morrow, Sir.

[LADY WRONGHEAD *whispers* MRS MOTHERLY, *pointing to* MYRTILLA.

Moth. Only a niece of mine, Madam, that lives with me: she will be proud to give your ladyship any assistance in her power.

Lady W. A pretty sort of a young woman—Jenny, you two must be acquainted.

Jenny. Oh, mamma, I am never strange in a strange place. [*Salutes* MYRTILLA.

Myr. You do me a great deal of honour, Madam—Madam, your ladyship's welcome to London.

Jenny. Mamma, I like her prodigiously; she called me my ladyship.

'Squire R. Pray, mother, mayn't I be acquainted with her too?

Lady W. You, you clown! stay till you learn a little more breeding first.

Sir F. Ods heart, my Lady Wronghead! why do you baulk the lad? How should he ever learn breeding, if he does not put himself forward?

'Squire R. Why, ay, feyther, does mother think 'at I'd be uncivil to her?

Myr. Master has so much good humour, Madam, he would soon gain upon any body. [*He kisses* MYRTILLA.

'Squire R. Lo' you there, mother; and you would but be quiet, she and I should do well enough.

Lady W. Why, how now, sirrah! boys must not be familiar.

'Squire R. Why, an' I know nobody how the murrain mun I pass my time here, in a strange place? Naw you and I, and sister, forsooth, sometimes, in an afternoon, may play at one and thirty bone-ace, purely.

Jenny. Speak for yourself, Sir; d'ye think I play at such clownish games?

'Squire R. Why, and you wont, yo' ma' let it alone! then she and I, mayhap will have a bawt at all-fours, without you.

Sir F. Noa, noa, Dick, that wont do neither; you mun learn to make one at ombre, here, child.

Myr. If master pleases, I'll show him.

'Squire R. What! the Humber! Hoy-day! why does our river run to this tawn, feyther?

Sir F. Pooh! you silly tony! ombre is a geam at cards, that the better sort of people play three together at.

'Squire R. Nay, the moare the merrier I say; but sister is always so cross-grained—

Jenny. Lord! this boy is enough to deaf people——and one has really been stuffed up in a coach so long, that——Pray, Madam——could not I get a little powder for my hair?

Myr. If you please to come along with me, Madam. [*Exeunt* MYR. *and* JENNY.

'Squire R. What, has sister taken her away, naw! mess, I'll go and have a little game with 'em. [*Exit after them.*

Lady W. Well, Count, I hope you wont so far change your lodgings, but you will come, and be at home here sometimes?

Sir F. Ay, ay! pr'ythee, come and take a bit of mutton with us, naw and tan, when thou'st naught to do.

Count B. Well, Sir Francis, you shall find I'll make but very little ceremony.

Sir F. Why, ay now, that's hearty!

Moth. Will your ladyship please to refresh yourself with a dish of tea, after your fatigue? I think I have pretty good.

Lady W. If you please, Mrs. Motherly; but I believe we had best have it above stairs.

Moth. Very well, Madam: it shall be ready immediately. [*Exit* MRS. MOTHERLY.

Lady W. Wont you walk up, Sir?

Sir F. Moody!

Count B. Sha'n't we stay for Sir Francis, Madam?

Lady W. Lard! don't mind him: he will come if he likes it.

Sir F. Ay, ay! ne'er heed me—I have things to look after.

[*Exeunt* LADY WRONG. *and* COUNT BASSET.

Enter JOHN MOODY.

J. Moody. Did your worship want mub?

Sir F. Ay, is the coach cleared, and all our things in?

J. Moody. Aw but a few bandboxes, and the nook that's left o' the goose poy—But a plague on him, th' monkey has gin us the slip, I think—I suppose he's goon to see his relations; for ere looks to be a power of um in this tawn—but heavy Ralph is skawered after him.

Sir F. Why, let him go to the devil! no matter, and the hawnds had had him a month ago—but I wish the coach and horses had got safe to the inn! This is a sharp tawn, we mun look about us, here, John; therefore I would have you go along with Roger, and see that nobody runs away with them before they get to the stable.

J. Moody. Alas-a-day, Sir, I believe our awld cattle wont yeasly be run away with to-night—but howsomever, we'st ta' the best care we can of 'um, poor sawls.

Sir F. Well, well! make haste—

[MOODY *goes out and returns.*

J. Moody. Ods flesh! here's Master Manly come to wait upo' your worship.

Sir F. Where is he?

J. Moody. Just coming in at threshold.

Sir F. Then goa about your business.

[*Exit* MOODY.

Enter MANLY.

Cousin Manly! Sir, I am your very humble servant.

Man. I heard you were come, Sir Francis—and—

Sir F. Odsheart! this was kindly done of you naw.

Man. I wish you may think it so, cousin! for I confess, I should have been better pleased to have seen you in any other place.

Sir F. How soa, Sir?

Man. Nay, 'tis for your own sake; I'm not concerned.

Sir F. Look you, cousin: thof' I know you wish me well; yet I don't question I shall give you such weighty reasons for what I have done, that you will say, Sir, this is the wisest journey that ever I made in my life.

Man. I think it ought to be, cousin; for I believe you will find it the most expensive one—your election did not cost you a trifle, I suppose.

Sir F. Why ay! it's true! That—that did lick a little; but if a man's wise (and I han't fawn'd yet that I'm a fool,) there are ways, cousin, to lick one's self whole again.

Man. Nay, if you have that secret—

Sir F. Don't you be fearful, cousin—you'll find that I know something.

Man. If it be any thing for your good, I should be glad to know it too.

Sir F. In short, then, I have a friend in a corner; that has let me a little into what's what, at Westminster—that's one thing.

Man. Very well! but what good is that to do you?

Sir F. Why not me, as much as it does other folks?

Man. Other people, I doubt, have the advantage of different qualifications.

Sir F. Why, ay! there's it naw! you'll say that I have lived all my days i' the country—what then—I'm o' the quorum—I have been at sessions, and I have made speeches there! ay, and at vestry too—and mayhap they may find here—that I have brought my tongue up to town with me! D'ye take me naw?

Man. If I take your case right cousin, I am afraid the first occasion you will have for your eloquence here, will be, to show that you have any right to make use of it at all.

Sir F. How d'ye mean?

Man. That Sir John Worthland has lodged a petition against you.

Sir F. Petition! why, ay! then let it lie—we'll find a way to deal with that, I warrant you!—Why, you forget, cousin, Sir John's o' the wrong side, mon?

Man. I doubt, Sir Francis, that will do you but little service; for in cases very notorious, which I take yours to be, there is such a thing as a short day, and despatching them immediately.

Sir F. With all my heart! the sooner I send him home again, the better.

Man. And this is the scheme you have laid down to repair your fortune!

Sir F. In one word, cousin, I think it my duty! The Wrongheads have been a considerable family ever since England was England: and since the world knows I have talents wherewithal, they sha'n't say it's my fault, if I don't make as good a figure as any that ever were at the head on't.

Man. Nay, this project, as you have laid it, will come up to any thing your ancestors have done these five hundred years.

Sir F. And let me alone to work it; mayhap I hav'n't told you all, neither—

Man. You astonish me! what! and is it full as practicable as what you have told me?

Sir F. Ay, thof' I say it—every whit, cousin. You'll find that I have more irons i' the fire than one; I doan't come of a fool's errand!

Man. Very well.

Sir F. In a word, my wife has got a friend at court, as well as myself, and her dowghter Jenny is naw pretty well grown up—

Man. [*Aside.*]—And what in the devil's name, would he do with the dowdy?

Sir F. Naw, if I doan't lay in for a husband for her, mayhap, i' this tawn, she may be looking out for herself.

Man. Not unlikely.

Sir F. Therefore I have some thoughts of getting her to be maid of honour.

Man. [*Aside.*]——Oh! he has taken my breath away; but I must hear him out—Pray, Sir Francis, do you think her education has yet qualified her for a court!

Sir F. Why, the girl is a little too mettlesome, its true; but she has tongue enough: she woan't be dash't! Then she shall learn to daunce forthwith, and that will soon teach her how to stond still you know.

Man. Very well; but when she is thus accomplished, you must still wait for a vacancy.

Sir F. Why, I hope one has a good chance for that every day, cousin; for if I take it right, that's a post, that folks are not more willing to get into, than they are to get out of—It's like an orange tree, upon that accawnt—it will bear blossoms, and fruit that's ready to drop, at the same time.

Man. Well, Sir, you best know how to make good your pretensions! But, pray, where is my lady, and my young cousin? I should be glad to see them too.

Sir F. She is but just taking a dish of tea with

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the Count, and my landlady—I'll call her dawn.

Man. No, no, if she's engaged, I shall call again.

Sir F. Odsheart! but you mun see her naw, cousin; what! the best friend I have in the world!—Here, sweetheart! [*To a Servant without.*] pr'ythee, desire my lady and the gentleman to come dawn a bit; tell her here's cousin Manly come to wait upon her.

Man. Pray, Sir, who may the gentleman be?

Sir F. You mun know him to be sure; why, it's Count Basset.

Man. Oh! is it he?—Your family will be infinitely happy in his acquaintance.

Sir F. Troth! I think so too: he's the civillest man that ever I knew in my life—Why, here he would go out of his own lodgings, at an hour's warning, purely to oblige my family. Wasn't that kind, naw?

Man. Extremely civil—the family is in admirable hands already. [*Aside.*

Sir F. Then my lady likes him hugely—all the time of York races, she would never be without him.

Man. That was happy, indeed! and a prudent man, you know, should always take care that his wife may have innocent company.

Sir F. Why, ay! that's it! and I think there could not be such another!

Man. Why, truly, for her purpose, I think not.

Sir F. Only naw and tan, he—stonds a leetle too much upon ceremony; that's his fault.

Man. Oh, never fear! he'll mend that every day—Mercy on us! what a head he has! [*Aside.*

Sir F. So, here they come!

Enter LADY WRONGHEAD, COUNT BASSET, *and* MRS. MOTHERLY.

Lady W. Cousin Manly, this is infinitely obliging; I am extremely glad to see you.

Man. Your most obedient servant, Madam; I am glad to see your ladyship look so well, after your journey.

Lady W. Why, really, coming to London is apt to put a little more life in one's looks.

Man. Yet the way of living here, is very apt to deaden the complexion—and, give me leave to tell you, as a friend, Madam, you are come to the worst place in the world for a good woman to grow better in.

Lady W. Lord, cousin! how should people ever make any figure in life, that are always moaped up in the country.

Count B. Your ladyship certainly takes the thing in quite a right light, Madam. Mr. Manly, your humble servant—a hem.

Man. Familiar puppy. [*Aside.*] Sir, your most obedient—I must be civil to the rascal, to cover my suspicion of him. [*Aside.*

Count B. Was you at White's this morning, Sir?

Man. Yes, Sir, I just called in.

Count B. Pray—what—was there any thing done there?

Man. Much as usual, Sir; the same daily carcases, and the same crows about them.

Count B. The Demoivre-Baronet had a bloody tumble yesterday.

Man. I hope, Sir, you had your share of him.

Count B. No faith; I came in when it was all over—I think I just made a couple of bets with him, took up a cool hundred, and so went to the King's Arms.

Lady W. What a genteel easy manner he has. [*Aside.*

Man. A very hopeful acquaintance I have made here. [*Aside.*

Enter 'SQUIRE RICHARD, *with a wet brown paper on his face.*

Sir F. How naw, Dick; what's the matter with thy forehead, lad?

'Squire R. I ha' gotten a knock upon't.

Lady W. And how did you come by it, you heedless creature?

'Squire R. Why, I was but running after sister, and t'other young woman, into a little room just naw: and so with that they slapped the door full in my face, and gave me such a whurr here—I thought they had beaten my brains out; so I got a dab of wet brown paper here, to swage it a while.

Lady W. They served you right enough; will you never have done with your horse-play?

Sir F. Pooh, never heed it, lad; it will be well by to-morrow—the boy has a strong head.

Man. Yes, truly, his skull seems to be of a comfortable thickness. [*Aside.*

Sir F. Come, Dick, here's cousin Manly—Sir, this is your godson.

'Squire R. Honoured godfeyther, I crave leave to ask your blessing.

Man. Thou hast it, child—and if it will do thee any good, may it be to make thee, at least, as wise a man as thy father.

Enter MISS JENNY.

Lady W. Oh, here's my daughter too. Miss Jenny! don't you see your cousin, child?

Man. And as for thee my pretty dear—[*Salutes her.*] may'st thou be, at least, as good a woman as thy mother.

Jenny. I wish I may ever be so handsome, Sir.

Man. Ha, Miss Pert! Now that's a thought that seems to have been hatched in the girl on this side Highgate. [*Aside.*

Sir F. Her tongue is a little nimble, Sir.

Lady W. That's only from her country education, Sir Francis. You know she has been kept too long there—so I brought her to London, Sir, to learn a little more reserve and modesty.

Man. Oh, the best place in the world for it—every woman she meets will teach her something of it——There's the good gentlewoman of the house looks like a knowing person; even she perhaps will be so good as to show her a little London behaviour.

Moth. Alas, Sir, Miss wont stand long in need of my instructions.

Man. Then I dare say. What thou cans't teach her she will soon be mistress of. [*Aside.*

Moth. If she does, Sir, they shall always be at her service.

Lady W. Very obliging, indeed, Mrs. Motherly.

Sir F. Very kind and civil truly—I think we are got into a mighty good hawse here.

Man. Oh, yes, and very friendly company.

Count B. Humph! I'gad I dont like his looks—he seems a little smoky—I believe I had

as good brush off—If I stay, I don't know but he may ask me some odd questions.

Man. Well, Sir, I believe you and I do but hinder the family.

Count B. It's very true, Sir—I was just thinking of going—He don't care to leave me, I see: but it's no matter, we have time enough. [*Aside.*] And so, ladies, without ceremony, your humble servant.

[*Exit* COUNT BASSET, *and drops a letter.*

Lady W. Ha! what paper's this? Some billet-doux, I'll lay my life; but this is no place to examine it. [*Puts it in her pocket.*

Sir F. Why in such haste, cousin?

Man. Oh, my lady must have a great many affairs upon her hands, after such a journey.

Lady W. I believe, Sir, I shall not have much less every day, while I stay in this town, of one sort or other.

Man. Why truly, ladies seldom want employment here, Madam.

Jenny. And mamma did not come to it to be idle, Sir.

Man. Nor you neither, I dare say, my young mistress.

Jenny. I hope not, Sir.

Man. Ha, Miss Mettle!—Where are you going, Sir?

Sir F. Only to see you to the door, Sir.

Man. Oh, Sir Francis, I love to come and go without ceremony.

Sir F. Nay, Sir, I must do as you will have me—your humble servant. [*Exit* MANLY.

Jenny. This cousin Manly, papa, seems to be but of an odd sort of a crusty humour—I don't like him half so well as the count.

Sir F. Pooh! that's another thing, child—Cousin is a little proud indeed; but however you must always be civil to him, for he has a deal of money, and nobody knows who he may give it to.

Lady W. Psha! a fig for his money; you have so many projects of late about money, since you are a parliament man. What, we must make ourselves slaves to his impertinent humours, eight or ten years perhaps, in hopes to be his heirs, and then he will be just old enough to marry his maid.

Moth. Nay, for that matter, Madam, the town says he is going to be married already.

Sir F. Who! cousin Manly?

Lady W. To whom, pray?

Moth. Why, is it possible your ladyship should know nothing of it?—to my Lord Townly's sister, Lady Grace.

Lady W. Lady Grace!

Moth. Dear Madam, it has been in the newspapers!

Lady W. I don't like that, neither.

Sir F. Naw, I do; for then its likely it mayn't be true.

Lady W. [*Aside.*] If it is not too far gone: at least it may be worth one's while to throw a rub in his way.

'Squire R. Pray, feyther, haw lung will it be to supper?

Sir F. Odso! that's true; step to the cook, lad, and ask what she can get us.

Moth. If you please, Sir, I'll order one of my maids to show her where she may have any thing you have a mind to.

Sir F. Thank you kindly, Mrs. Motherly.

'Squire R. Ods-flesh! what is not it i' the hawse yet—I shall be famished—but hawld! I'll go and ask Doll, an there's none o' the goose poy left.

Sir F. Do so, and do'st hear, Dick—see if there's e'er a bottle o' the strong beer that came i' the coach with us—if there be, clap a toast in it, and bring it up.

'Squire R. With a little nutmeg and sugar, shawn't I, feyther.

Sir F. Ay, ay, as thee and I always drink it for breakfast—Go thy ways! and I'll fill a pipe i' the mean while.

[*Takes one from a pocket-case, and fills it.*

Exit. 'SQUIRE RICHARD.

Lady W. This boy is always thinking of his belly.

Sir F. Why, my dear, you may allow him to be a little hungry after his journey.

Lady W. Nay, even breed him your own way—He has been cramming in or out of the coach all this day, I am sure—I wish my poor girl could eat a quarter as much.

Jenny. Oh, as for that I could eat a great deal more mamma, but, then, mayhap, I should grow coarse, like him, and spoil my shape.

Lady W. Ay, so thou wouldst, my dear.

Enter 'SQUIRE RICHARD, *with a full tankard.*

'Squire R. Here, feyther, I ha' brought it—it's well I went as I did: for our Doll had just baked a toast, and was going to drink it herself.

Sir F. Why then, here's to thee, Dick!

[*Drinks.*

'Squire R. Thonk you, feyther.

Lady W. Lord, Sir Francis, I wonder you can encourage the boy to swill so much of that lubberly liquor—it's enough to make him quite stupid.

'Squire R. Why it never hurts me, mother; and I sleep like a hawnd after it. [*Drinks.*

Sir F. I am sure I ha' drunk it these thirty years, and by your leave, Madam, I don't know that I wan't wit: ha, ha!

Jenny. But you might have had a great deal more, papa, if you would have been governed by my mother.

Sir F. Daughter, he that is governed by his wife has no wit at all.

Jenny. Then I hope I shall marry a fool, Sir; for I love to govern dearly.

Sir F. You are too pert, child, it don't do well in a young woman.

Lady W. Pray, Sir Francis, don't snub her; she has a fine growing spirit, and if you check her so, you will make her as dull as her brother there.

'Squire R. [*After a long draught.*] Indeed, mother, I think my sister is too forward.

Jenny. You! you think I'm too forward! sure, brother mud! your head's too heavy to think of any thing but your belly.

Lady W. Well said, Miss, he's none of your master, though he is your elder brother.

'Squire R. No, nor she shawn't be my mistress, while she's younger sister.

Sir F. Well said, Dick! show them that stawt liquor makes a stawt heart, lad!

'Squire R. So I will, and I'll drink ageen, for all her. [*Drinks.*

Enter JOHN MOODY.

Sir F. So, John, how are the horses?

J. Moody. Troth, Sir, I ha' noa good opinion o' this town, It's made up o' mischief, I think.

Sir F. What's the matter naw?

J. Moody. Why, I'll tell your worship—before we were gotten to the street end, with the

coach, here, a great luggerheaded cart, with wheels as thick as a brick-wall, laid hawld on't, and has poo'd it aw to bits; crack, went the perch! down goes the coach! and whang says the glasses, all to shievers! Marcy upon us! and this be London, would we were aw weel in the country ageen!

Jenny. What have you to do, to wish us all in the country again, Mr. Lubber? I hope we shall not go into the country again these seven years, mamma; let twenty coaches be pulled to pieces.

Sir F. Hold your tongue, Jenny!—Was Roger in no fault in all this?

J. Moody. Noa, Sir, nor I, noather. Are not yow ashamed, says Roger to the carter, to do such an unkind thing by strangers? Noa, says he, you bumpkin. Sir, he did the thing on very purpose; and so the folks said that stood by—Very well, says Roger, yow shall see what our meyster will say to ye! Your meyster! says he; your meyster may kiss my ——and so he clapped his hand just there, and like your worship. Flesh! I thought they had better breeding in this town.

Sir F. I'll teach this rascal some, I'll warrant him! Odsbud! if I take him in hand, I'll play the devil with him.

'Squire R. Ay do, feyther; have him before the parliament.

Sir F. Odsbud! and so I will—I will make him know who I am! Where does he live?

J. Moody. I believe in London, Sir.

Sir F. What's the rascal's name?

J. Moody. I think I heard somebody call him Dick.

'Squire R. What, my hame!

Sir F. Where did he go?

J. Moody. Sir, he went home.

Sir F. Where's that?

J. Moody. By my troth, Sir, I doan't know! I heard him say he would cross the same street again to-morrow; and if we had a mind to stand in his way, he would pooll us over and over again.

Sir F. Will he so? Odzooks! get me a constable.

Lady W. Pooh! get you a good supper. Come, Sir Francis, don't put yourself in a heat for what can't be helped. Accidents will happen to people that travel abroad to see the world—For my part I think it's a mercy it was not overturned before we were all out on't.

Sir F. Why ay, that's true again, my dear.

Lady W. Therefore see to-morrow if we can buy one at second-hand, for present use; so bespeak a new one, and then all's easy.

J. Moody. Why, troth, Sir, I doan't think this could have held you above a day longer.

Sir F. D'ye think so, John?

J. Moody. Why you ha' had it ever since your worship were high sheriff.

Sir F. Why then go and see what Doll has got us for supper—and come and get off my boots. [*Exit*.

Lady W. In the mean time, Miss, do you step to Handy, and bid her get me some fresh night-clothes. [*Exit*.

Jenny. Yes, Mamma, and some for myself too. [*Exit*.

'Squire R. Ods-flesh! and what mun I do all alone?

I'll e'en seek out where t'other pratty Miss is,
And she and I'll go play at cards for kisses.
[*Exit*.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—Lord Townly's *House*.

Enter Lord Townly, *a* Servant *attending*.

Lord T. Who's there?

Ser. My lord.

Lord T. Bid them get dinner—Lady Grace, your servant.

Enter Lady Grace.

Lady G. What, is the house up already? My lady is not dressed yet.

Lord T. No matter—it's three o'clock—she may break my rest, but she shall not alter my hours.

Lady G. Nay, you need not fear that now, for she dines abroad.

Lord T. That, I suppose is only an excuse for her not being ready yet.

Lady G. No, upon my word, she is engaged in company.

Lord T. Where, pray?

Lady G. At my Lady Revel's; and you know they never dine till supper-time.

Lord T. No, truly——she is one of those orderly ladies, who never let the sun shine upon any of their vices!—But pr'ythee, sister, what humour is she in to-day?

Lady G. Oh, in tip-top spirits, I can assure you—she won a good deal last night.

Lord T. I know no difference between her winning or losing, while she continues her course of life.

Lady G. However, she is better in good humour than bad.

Lord T. Much alike: when she is in good humour, other people only are the better for it; when in a very ill humour, then indeed I seldom fail to have my share of her.

Lady G. Well, we wont talk of that now—Does any body dine here?

Lord T. Manly promised me—By the way, Madam, what do you think of his last conversation?

Lady G. I am a little at a stand about it.

Lord T. How so?

Lady G. Why—I don't know how he can ever have any thoughts of me, that could lay down such severe rules upon wives in my hearing.

Lord T. Did you think his rules unreasonable?

Lady G. I can't say I did; but he might have had a little more complaisance before me, at least.

Lord T. Complaisance is only a proof of good breeding: but his plainness was a certain proof of his honesty; nay, of his good opinion of you; for he would never have opened himself so freely, but in confidence that your good sense would not be disobliged at it.

Lady G. My good opinion of him, brother, has hitherto been guided by yours: but I have received a letter this morning, that shows him a very different man from what I thought him.

Lord T. A letter! from whom?

Lady G. That I don't know; but there it is. [*Gives a letter*.

Lord T. Pray, let's see. [*Reads*.] "The inclosed, Madam, fell accidentally into my

hands: if it no way concerns you, you will only have the trouble of reading this, from your sincere friend, and humble servant, Unknown," &c.

Lady G. And this was the inclosed.

[*Gives another.*

Lord T. [*Reads.*] "To Charles Manly, Esq. —Your manner of living with me of late, convinces me that I now grow as painful to you as to myself: but however, though you can love me no longer, I hope you will not let me live worse than I did, before I left an honest income, for the vain hopes of being ever yours. MYRTILLA DUPE.—P.S. 'Tis above four months since I received a shilling from you."

Lady G. What think you now?

Lord T. I am considering——

Lady G. You see it's directed to him—

Lord T. That's true; but the postcript seems to be a reproach that I think he is not capable of deserving.

Lady G. But who could have concern enough to send it to me?

Lord T. I have observed that these sort of letters from unknown friends generally come from secret enemies.

Lady G. What would you have me to do in it?

Lord T. What I think you ought to do—fairly show it to him, and say I advised you to it.

Lady G. Will not that have a very odd look from me?

Lord T. Not at all, if you use my name in it; if he is innocent, his impatience to appear so will discover his regard to you. If he is guilty, it will be the best way of preventing his addresses.

Lady G. But what pretence have I to put him out of countenance?

Lord T. I can't think there's any fear of that.

Lady G. Pray, what is it you do think then?

Lord T. Why, certainly, that it's much more probable this letter may be all an artifice, than that he is in the least concerned in it—

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Mr. Manly, my lord.

Lord T. Do you receive him, while I step a minute in to my lady. [*Exit.*

Enter MANLY.

Man. Madam, your most obedient; they told me my lord was here.

Lady G. He will be here presently; he is but just gone in to my sister.

Man. So, then my lady dines with us.

Lady G. No; she is engaged.

Man. I hope you are not of her party, Madam.

Lady G. Not till after dinner.

Man. And, pray, how may she have disposed of the rest of the day?

Lady G. Much as usual; she has visits till about eight; after that, till court time, she is to be at quadrille, at Mrs. Idle's; after the drawing-room, she takes a short supper with my lady Moonlight. And from thence they go together to my lord Noble's assembly.

Man. And are you to do all this with her, Madam?

Lady G. Only a few of the visits: I would, indeed, have drawn her to the play; but I doubt we have so much upon our hands, that it will not be practicable.

Man. But how can you forbear all the rest of it?

Lady G. There's no great merit in forbearing what one is not charmed with.

Man. And yet I have found that very difficult in my time.

Lady G. How do you mean?

Man. Why, I have passed a great deal of my life in the hurry of the ladies, though I was generally better pleased when I was at quiet without them.

Lady G. What induced you then to be with them?

Man. Idleness, and the fashion.

Lady G. No mistresses in the case?

Man. To speak honestly—yes——Being often in the toy-shop, there was no forbearing the baubles.

Lady G. And of course, I suppose, sometimes you were tempted to pay for them twice as much as they were worth.

Man. Why, really, where fancy only makes the choice, Madam, no wonder if we are generally bubbled in those sort of bargains; which, I confess, has been often my case: for I had constantly some coquette or other upon my hands, whom I could love, perhaps, just enough to put it in her power to plague me.

Lady G. And that's a power, I doubt, commonly made use of.

Man. The amours of a coquette, Madam, seldom have any other view; I look upon them and prudes to be nuisances just alike, though they seem very different; the first are always plaguing the men, and the others are always abusing the women.

Lady G. And yet both of them do it for the same vain ends; to establish a false character of being virtuous.

Man. Of being chaste, they mean; for they know no other virtue; and, upon the credit of that, they traffic in every thing else that's vicious. They (even against nature) keep their chastity, only because they find they have more power to do mischief with it, than they could possibly put in practice without it.

Lady G. Hold, Mr. Manly: I am afraid this severe opinion of the sex is owing to the ill choice you have made of your mistresses.

Man. In a great measure it may be so; but Madam, if both these characters are so odious, how vastly valuable is that woman, who has attained all they aim at, without the aid of the folly or vice of either!

Lady G. I believe those sort of women to be as scarce, Sir, as the men that believe there are any such: or that, allowing such, have virtue enough to deserve them.

Man. That could deserve them, then——had been a more favourable reflection.

Lady G. Nay, I speak only from my little experience; for (I'll be free with you, Mr. Manly) I don't know a man in the world that, in appearance, might better pretend to a woman of the first merit than yourself; and yet I have a reason in my hand, here, to think you have your failings.

Man. I have infinite, Madam; but I am sure the want of an implicit respect for you is not among the number—Pray, what is in your hand, Madam?

Lady G. Nay, Sir, I have no title to it, for the direction is to you. [*Gives him a letter.*

Man. To me! I don't remember the hand.

[*Reads to himself.*

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Lady G. I can't perceive any change of guilt in him; and his surprise seems natural. [*Aside.*]—Give me leave to tell you one thing by the way, Mr. Manly; that I should never have shown you this, but that my brother enjoined me to it.

Man. I take that to proceed from my lord's good opinion of me, Madam.

Lady G. I hope, at least, it will stand as an excuse for my taking this liberty.

Man. I never yet saw you do any thing, Madam, that wanted an excuse; and I hope you will not give me an instance to the contrary, by refusing the favour I am going to ask you.

Lady G. I don't believe I shall refuse any that you think proper to ask.

Man. Only this, Madam, to indulge me so far as to let me know how this letter came into your hands.

Lady G. Inclosed to me in this, without a name.

Man. If there be no secret in the contents, Madam.

Lady G. Why—there's an impertinent insinuation in it; but as I know your good sense will think it so too, I will venture to trust you.

Man. You'll oblige me, Madam.

[*He takes the other letter, and reads.*

Lady G. [*Aside.*] Now am I in the oddest situation; methinks our conversation grows terribly critical. This must produce something——Oh, lud! would it were over.

Man. Now, Madam, I begin to have some light into the poor project that is at the bottom of all this.

Lady G. I have no notion of what could be proposed by it.

Man. A little patience, Madam——First, as to the insinuation you mention—

Lady G. Oh! what is he going to say now? [*Aside.*

Man. Though my intimacy with my lord may have allowed my visits to have been very frequent here of late; yet, in such a talking town as this you must not wonder if a great many of those visits are placed to your account: and this taken for granted, I suppose, has been told to my Lady Wronghead, as a piece of news since her arrival, not improbably with many more imaginary circumstances.

Lady G. My Lady Wronghead!

Man. Ay, Madam; for I am positive this is her hand.

Lady G. What view could she have in writing it?

Man. To interrupt any treaty of marriage she may have heard I am engaged in; because, if I die without heirs, her family expects that some part of my estate may return to them again. But I hope she is so far mistaken, that if this letter has given you the least uneasiness—I shall think that the happiest moment of my life.

Lady G. That does not carry your usual complaisance, Mr. Manly!

Man. Yes, Madam, because I am sure I can convince you of my innocence.

Lady G. I am sure I have no right to inquire into it.

Man. Suppose you may not, Madam; yet you may very innocently have so much curiosity.

Lady G. With what an artful gentleness he steals into my opinion! [*Aside.*] Well, Sir, I wont pretend to have so little of the woman in me, as to want curiosity—But, pray, do you suppose, then, this Myrtilla is a real, or a fictitious name?

Man. Now I recollect, Madam, there is a young woman in the house where my Lady Wronghead lodges, that I heard somebody call Myrtilla: this letter may be written by her—But how it came directed to me, I confess, is a mystery, that, before I ever presume to see your ladyship again, I think myself obliged in honour to find out. [*Going.*

Lady G. Mr. Manly—you are not going?

Man. 'Tis but to the next street, Madam; I shall be back in ten minutes.

Lady G. Nay, but dinner's just coming up.

Man. Madam, I can neither eat nor rest till I see an end of this affair.

Lady G. But this is so odd! why should any silly curiosity of mine drive you away?

Man. Since you wont suffer it to be yours, Madam; then it shall be only to satisfy my own curiosity— [*Exit.*

Lady G. Well—and now, what am I to think of all this? Or suppose an indifferent person had heard every word we have said to one another, what would they have thought on't? Would it have been very absurd to conclude, he is seriously inclined to pass the rest of his life with me?—I hope not—for I am sure the case is terribly clear on my side; and why may not I, without vanity, suppose my—unaccountable somewhat—has done as much execution upon him?—Why—because he never told me so—nay, he has not so much as mentioned the word love, or ever said one civil thing to my person—well—but he has said a thousand to my good opinion, and has certainly got it—had he spoke first to my person, he had paid a very ill compliment to my understanding—I should have thought him impertinent, and never have troubled my head about him; but as he has managed the matter, at least I am sure of one thing, that let his thoughts be what they will, I shall never trouble my head about any other man as long as I live.

Enter Mrs. Trusty.

Well, Mrs. Trusty, is my sister dressed yet?

Trusty. Yes, Madam; but my lord has been courting her so, I think, till they are both out of humour.

Lady G. How so?

Trusty. Why, it began, Madam, with his lordship's desiring her ladyship to dine at home to-day—upon which my lady said she could not be ready; upon that my lord ordered them to stay the dinner; and then my lady ordered the coach: then my lord took her short, and said he had ordered the coachman to set up: then my lady made him a great courtesy, and said she would wait till his lordship's horses had dined, and was mighty pleasant: but, for fear of the worst, Madam, she whispered me—to get her chair ready. [*Exit.*

Lady G. Oh, here they come! and, by their looks, seem a little unfit for company. [*Exit.*

Enter Lady Townly, Lord Townly *following.*

Lady T. Well, look you, my lord, I can bear it no longer; nothing still but about my faults, my faults: an agreeable subject, truly.

Lord T. Why, Madam, if you wont hear of them, how can I ever hope to see you mend them?

Lady T. Why, I don't intend to mend them—I can't mend them—you know I have tried to do it a hundred times—and—it hurts me so—I can't bear it.

Lord T. And I, Madam, can't bear this daily licentious abuse of your time and character.

Lady T. Abuse! astonishing! when the universe knows, I am never in better company than when I am doing what I have a mind to. But to see this world! that men can never get over that silly spirit of contradiction—Why, but last Thursday, now—there you wisely amended one of my faults, as you call them—you insisted upon my not going to the masquerade—and, pray, what was the consequence? Was not I as cross as the devil all the night after? Was not I forced to get company at home? And was it not almost three o'clock in the morning before I was able to come to myself again?—And then the fault is not mended neither—for next time I shall only have twice the inclination to go: so that all this mending, and mending, you see, is but darning an old ruffle, to make it worse than it was before.

Lord T. Well, the manner of women's living of late is insupportable; and one way or other—

Lady T. It's to be mended, I suppose: why, so it may: but then, my dear lord, you must give one time—and when things are at worst, you know, they may mend themselves, ha, ha!

Lord T. Madam, I am not in a humour now to trifle.

Lady T. Why, then, my lord, one word of fair argument—to talk with you in your own way, now—You complain of my late hours, and I of your early ones—so far we are even, you'll allow—but pray, which gives us the best figure in the eye of the polite world; my active, spirited three in the morning, or your dull, drowsy eleven at night! Now, I think, one has the air of a woman of quality, and t'other of a plodding mechanic, that goes to bed betimes, that he may rise early to open his shop—Faugh!

Lord T. Fy, fy, Madam! is this your way of reasoning? 'tis time to wake you, then—'Tis not your ill hours alone that disturb me, but as often the ill company that occasions those ill hours.

Lady T. Sure I don't understand you now, my lord; what ill company do I keep?

Lord T. Why, at best, women that lose their money, and men that win it; or, perhaps, men that are voluntary bubbles at one game, in hopes a lady will give them fair play at another. Then, that unavoidable mixture with known rakes, concealed thieves, and sharpers in embroidery—or, what to me is still more shocking, that herd of familiar, chattering crop-eared coxcombs, who are so often like monkeys, there would be no knowing them asunder, but that their tails hang from their heads, and the monkey's grows where it should do.

Lady T. And a husband must give eminent proof of his sense, that thinks their powder-puffs dangerous.

Lord T. Their being fools, Madam, is not always the husband's security; or, if it were, fortune sometimes gives them advantages that might make a thinking woman tremble.

Lady T. What do you mean?

Lord T. That women sometimes lose more than they are able to pay; and if a creditor be a little pressing, the lady may be reduced to try, if, instead of gold, the gentleman will accept of a trinket.

Lady T. My lord, you grow scurrilous; you'll make me hate you. I'll have you to know, I keep company with the politest people in town, and the assemblies I frequent are full of such.

Lord T. So are the churches—now and then.

Lady T. My friends frequent them too, as well as the assemblies.

Lord T. Yes, and would do it oftener, if a groom of the chambers were there allowed to furnish cards to the company.

Lady T. I see what you drive at all this while: you would lay an imputation on my fame, to cover your own avarice. I might take any pleasures, I find, that were not expensive.

Lord T. Have a care, Madam; don't let me think you only value your chastity to make me reproachable for not indulging you in every thing else that's vicious—I, Madam, have a reputation, too, to guard, that's dear to me as yours—The follies of an ungoverned wife may make the wisest man uneasy; but 'tis his own fault, if ever they make him contemptible.

Lady T. My lord—you would make a woman mad!

Lord T. You'd make a man a fool.

Lady T. If Heaven has made you otherwise, that wont be in my power.

Lord T. Whatever may be in your inclination, Madam, I'll prevent your making me a beggar, at least.

Lady T. A beggar! Crœsus! I'm out of patience!—I wont come home till four to-morrow morning.

Lord T. That may be, Madam; but I'll order the doors to be locked at twelve.

Lady T. Then I wont come home till to-morrow night.

Lord T. Then, Madam, you shall never come home again. [*Exit.*

Lady T. What does he mean? I never heard such a word from him in my life before? The man always used to have manners in his worst humours. There's something, that I don't see, at the bottom of all this—But his head's always upon some impracticable scheme or other; so I wont trouble mine any longer about him.—Mr. Manly, your servant.

Enter MANLY.

Man. I ask pardon for intrusion, Madam; but I hope my business with my lord will excuse it.

Lady T. I believe you'll find him in the next room, Sir.

Man. Will you give me leave, Madam?

Lady T. Sir—you have my leave, though you were a lady.

Man. [*Aside.*] What a well-bred age do we live in. [*Exit.*

Enter LADY GRACE.

Lady T. Oh, my dear Lady Grace! how could you leave me so unmercifully alone all this while?

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Lady G. I thought my lord had been with you.

Lady T. Why, yes—and therefore I wanted your relief; for he has been in such a flutter here—

Lady G. Bless me! for what?

Lady T. Only our usual breakfast; we have each of us had our dish of matrimonial comfort this morning—We have been charming company.

Lady G. I am mighty glad of it: sure it must be a vast happiness, when a man and wife can give themselves the same turn of conversation!

Lady T. Oh, the prettiest thing in the world!

Lady G. Now I should be afraid, that where two people are every day together so, they must often be in want of something to talk upon.

Lady T. Oh, my dear, you are the most mistaken in the world! married people have things to talk of, child, that never enter into the imagination of others.—Why, here's my lord and I, now, we have not been married above two short years, you know, and we have already eight or ten things constantly in bank, that, whenever we want company, we can take up any one of them for two hours together, and the subject never the flatter; nay, if we have occasion for it, it will be as fresh the next day, too, as it was the first hour it entertained us.

Lady G. Certainly that must be vastly pretty.

Lady T. Oh, there's no life like it! Why, t'other day for example, when you dined abroad, my lord and I, after a pretty cheerful *tête à tête* meal, sat us down by the fireside in an easy, indolent, pick-tooth way, for about a quarter of an hour, as if we had not thought of any other's being in the room—At last, stretching himself, and yawning—My dear—says he—aw—you came home very late last night—'Twas but just turned of two, says I—I was in bed—aw—by eleven—says he—So you are every night, says I—Well, says he, I am amazed you can sit up so late—How can you be amazed, says I, at a thing that happens so often?—Upon which we entered into a conversation—and though this is a point has entertained above fifty times already, we always find so many pretty new things to say upon it, that I believe in my soul it will last as long as we live.

Lady G. But pray, in such sort of family dialogues, (though extremely well for passing the time) don't there, now and then, enter some little witty sort of bitterness?

Lady T. Oh, yes! which does not do amiss at all. A smart repartee, with a zest of recrimination at the head of it, makes the prettiest sherbet. Ay, ay, if we did not mix a little of the acid with it, a matrimonial society would be so luscious, that nothing but an old liquorish prude would be able to bear it.

Lady G. Well—certainly you have the most elegant taste—

Lady T. Though to tell you the truth, my dear, I rather think we squeezed a little too much lemon into it, this bout; for it grew so sour at last, that—I think—I almost told him he was a fool—and he, again—talked something oddly—of turning me out of doors.

Lady G. Oh, have a care of that!

Lady T. Nay, if he should, I may thank my own wise father for that—

Lady G. How so?

Lady T. Why—when my good lord first opened his honourable trenches before me, my unaccountable papa, in whose hands I then was, gave me up at discretion.

Lady G. How do you mean?

Lady T. He said, the wives of this age were come to that pass, that he would not desire even his own daughter should be trusted with pin-money; so that my whole train of separate inclinations are left entirely at the mercy of a husband's odd humours.

Lady G. Why, that, indeed, is enough to make a woman of spirit look about her.

Lady T. Nay, but to be serious, my dear; what would you really have a woman to do, in my case?

Lady G. Why—if I had a sober husband, as you have, I would make myself the happiest wife in the world, by being as sober as he.

Lady T. Oh, you wicked thing! how can you tease one at this rate, when you know he is so very sober, that (except giving me money) there is not one thing in the world he can do to please me. And I, at the same time, partly by nature, and partly, perhaps, by keeping the best company, do, with my soul, love almost every thing he hates. I dote upon assemblies; my heart bounds at a ball; and at an opera—I expire. Then I love play to distraction; cards enchant me—and dice—put me out of my little wits—Dear, dear hazard!—Oh, what a flow of spirits it gives one!—Do you never play at hazard, child?

Lady G. Oh, never! I don't think it sits well upon women; there's something so masculine, so much the air of a rake in it. You see how it makes the men swear and curse; and when a woman is thrown into the same passion—why—

Lady T. That's very true; one is a little put to it, sometimes, not to make use of the same words to express it.

Lady G. Well, and, upon ill luck, pray what words are you really forced to make use of?

Lady T. Why, upon a very hard case, indeed, when a sad wrong word is rising, just to one's tongue's end, I give a great gulp—and swallow it.

Lady G. Well—and is not that enough to make you forswear play as long as you live?

Lady T. Oh, yes; I have forsworn it.

Lady G. Seriously?

Lady T. Solemnly! a thousand times; but then one is constantly forsworn.

Lady G. And how can you answer that?

Lady T. My dear, what we say when we are losers, we look upon to be no more binding than a lover's oath, or a great man's promise. But I beg pardon, child; I should not lead you so far into the world; you are a prude, and design to live soberly.

Lady G. Why, I confess, my nature and my education do, in a good degree, incline me that way.

Lady T. Well, how a woman of spirit (for you don't want that, child,) can dream of living soberly, is to me inconceivable; for you will marry, I suppose.

Lady G. I can't tell but I may.

Lady T. And wont you live in town?

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Lady G. Half the year, I should like it very well.

Lady T. My stars! and you would really live in London half the year to be sober in it?

Lady G. Why not?

Lady T. Why can't you as well go and be sober in the country?

Lady G. So I would—'t'other half year.

Lady T. And pray, what comfortable scheme of life would you form, now, for your summer and winter sober entertainments?

Lady G. A scheme that I think might very well content us.

Lady T. Oh, of all things, let's hear it.

Lady G. Why, in summer, I could pass my leisure hours in riding, in reading, walking by a canal, or sitting at the end of it under a great tree; in dressing, dining, chatting with an agreeable friend; perhaps hearing a little music, taking a dish of tea, or a game of cards, soberly; managing my family, looking into its accounts, playing with my children, if I had any, or in a thousand other innocent amusements—soberly; and, possibly, by these means, I might induce my husband to be as sober as myself.—

Lady T. Well, my dear, thou art an astonishing creature! For sure such primitive antediluvian notions of life have not been in any head these thousand years—Under a great tree! Oh, my soul!—But I beg we may have the sober town-scheme too—for I am charmed with the country one!—

Lady G. You shall, and I'll try to stick to my sobriety there too.

Lady T. Well, though I'm sure it will give me the vapours, I must hear it however.

Lady G. Why then, for fear of your fainting, Madam, I will first so far come into the fashion, that I would never be dressed out of it—but still it should be soberly: for I can't think it any disgrace to a woman of my private fortune, not to wear her lace as fine as the wedding-suit of a first dutchess. Though there is one extravagance I would venture to come up to.

Lady T. Ay, now for it—

Lady G. I would every day be as clean as a bride.

Lady T. Why, the men say, that's a great tep to be made one—Well, now you are dressed—Pray, let's see to what purpose?

Lady G. I would visit—that is, my real friends; but as little for form as possible.—I would go to court; sometimes to an assembly, nay, play at quadrille—soberly: I would see all the good plays; and, because 'tis the fashion, now and then an opera—but I would not expire there, for fear I should never go again: and, lastly, I can't say, but for curiosity, if I liked my company, I might be drawn in once to a masquerade; and this, I think, is as far as any woman can go—soberly.

Lady T. Well if it had not been for that last piece of sobriety, I was just going to call for some surfeit water.

Lady G. Why, don't you think, with the farther aid of breakfasting, dining, and taking the air, supping, sleeping, not to say a word of devotion, the four and twenty hours might roll over in a tolerable manner?

Lady T. Tolerable! Deplorable! Why, child all you purpose is but to endure life, now I want to enjoy it—

Enter MRS. TRUSTY.

Trusty. Madam, your ladyship's chair is ready.

Lady T. Have the footmen their white flambeaux yet? For last night I was poisoned.

Trusty. Yes, Madam; there were some come in this morning. [*Exit.*

Lady T. My dear, you will excuse me; but you know my time is so precious—

Lady G. That I beg I may not hinder your least enjoyment of it.

Lady T. You will call on me at Lady Revel's?

Lady G. Certainly.

Lady T. But I am so afraid it will break into your scheme, my dear.

Lady G. When it does, I will—soberly break from you.

Lady T. Why then, 'till we meet again, dear sister, I wish you all tolerable happiness. [*Exit.*

Lady G. There she goes—Dash! into her stream of pleasures! Poor woman, she is really a fine creature; and sometimes infinitely agreeable; nay, take her out of the madness of this town, rational in her notions and easy to live with: but she is so borne down by this torrent of vanity in vogue, she thinks every hour of her life is lost that she does not lead at the head of it. What it will end in, I tremble to imagine!—Ha, my brother, and Manly with him! I guess what they have been talking of—I shall hear it in my turn, I suppose, but it wont become me to be inquisitive. [*Exit.*

Enter LORD TOWNLY *and* MANLY.

Lord T. I did not think my Lady Wronghead had such a notable brain: though I can't say she was so very wise, in trusting this silly girl, you call Myrtilla, with the secret.

Man. No, my lord, you mistake me; had the girl been in the secret, perhaps I had never come at it myself.

Lord T. Why, I thought you said the girl writ this letter to you, and that my Lady Wronghead sent it inclosed to my sister.

Man. If you please to give me leave, my lord—the fact is thus—This inclosed letter to Lady Grace was a real original one, written by this girl, to the count we have been talking of: the count drops it, and my Lady Wronghead finds it: then only changing the cover, she seals it up as a letter of business, just written by herself, to me; and pretending to be in a hurry, gets this innocent girl to write the direction for her.

Lord T. Oh, then the girl did not know she was superscribing a *billet-doux* of her own to you?

Man. No my lord; for when I first questioned her about the direction, she owned it immediately: but when I showed her that her letter to the count was within it, and told her how it came into my hands, the poor creature was amazed, and thought herself betrayed both by the count and my lady—in short, upon this discovery, the girl and I grew so gracious, that she has let me into some transactions, in my Lady Wronghead's family, which, with my having a careful eye over them, may prevent the ruin of it.

Lord T. You are very generous, to be solicitous for a lady that has given you so much uneasiness.

Man. But I will be most unmercifully revenged of her; for I will do her the greatest friendship in the world—against her will.

Lord T. What an uncommon philosophy art thou master of, to make even thy malice a vartue!

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Man. Yet, my lord, I assure you, there is no one action of my life gives me more pleasure than your approbation of it.

Lord T. Dear Charles! my heart's impatient 'till thou art nearer to me: and, as a proof that I have long wished thee so, while your daily conduct has chosen rather to deserve than ask my sister's favour, I have been as secretly industrious to make her sensible of your merit: and since on this occasion you have opened your whole heart to me, 'tis now with equal pleasure I assure you we have both succeeded—she is as firmly yours—

Man. Impossible! you flatter me!

Lord T. I'm glad you think it flattery: but she herself shall prove it none: she dines with us alone: when the servants are withdrawn, I'll open a conversation, that shall excuse my leaving you together—Oh, Charles! had I, like thee, been cautious in my choice, what melancholy hours had this heart avoided.

Man. No more of that, I beg my lord—

Lord T. But 'twill, at least, be some relief to my anxiety, however barren of content the state has been to me, to see so near a friend and sister happy in it. Your harmony of life will be an instance how much the choice of temper is preferable to beauty.

While your soft hours in mutual kindness move,
You'll reach by virtue what I lost by love.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—Mrs. Motherly's *House.*

Enter Mrs. Motherly, *meeting* Myrtilla.

Moth. So, niece! where is it possible you can have been these six hours?

Myr. Oh, Madam, I have such a terrible story to tell you!

Moth. A story! Ods my life! What have you done with the count's note of five hundred pounds I sent you about? Is it safe! Is it good? Is it security!

Myr. Yes, yes, it is safe: but for its goodness—Mercy on us! I have been in a fair way to be hanged about it!

Moth. The dickens! has the rogue of a count played us another trick then?

Myr. You shall hear, Madam: when I came to Mr. Cash, the banker's, and showed him his note for five hundred pounds, payable to the count, or order, in two months—he looked earnestly upon it, and desired me to step into the inner room, while he examined his books—after I had stayed about ten minutes, he came in to me—claps the door, and charges me with a constable for forgery.

Moth. Ah, poor soul! and how didst thou get off?

Myr. While I was ready to sink in this condition I begged him to have a little patience, 'till I could send for Mr. Manly, whom he knew to be a gentleman of worth and honour, and who, I was sure, would convince him whatever fraud might be in the note, that I was myself an innocent abused woman—and, as, good luck would have it, in less than half an hour Mr. Manly came—so, without mincing the matter I fairly told him upon what design the count had lodged that note in your hands, and, in short, laid open the whole scheme he had drawn us into to make our fortune.

Moth. The devil you did!

Myr. Why, how do you think it was possible I could any otherwise make Mr. Manly my friend, to help me out of the scrape I was in? To conclude, he soon made Mr. Cash easy, and sent away the constable: nay, farther, he promised me, if I would trust the note in his hands, he would take care it should be fully paid before it was due, and at the same time would give me an ample revenge upon the count; so that all you have to consider now, Madam, is whether you think yourself safer in the count's hands, or Mr. Manly's.

Moth. Nay, nay, child; there is no choice in the matter! Mr. Manly may be a friend indeed, if any thing in our power can make him so.

Myr. Well, Madam; and now, pray, how stand matters at home here? What has the count done with the ladies?

Moth. Why, every thing he has a mind to do, by this time, I suppose. He is in as high favour with miss, as he is with my lady.

Myr. Pray, where are the ladies?

Moth. Rattling abroad in their own coach, and the well-bred count along with them: they have been scouring all the shops in the town over, buying fine things and new clothes from morning to night; they have made one voyage already, and have brought home such a cargo of bawbles and trumpery—Mercy on the poor man that's to pay for them!

Myr. Did not the young 'Squire go with them!

Moth. No, no; miss said, truly he would but disgrace their party: so they even left him asleep by the kitchen fire.

Myr. Has not he asked after me all this while? For I had a sort of an assignation with him.

Moth. Oh, yes, he has been in a bitter taking about it. At last his disappointment grew so uneasy, that he fairly fell a crying: so to quiet him, I sent one of the maids and John Moody abroad with him to show him—the lions, and the monument. Ods me! there he is just come home again—You may have business with him—so, I'll even turn you together. [*Exit.*

Enter Squire Richard.

'Squire R. Soah, soah, Mrs. Myrtilla, where han yaw been aw this day, forsooth?

Myr. Nay, if you go to that, 'Squire, where have you been, pray!

'Squire R. Why, when I fun' at yaw were no loikly to come whoam, I were ready to hong my sel—so John Moody, and I, and one o' your lasses, have been—Lord knows where—a seeing o' the soights.

Myr. Well, and pray what have you seen, Sir?

Squire R. Flesh! I cawnt tell, not I—seen every thing, I think. First, there we went o' top o' the what d'ye call it? there, the great huge stone post, up the rawnd and rawnd stairs, that twine and twine about just an as thof it was a cork-screw.

Myr. Oh, the monument; well, and was it not a fine sight from the top?

'Squire R. Sight, miss! I know no'—I saw nought but smoke and brick housen, and steeple tops—then there was such a mortal tingtang of bells, and rumbling of carts and coaches; and then the folks under one looked so small, and made such a hum and buz, it put me in

mind of my mother's great glass bee-hive in our garden in the country.

Myr. I think, master, you give a very good account of it.

'Squire R. Ay, but I did not like it: for my head—my head—began to turn—so I trundled me down stairs agen like a round trencher.

Myr. Well, but this was not all you saw, I suppose?

'Squire R. Noa, noa, we went after that, and saw the lions, and I liked them better by hawlf; they are pure grim devils; hoh, hoh! I touke a stick, and gave one o' them such a poke o' the noase—I believe he would ha' snapped my head off, an' he could have got me. Hoh, hoh, hoh!

Myr. Well, master, when you and I go abroad, I'll show you prettier sights than these—there's a masquerade to-morrow.

'Squire R. Oh, laud, ay! they say that's a pure thing for Merry Andrews, and these sort of comical mummers—and the count tells me, that there lads and lasses may jig their tails, and eat, and drink, without grudging, all night lung.

Myr. What would you say now, if I should get you a ticket, and go along with you?

'Squire R. Ah, dear!

Myr. But have a care, 'squire, the fine ladies there are terribly tempting; look well to your heart, or, ads me! they'll whip it up in the trip of a minute.

'Squire R. Ay, but they cawnt thoa—soa let 'um look to themselves, an' ony of 'um falls in love with me—mayhap they had as good be quiet.

Myr. Why sure you would not refuse a fine lady, would you?

'Squire R. Ay, but I would though, unless it were—one as I know of.

Myr. Oh, oh, then you have left your heart in the country, I find?

'Squire R. Noa, noa, my heart—eh—my heart e'nt awt o' this room.

Myr. I am glad you have it about you however.

'Squire R. Nay, mayhap, not soa noather, somebody else may have it, 'at you little think of.

Myr. I can't imagine what you mean!

'Squire R. Noa! why doan't you know how many folks there is in this room, naw?

Myr. Very fine, master, I see you have learned the town gallantry already.

'Squire R. Why, doan't you believe 'at I have a kindness for you then?

Myr. Fy, fy, master, how you talk; beside, you are too young to think of a wife.

'Squire R. Ay! but I caunt help thinking o' yow, for all that.

Myr. How! why sure, Sir, you don't pretend to think of me in a dishonourable way?

'Squire R. Nay, that's as you see good—I did no' think 'at you would ha' thowght of me for a husband, mayhap; unless I had means in my own hands; and feyther allows me but haulf a crown a week, as yet awhile.

Myr. Oh, when I like any body, 'tis not want of money will make me refuse them.

'Squire R. Well, that's just my mind now: for an' I like a girl, miss, I would take her in her smock.

Myr. Ay, master, now you speak like a man of honour; this shows something of a true heart in you.

'Squire R. Ay, and a true heart you'll find me; try when you will.

Myr. Hush, hush, here's your papa come home, and my 'aunt with him.

'Squire R. A devil rive 'em, what do they come naw for?

Myr. When you and I get to the masquerade, you shall see what I'll say to you.

'Squire R. Well, hands upon't, then—

Myr. There—

'Squire R. One buss, and a bargain. [*Kisses her.*] Ads wauntlikins; as soft and plump as a marrow-pudding.

[*Exeunt severally.*

Enter SIR FRANCIS WRONGHEAD, *and* MRS. MOTHERLY.

Sir F. What! my wife and daughter abroad, say you?

Moth. Oh, dear Sir, they have been mighty busy all the day long; they just came home to snap up a short dinner, and so went out again.

Sir F. Well, well, I sha'n't stay supper for 'em, I can tell 'em that; for ods heart, I have nothing in me, but a toast and tankard, since morning.

Moth. I am afraid, Sir, these late parliament hours wont agree with you.

Sir F. Why, truly, Mrs. Motherly, they don't do right with us country gentlemen; to lose one meal out of three, is a hard tax upon a good stomach.

Moth. It is so indeed, Sir.

Sir F. But howsomever, Mrs. Motherly, when we consider, that what we suffer is for the good of our country—

Moth. Why truly, Sir, that is something.

Sir F. Oh, there's a great deal to be said for't—the good of one's country is above all things—A true-hearted Englishman thinks nothing too much for it—I have heard of some honest gentlemen so very zealous, that for the good of their country——they would sometimes go to dinner at midnight.

Moth. Oh, that goodness of 'em! sure their country must have a vast esteem for them?

Sir F. So they have, Mrs. Motherly; they are so respected when they come home to their boroughs after a session, and so beloved—that their country will come and dine with them every day in the week.

Moth. Dear me! What a fine thing 'tis to be so populous!

Sir F. It is a great comfort indeed! and, I can assure you, you are a good sensible woman, Mrs. Motherly.

Moth. Oh, dear Sir, your honour's pleased to compliment.

Sir F. No, no, I see you know how to value people of consequence.

Moth. Good lack! here's company, Sir; will you give me leave to get you a little something till the ladies come home, Sir?

Sir F. Why, troth, I don't think it would be amiss.

Moth. It shall be done in a moment, Sir.

[*Exit.*

Enter MANLY.

Man. Sir Francis, your servant.

Sir F. Cousin Manly.

Man. I am come to see how the family goes on here.

Sir F. Troth! all as busy as bees; I have

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been upon the wing ever since eight o'clock this morning.

Man. By your early hour, then, I suppose you have been making your court to some of the great men.

Sir F. Why, faith! you have hit it, Sir——I was advised to lose no time: so I e'en went straight forward to one great man I had never seen in all my life before.

Man. Right, that was doing business: but who had you got to introduce you?

Sir F. Why, nobody—I remember I had heard a wise man say—My son, be bold—so troth! I introduced myself.

Man. As how, pray?

Sir F. Why, thus—Look ye—Please your lordship, says I, I am Sir Francis Wronghead, of Bumper-hall, and member of parliament for the borough of Guzzledown——Sir, your humble servant, says my lord; thof I have not the honour to know your person, I have heard you are a very honest gentleman, and I am glad your borough has made choice of so worthy a representative; and so, says he, Sir Francis, have you any service to command me? Naw, cousin, those last words, you may be sure gave me no small encouragement. And thof I know, Sir, you have no extraordinary opinion of my parts, yet I believe, you wont say I missed it naw!

Man. Well, I hope I shall have no cause.

Sir F. So, when I found him so courteous—My lord, says I, I did not think to ha' troubled your lordship with business upon my first visit: but, since your lordship is pleased not to stand upon ceremony,—why truly, says I, I think naw is as good as another time.

Man. Right! there you pushed him home.

Sir F. Ay, ay, I had a mind to let him see that I was none of your mealy-mouthed ones.

Man. Very good.

Sir F. So, in short, my lord, says I, I have a good estate—but—a—it's a little awt at elbows: and as I desire to serve my king as well as my country, I shall be very willing to accept of a place at court.

Man. So this was making short work on't.

Sir F. I'cod! I shot him flying, cousin: some of your hawf-witted ones, naw, would ha' hummed and hawed, and dangled a month or two after him, before they durst open their mouths about a place, and, mayhap, not ha' got it at last neither.

Man. Oh, I'm glad you're so sure on't—

Sir F. You shall hear, cousin——Sir Francis says my lord, pray what sort of a place may you ha' turned your thoughts upon? My lord, says I, beggars must not be choosers; but ony place, says I, about a thousand a-year, will be well enough to be doing with, till something better falls in—for I thowght it would not look well to stond haggling with him at first.

Man. No, no, your business was to get footing any way.

Sir F. Right! ay, there's it! ay cousin, I see you know the world.

Man. Yes, yes, one sees more of it every day—Well but what said my lord to all this?

Sir F. Sir Francis, says he, I shall be glad to serve you any way that lies in my power; so he gave me a squeeze by the hand, as much as to say, give yourself no trouble——I'll do your business; with that he turned himself abawt to somebody with a coloured ribbon across here, that looked, in my thowghts, as if he came for a place too.

Man. Ha! so, upon these hopes, you are to make your fortune!

Sir F. Why, do you think there is any doubt of it, Sir?

Man. Oh, no, I have not the least doubt about it—for just as you have done, I made my fortune ten years ago.

Sir F. Why, I never knew you had a place, cousin.

Man. Nor I neither, upon my faith, cousin. But you, perhaps, may have better fortune: for I suppose my lord has heard of what importance you were in the debate to-day—You have been since down at the house, I presume.

Sir F. Oh, yes! I would not neglect the house for ever so much.

Man. Well, and pray what have they done there?

Sir F. Why, troth! I can't well tell you what they have done; but I can tell you what I did, and I think pretty well in the main, only I happened to make a little mistake at last, indeed.

Man. How was that?

Sir F. Why, they were all got there into a sort of puzzling debate about the good of the nation—and I were always for that, you know——but, in short, the arguments were so long-winded o' both sides, that waunds! I did not well understand 'um: hawsomever I was convinced, and so resolved to vote right, according to my conscience—so when they came to put the question, as they call it,—I don't know haw 'twas—but I doubt I cried ay! when I should ha' cried no!

Man. How came that about?

Sir F. Why, by a mistake, as I tell you—for there was a good-humoured sort of a gentleman, one Mr. Totherside, I think they call him, that sat next me, as soon as I had cried ay! gives me a hearty shake by the hand. Sir, says he, you are a man of honour, and a true Englishman; and I should be proud to be better acquainted with you—and so, with that he takes me by the sleeve, along with the crowd into the lobby—so I knew nowght—but, odds-flesh! I was got o' the wrung side the post—for I were told, afterwards, I should have staid were I was.

Man. And so, if you had not quite made your fortune before, you have clinched it now!——Ah, thou head of the Wrongheads! [*Aside.*

Sir F. Odso! here's my lady come home at last—I hope, cousin, you will be so kind as to take a family supper with us?

Man. Another time, Sir Francis; but to-night I am engaged.

Enter LADY WRONGHEAD, MISS JENNY, *and* COUNT BASSET

Lady W. Cousin, your servant; I hope you will pardon my rudeness; but we have really been in such a continual hurry here, that we have not had a leisure moment to return your last visit.

Man. Oh, Madam, I am a man of no ceremony; you see that has not hindered my coming again.

Lady W. You are infinitely obliging; but I'll redeem my credit with you.

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Man. At your own time, Madam.

Count B. I must say that for Mr. Manly, Madam, if making people easy is the rule of good-breeding, he is certainly the best bred man in the world.

Man. Soh! I am not to drop my acquaintance, I find—[*Aside.*] I am afraid, Sir, I shall grow vain upon your good opinion.

Count B. I don't know that, Sir; but I am sure what you are pleased to say makes me so.

Man. The most impudent modesty that ever I met with. [*Aside.*

Lady W. Lard! how ready his wit is. [*Aside.*

Sir F. Don't you think, Sir, the count's a very fine gentleman! [*Apart.*

Man. Oh, among the ladies certainly. [*Apart.*

Sir F. And yet he's as stout as a lion. Waund, he'll storm any thing. [*Apart.*

Man. Will he so? Why then, Sir, take care of your citadel. [*Apart.*

Sir F. Ah, you are a wag, cousin. [*Apart.*

Man. I hope, ladies, the town air continues to agree with you.

Jenny. Oh, perfectly well, Sir! We have been abroad in our new coach all day long—and we have bought an ocean of fine things. And to-morrow we go to the masquerade; and on Friday to the play; and on Saturday to the opera; and on Sunday we are to be at the what-d'ye you call it—assembly, and see the ladies play at quadrille, and piquet, and ombre, and hazard, and basset; and on Monday we are to see the king, and so on Tuesday—

Lady W. Hold, hold, miss! you must not let your tongue run so fast, child—you forget; you know I brought you hither to learn modesty.

Man. Yes, yes! and she is improved with a vengeance— [*Aside.*

Jenny. Lawrd! mamma, I am sure I did not say any harm; and if one must not speak in one's turn, one may be kept under as long as one lives, for aught I see.

Lady W. O' my conscience, this girl grows so headstrong—

Sir F. Ay, ay, there's your fine growing spirit for you! now tack it dawn an' you can.

Jenny. All I said, papa, was only to entertain my cousin Manly.

Man. My pretty dear, I am mightily obliged to you.

Jenny. Look you there now, Madam.

Lady W. Hold your tongue, I say.

Jenny. [*Turning away and glowting.*] I declare it, I wont bear it: she is always snubbing me before you, Sir!—I know why she does it well enough-- [*Aside to the* COUNT.

Count B. Hush, hush, my dear! don't be uneasy at that; she'll suspect us. [*Aside.*

Jenny. Let her suspect, what do I care—I don't know but I have as much reason to suspect as she—though perhaps I am not so afraid of her.

Count B. [*Aside.*] I'gad, If I don't keep a tight hand on my tit, here, she'll run away with my project before I can bring it to bear.

Lady W. [*Aside.*] Perpetually hanging upon him! the young harlot is certainly in love with him; but I must not let them see I think so—and yet I can't bear it. Upon my life, count, you'll spoil that forward girl—you should not encourage her so.

Count B. Pardon me, Madam, I was only advising her to observe what your ladyship said to her.

Man. Yes, truly, her observations have been something particular. [*Aside.*

Count B. In one word, Madam, she has a jealousy of your ladyship, and I am forced to encourage her to blind it; 'twill be better to take no notice of her behaviour to me. [*Apart*

Lady W. You are right, I will be more cautious. [*Apart.*

Count B. To-morrow, at the masquerade, we may lose her. [*Apart.*

Lady W. We shall be observed; I'll send you a note, and settle that affair—go on with the girl, and don't mind me. [*Apart.*

Count B. I have been taking your part, my little angel.

Lady W. Jenny! come hither, child—you must not be so hasty, my dear—I only advise you for your good.

Jenny. Yes, mamma; but when I am told of a thing before company, it always makes me worse, you know.

Man. If I have any skill in the fair sex, miss and her mamma have only quarrelled because they are both of a mind. This facetious count seems to have made a very genteel step into the family. [*Aside*

Enter MYRTILLA. MANLY *talks apart with her.*

Lady W. Well, Sir Francis, and what news have you brought us from Westminster to-day!

Sir F. News, Madam! I'cod! I have some—and such as does not come every day, I can tell you—a word in your ear—I have got a promise of a place at court of a thousand pawnd a year already.

Lady W. Have you so, Sir? And pray who may you thank for't? Now, who is in the right? Is not this better than throwing so much away after a stinking pack of fox-hounds in the country? Now your family may be the better for it.

Sir F. Nay, that's what persuaded me to come up, my dove.

Lady W. Mighty well—come—let me have another hundred pound then.

Sir F. Another, child? Waunds! you have had one hundred this morning, pray what's become of that, my dear?

Lady W. What's become of it? Why I'll show you, my love! Jenny, have you the bills about you.

Jenny. Yes, mamma.

Lady W. What's become of it! Why laid out, my dear, with fifty more to it, that I was forced to borrow of the count here.

Jenny. Yes, indeed, papa, and that would hardly do neither—There's the account.

Sir F. [*Turning over the bills.*] Let's see! let's see! what the devil have we got here?

Man. Then you have sounded your aunt, you say, and she readily comes into all I proposed to you. [*Apart.*

Myr. Sir, I'll answer, with my life, she is most thankfully yours in every article. She mightily desires to see you, Sir. [*Apart.*

Man. I am going home, directly; bring her to my house in half an hour; and if she makes good what you tell me, you shall both find your account in it. [*Apart.*

Myr. Sir, she shall not fail you. [*Apart.*

Sir F. Ods-life! Madam, here's nothing but

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toys and trinkets, and fans, and clock stockings, by wholesale.

Lady W. There's nothing but what's proper, and for your credit, Sir Francis—Nay, you see I am so good a housewife that in necessaries for myself I have scarce laid out a shilling.

Sir F. No, by my troth, so it seems; for the devil o' one thing's here that I can see you have any occasion for.

Lady W. My dear, do you think I came hither to live out of the fashion? why, the greatest distinction of a fine lady in this town is in the variety of pretty things that she has no occasion for.

Jenny. Sure, papa, could you imagine, that women of quality wanted nothing but stays and petticoats?

Lady W. Now, that is so like him!

Man. So the family comes on finely. [*Aside.*

Lady W. Lard, if men were always to govern, what dowdies they would reduce their wives to!

Sir F. A hundred pound in the morning, and want another afore night! Waunds and fire! the lord mayor of London could not hold at this rate!

Man. Oh, do you feel it, Sir? [*Aside.*

Lady W. My dear, you seem uneasy; let me have the hundred pound, and compose yourself.

Sir F. Compose the devil, Madam! why do you consider what a hundred pounds 'a day comes to in a year.

Lady W. My life, if I account with you from one day to another, that's really all my head is able to bear at a time——But I'll tell you what I consider—I consider that my advice has got you a thousand pound a-year this morning—That now, methinks, you might consider, Sir.

Sir F. A thousand a-year! Waunds, Madam, but I have not touched a penny of it yet!

Man. Nor ever will, I'll answer for him. [*Aside.*

Enter 'SQUIRE RICHARD.

'Squire R. Feyther, an' you doan't come quickly, the meat will be coaled: and I'd fain pick a bit with you.

Lady W. Bless me, Sir Francis! you are not going to sup by yourself.

Sir F. No, but I'm going to dine by myself, and that's pretty near the matter, Madam.

Lady W. Had not you as good stay a little, my dear. We shall all eat in half an hour; and I was thinking to ask my cousin Manly to take a family morsel with us.

Sir F. Nay, for my cousin's good company, I don't care if I ride a day's journey without baiting.

Man. By no means, Sir Francis. I am going upon a little business.

Sir F. Well, Sir, I know you don't love compliments.

Man. You'll excuse me, Madam——

Lady W. Since you have business, Sir—— [*Exit* MANLY.

Enter MRS. MOTHERLY.

Oh, Mrs. Motherly, you were saying this morning you had some very fine lace to show me—can't I see it now. [SIR FRANCIS *stares.*

Moth. Why, really, Madam, I had made a sort of a promise to let the Countess of Nicely have the first sight of it for the birth-day: but your ladyship—

Lady W. Oh, I die if I don't see it before her.

'Squire R. Woan't you go, feyther. [*Apart.*

Sir F. Waunds, lad! I shall ha' noa stomach at this rate. [*Apart.*

Moth. Well, Madam, though I say it, 'tis the sweetest pattern that ever came over—and for fineness—no cobweb comes up to it.

Sir F. Ods guts and gizzard, Madam? Lace as fine as a cobweb! why, what the devil's that to cost now?

Moth. Nay, if Sir Francis does not like of it, Madam——

Lady W. He like it! Dear Mrs. Motherly, he is not to wear it.

Sir F. Flesh, Madam! but I suppose I am to pay for it.

Lady W. No doubt on't! Think of your thousand a-year, and who got it you; go, eat your dinner, and be thankful, go! [*Driving him to the door.*] Come, Mrs. Motherly.

[*Exit* LADY WRONGHEAD *with* MRS. MOTHERLY.

Sir F. Very fine! so here I mun fast, till I am almost famished, for the good of my country, while Madam is laying me out a hundred pound a-day in lace as fine as a cobweb, for the honour of my family! Ods-flesh! things had need go well at this rate.

'Squire R. Nay, nay—come, feyther.

[*Exeunt* SIR F. *and* 'SQUIRE R.

Enter MRS. MOTHERLY.

Moth. Madam, my lady desires you and the count will please to come and assist her fancy in some of the new laces.

Count B. We'll wait upon her.

[*Exit* MRS. MOTH.

Jenny. So, I told you how it was! you see she can't bear to leave us together.

Count B. No matter, my dear: you know she has asked me to stay supper; so when your papa and she are a-bed, Mrs. Myrtilla will let me into the house again; then you may steal into her chamber, and we'll have a pretty sneaker of punch together.

Myr. Ay, ay, Madam, you may command me in any thing.

Jenny. Well, that will be pure!

Count B. But you had best go to her alone, my life: it will look better if I come after you.

Jenny. Ay, so it will: and to-morrow, you know, at the masquerade. And then!—

SONG.

Oh, I'll have a husband! ay, marry;
For why should I longer tarry,
For why should I longer tarry,
Than other brisk girls have done?
For if I stay till I grow gray,
They'll call me old maid, and fusty old jade;
So I'll no longer tarry;
But I'll have a husband, ay, marry,
If money can buy me one.

My mother, she says, I'm too coming;
And still in my ears she is drumming.
And still in my ears she is drumming,

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That I such vain thoughts should shun.
My sisters they cry, oh, fy! and, oh, fy!
But yet I can see, they're as coming as me;
So let me have husbands in plenty:
I'd rather have twenty times twenty,
Than die an old maid undone. [*Exit.*

Myr. So, Sir, am not I very commode to you?

Count B. Well, child, and don't you find your account in it? Did not I tell you we might still be of use to one another?

Myr. Well, but how stands your affair with Miss in the main?

Count B. Oh, she's mad for the masquerade! It drives like a nail; we want nothing now but a parson to clinch it. Did not your aunt say she could get one at a short warning?

Myr. Yes, yes, my lord Townly's chaplain is her cousin, you know; he'll do your business and mine at the same time.

Count B. Oh, it's true; but where shall we appoint him?

Myr. Why, you know my lady Townly's house is always open to the masks upon a ball-night, before they go to the Haymarket.

Count B. Good.

Myr. Now the doctor purposes we should all come thither in our habits, and when the rooms are full, we may steal up into his chamber, he says, and there—crack—he'll give us all canonical commission to go to bed together.

Count B. Admirable! Well, the devil fetch me, if I shall not be heartily glad to see thee well-settled, child.

Myr. And may the black gentleman tuck me under his arm at the same time, if I shall not think myself obliged to you as long as I live.

Count B. One kiss for old acquaintance sake—I'gad I shall want to be busy again.

Myr. Oh, you'll have one shortly will find you employment—but I must run to my 'squire.

Count B. And I to the ladies—so your humble servant, sweet Mrs. Wronghead.

Myr. Yours, as in duty bound, most noble Count Basset. [*Exit.*

Count B. Why, ay! count! That title has been of some use to me indeed; not that I have any more pretence to it than I have to a blue ribband. Yet, I make a pretty considerable figure in life with it. I have lolled in my own chariot, dealt at assemblies, dined with ambassadors, and made one at quadrille with the first women of quality——But—*tempora mutantur*—since that damned squadron at White's have left me out of their last secret, I am reduced to trade upon my own stock of industry, and make my last push upon a wife. If my card comes up right (which, I think, cannot fail), I shall once more cut a figure, and cock my hat in the face of the best of them: for since our modern men of fortune are grown wise enough to be sharpers, I think sharpers are fools that don't take up the airs of men of quality. [*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—Lord Townly's *House.*

Enter Manly *and* Lady Grace.

Man. There's something, Madam, hangs upon your mind to-day: is it unfit to trust me with it?

Lady G. Since you will know—my sister, then—unhappy woman!

Man. What of her?

Lady G. I fear is on the brink of ruin.

Man. I am sorry for it—what has happened?

Lady G. Nothing so very new; but the continual repetition of it at last has raised my brother to an intemperance that I tremble at.

Man. Have they had any words upon it?

Lady G. He has not seen her since yesterday.

Man. What! not at home all night?

Lady G. About five this morning, in she came; but with such looks, and such an equipage of misfortunes at her heels—What can become of her?

Man. Has not my lord seen her, say you?

Lady G. No; he changed his bed last night—I sat with him alone till twelve, in expectation of her: but when the clock struck, he started from his chair, and grew incensed to that degree, that had I not, almost on my knees, dissuaded him, he had ordered the doors, that instant, to have been locked against her.

Man. How terrible is his situation, when the most justifiable severities he can use against her are liable to be the mirth of all the dissolute card-tables in town.

Lady G. 'Tis that, I know, has made him bear so long: but you that feel for him, Mr. Manly, will assist him to support his honour, and, if possible, preserve his quiet; therefore I beg you don't leave the house, till one or both of them can be wrought into better temper.

Man. How amiable is this concern in you!

Lady G. For Heaven's sake, don't mind me; but think on something to preserve us all.

Man. I shall not take the merit of obeying your commands, Madam, to serve my lord—But pray, Madam, let me into all that has passed since yesternight.

Lady G. When my intreaties had prevailed upon my lord, not to make a story for the town, by so public a violence, as shutting her at once out of his doors, he ordered an apartment next to my lady's to be made ready for him—While that was doing, I tried by all the little arts I was mistress of, to amuse him into temper; in short, a silent grief was all I could reduce him to—On this, we took our leaves, and parted to our repose: what his was, I imagine by my own; for I ne'er closed my eyes. About five, as I told you, I heard my lady at the door; so I slipped on a gown, and sat almost an hour with her in her own chamber.

Man. What said she, when she did not find my lord there?

Lady G. Oh! so far from being shocked or alarmed at it, that she blessed the occasion; and said that, in her condition, the chat of a female friend was far preferable to the best husband's company in the world.

Man. Where has she spirits to support so much insensibility?

Lady G. Nay, 'tis incredible; for though she had lost every shilling she had in the world, and stretched her credit even to breaking, she rallied her own follies with such vivacity, and painted the penance she knows she must undergo for them in such ridiculous lights, that had not my concern for a brother been too

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strong for her wit, she had almost disarmed my anger.

Man. Her mind may have another cast by this time: the most flagrant dispositions have their hours of anguish, which their pride conceals from company. But pray, Madam, how could she avoid coming down to dine?

Lady G. Oh! she took care of that before she went to bed, by ordering her woman, whenever she was asked for, to say she was not well.

Man. You have seen her since she was up, I presume?

Lady G. Up! I question whether she be awake yet.

Man. Terrible; what a figure does she make now! That nature should throw away so much beauty upon a creature, to make such a slatternly use of it!

Lady G. Oh, fy! there is not a more elegant beauty in town, when she is dressed.

Man. In my eye, Madam, she that's early dressed has ten times her elegance.

Lady G. But she wont be long now, I believe; for I think I see her chocolate going up—Mrs. Trusty—a hem!

MRS. TRUSTY *comes to the door.*

Man. [*Aside.*] Five o'clock in the afternoon for a lady of quality's breakfast is an elegant hour indeed! which to show her more polite way of living too, I presume she eats in her bed.

Lady G. [*To* MRS. TRUSTY.] And when she is up, I would be glad she would let me come to her toilet—That's all, Mrs. Trusty.

Trusty. I will be sure to let her ladyship know, Madam. [*Exit.*

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Sir Francis Wronghead, Sir, desires to speak with you.

Man. He comes unseasonably—What shall I do with him?

Lady G. Oh, see him, by all means! we shall have time enough; in the mean while, I'll step in and have an eye upon my brother. Nay, don't mind me—you have business—

Man. You must be obeyed—

[*Retreating, while* LADY GRACE *goes out.* Desire Sir Francis to walk in—[*Exit* SERVANT.] I suppose, by this time, his wise worship begins to find that the balance of his journey to London is on the wrong side.

Enter SIR FRANCIS WRONGHEAD.

Sir Francis, your servant. How came I by the favour of this extraordinary visit?

Sir F. Ah, cousin!

Man. Why that sorrowful face, man?

Sir F. I have no friend alive but you—

Man. I am sorry for that—But what's the matter?

Sir F. I have played the fool by this journey, I see now—for my bitter wife—

Man. What of her?

Sir F. Is playing the devil.

Man. Why, truly, that's a part that most of your fine ladies begin with, as soon as they get to London.

Sir F. If I'm a living man, cousin, she has made away with above two hundred and fifty pounds since yesterday morning.

Man. Ha! I see a good housewife will do a great deal of work in a little time.

Sir F. Work, do they call it! Fine work, indeed!

Man. Well, but how do you mean made away with it? What, she has laid it out, may be—but I suppose you have an account of it.

Sir F. Yes, yes, I have had the account, indeed; but I mun needs say, it's a very sorry one.

Man. Pray, let's hear!

Sir F. Why, first I let her have a hundred and fifty, to get things handsome about her, to let the world see that I was somebody; and thought that sum was very genteel.

Man. Indeed I think so; and in the country might have served her a twelvemonth.

Sir F. Why, so it might—but here, in this fine town, forsooth, it could not get through four-and-twenty hours—for in half that time it was all squandered away in bawbles, and new-fashioned trumpery.

Man. Oh! for ladies in London, Sir Francis, all this might be necessary.

Sir F. Noa, there's the plague on't; the devil o' one useful thing do I see for it, but two pair of laced shoes, and those stond me in three pounds three shillings a pair, too.

Man. Dear Sir, this is nothing; Why we have city wives here, that while their good man is selling three pennyworth of sugar, will give you twenty pounds for a short apron.

Sir F. Mercy on us, what a mortal poor devil is a husband!

Man. Well, but I hope you have nothing else to complain of.

Sir F. Ah, would I could say so too!—but there's another hundred behind yet, that goes more to my heart than all that went before it.

Man. And how might that be disposed of?

Sir F. Troth, I am almost ashamed to tell you.

Man. Out with it.

Sir F. Why, she has been at an assembly.

Man. What, since I saw you! I thought you had all supped at home last night.

Sir F. Why so we did—and all as merry as grigs—I'cod my heart was so open that I tossed another hundred into her apron, to go out early this morning with—But the cloth was no sooner taken away, than in comes my lady Townly here, (who, between you and I—mum—has had the devil to pay yonder) with another rantipole dame of quality, and out they must have her, they said, to introduce her at my lady Noble's assembly forsooth.—A few words, you may be sure, made the bargain—so, bawnce! and away they drive, as if the devil had got into the coach-box—so, about four or five in the morning—home comes Madam, with her eyes a foot deep in her head—and my poor hundred pounds left behind her at the hazard-table.

Man. All lost at dice!

Sir F. Every shilling——among a parcel of pigtail puppies, and pale faced women of quality.

Man. But pray, Sir Francis, how came you after you found her so ill an housewife of one sum so soon to trust her with another?

Sir F. Why, truly, I mun say, that was partly my own fault: for if I had not been a blab of my tongue, I believe that last hundred might have been saved.

Man. How so?

Sir F. Why, like an owl, as I was, out of

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goodwill, forsooth, partly to keep her in humour, I must needs tell her of the thousand pounds a-year I had just got the promise of——I'cod, she lays her claws upon it that moment—said it was all owing to her advice, and truly she would have her share on't.

Man. What, before you had it yourself?

Sir F. Why, ay, that's what I told her—My dear, said I, mayhap, I mayn't receive the first quarter on't this half year.

Man. Sir Francis, I have heard you with a great deal of patience, and I really feel compassion for you.

Sir F. Truly, and well you may, cousin; for I don't see that my wife's goodness is a bit the better for bringing to London.

Man. If you remember, I gave you a hint of it.

Sir F. Why, ay, it's true, you did so; but the devil himself could not have believed she would have rid post to him.

Man. Sir, if you stay but a fortnight in this town, you will every day see hundreds as fast upon the gallop as she is.

Sir F. Ah, this London is a base place indeed——Waunds, if things should happen to go wrong with me at Westminster, at this rate, how the devil shall I keep out of a jail?

Man. Why, truly, there seems to be but one way to avoid it.

Sir F. Ah, would you could tell me that, cousin!

Man. The way lies plain before you, Sir; the same road that brought you hither, will carry you safe home again.

Sir F. Ods-flesh, cousin! what! and leave a thousand pounds a year behind me?

Man. Pooh, pooh! leave any thing behind you, but your family, and you are a saver by it.

Sir F. Ay, but consider, cousin, what a scurvy figure shall I make in the country, if I come dawn withawt it.

Man. You will make a much more lamentable figure in a jail without it.

Sir F. Mayhap 'at yow have no great opinion of it then, cousin?

Man. Sir Francis, to do you the service of a real friend, I must speak very plainly to you: you don't yet see half the ruin that's before you.

Sir F. Good-lack! how may you mean, cousin?

Man. In one word, your whole affairs stand thus—In a week you'll lose your seat at Westminster—In a fortnight my lady will run you into jail, by keeping the best company—In four and twenty hours your daughter will run away with a sharper, because she han't been used to better company: and your son will steal into marriage with a cast mistress, because he has not been used to any company at all.

Sir F. I' th' name of goodness, why should you think all this?

Man. Because I have proof of it; in short, I know so much of their secrets, that if all this is not prevented to-night, it will be out of your power to do it to-morrow morning.

Sir F. Mercy upon us! you frighten me——Well, Sir, I will be governed by you: but what am I to do in this case?

Man. I have not time here to give you proper instructions; but about eight this evening, I'll call at your lodgings, and there you shall have full conviction how much I have it at heart to serve you.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Sir, my lord desires to speak with you.

Man. I'll wait upon him.

Sir F. Well, then, I'll go straight home, naw.

Man. At eight depend upon me.

Sir F. Ah, dear cousin! I shall be bound to you as long as I live. Mercy deliver us what a terrible journey have I made on't.

[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.—Opens to a Dressing-room.

LADY TOWNLY, *as just up, walks to her Toilet, leaning on* MRS. TRUSTY.

Trusty. Dear Madam, what should make your ladyship so out of order?

Lady T. How is it possible to be well, where one is killed for want of sleep?

Trusty. Dear me! it was so long before you rung, Madam, I was in hopes your ladyship had been finely composed.

Lady T. Composed! why I have lain in an inn here; this house is worse than an inn with ten-stage coaches: what between my lord's impertinent people of business in a morning, and the intolerable thick shoes of footmen at noon, one has not a wink all night.

Trusty. Indeed, Madam, it's a great pity my lord can't be persuaded into the hours of people of quality—though I must say that, Madam, your ladyship is certainly the best matrimonial manager in town.

Lady T. Oh, you are quite mistaken, Trusty! I manage very ill; for, notwithstanding all the power I have, by never being over-fond of my lord—yet I want money infinitely oftener than he is willing to give it me.

Trusty. Ah! if his lordship could but be brought to play himself, Madam, then he might feel what it is to want money.

Lady T. Oh, don't talk of it! do you know that I am undone, Trusty?

Trusty. Mercy forbid, Madam!

Lady T. Broke, ruined, plundered!——stripped, even to a confiscation of my last guinea!

Trusty. You don't tell me so, Madam?

Lady T. And where to raise ten pounds in the world—What is to be done, Trusty?

Trusty. Truly, I wish I were wise enough to tell you, Madam: but may be your ladyship may have a run of better fortune upon some of the good company that comes here to-night.

Lady T. But I have not a single guinea to try my fortune.

Trusty. Ha! that's a bad business indeed, Madam—Adad, I have a thought in my head, Madam, if it is not too late—

Lady T. Out with it quickly, then I beseech thee.

Trusty. Has not the steward something of fifty pounds, Madam, that you left in his hands to pay somebody about this time?

Lady T. Oh, ay; I had forgot—'twas to—a—what's his filthy name?

Trusty. Now I remember, Madam, 'twas to Mr. Lutestring, your old mercer, that your ladyship turned off about a year ago, because he would trust you no longer.

Lady T. The very wretch! If he has not paid it, run quickly, dear Trusty, and bid him

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bring it hither immediately—[*Exit* TRUSTY.] Well, sure mortal woman never had such fortune! five, five and nine, against poor seven for ever—No, after that horrid bar of my chance, that Lady Wronghead's fatal red fist upon the table, I saw it was impossible ever to win another stake—Sit up all night; lose all one's money; dream of winning thousands; wake without a shilling; and then——How like a hag I look!—in short the pleasures of life are not worth this disorder. If it were not for shame, now, I could almost think Lady Grace's sober scheme not quite so ridiculous—If my wise lord could but hold his tongue for a week, 'tis odds but I should hate the town in a fortnight—But I will not be driven out of it, that's positive.

TRUSTY *returns.*

Trusty. Oh, Madam, there's no bearing of it! Mr. Lutestring was just let in at the door, as I came to the stair-foot; and the steward is now actually paying him the money in the hall.

Lady T. Run to the stair-case head again—and scream to him, that I must speak with him this instant. [TRUSTY *runs out.*

Trusty. Mr. Poundage—a-hem! Mr. Poundage, a word with you quickly. [*Without.*

Pound. I'll come to you presently. [*Without.*

Trusty. Presently wont do, man, you must come this minute. [*Without.*

Pound. I am but just paying a little money here. [*Without.*

Trusty. Cods my life, paying money! Is the man distracted? Come here, I tell you, to my lady this moment, quick! [*Without.*

TRUSTY *returns.*

Lady T. Will the monster come, or no?

Trusty. Yes, I hear him now, Madam; he is hobbling up as fast as he can.

Lady T. Don't let him come in—for he will keep such a babbling about his accounts—my brain is not able to bear him.

[POUNDAGE *comes to the door, with a money-bag in his hand.*

Trusty. Oh, it's well you are come, Sir! where's the fifty pounds?

Pound. Why, here it is; if you had not been in such haste, I should have paid it by this time—the man's now writing a receipt, below, for it.

Trusty. No matter; my lady says you must not pay him with that money! there's not enough, it seems; there's a pistole, and a guinea, that is not good, in it—besides, there is a mistake in the account too—[*Twitches the bag from him.*] But she is not at leisure to examine it now; so you must bid Mr. What-d'ye-call-um call another time.

Lady T. What is all that noise there?

Pound. Why, and it please your ladyship—

Lady T. Pr'ythee, don't plague me now; but do as you were ordered.

Pound. Nay, what your ladyship pleases, Madam. [*Exit.*

Trusty. There they are, Madam—[*Pours the money out of the bag.*]—The pretty things—were so near falling into a nasty tradesman's hand. I protest it made me tremble for them—I fancy your ladyship had as good give me that bad guinea, for luck's sake—thank you, Madam. [*Takes a guinea.*

Lady T. Why, I did not bid you take it.

Trusty. No; but your ladyship looked as if you were just going to bid me; and so I was willing to save you the trouble of speaking, Madam.

Lady T. Well, thou hast deserved it; and so, for once—but hark! don't I hear the man making a noise yonder! Though, I think, now, we may compound for a little of his ill-humour—

Trusty. I'll listen.

Lady T. Pr'ythee do. [TRUSTY *goes to the door.*

Trusty. Ay, they are at it, Madam—he's in a bitter passion with poor Poundage—Bless me! I believe he'll beat him—Mercy on us, how the wretch swears!

Lady T. And a sober citizen too! that's a shame.

Trusty. Ha! I think all's silent of a sudden—may be the porter has knocked him down—I'll step and see— [*Exit.*

Lady T. These trades-people are the troublesomest creatures! No words will satisfy them.

TRUSTY *returns.*

Trusty. Oh, Madam! undone, undone! My lord has just bolted out upon the man, and is hearing all his pitiful story over——If your ladyship pleases to come hither, you may hear him yourself.

Lady T. No matter; it will come round presently; I shall have it from my lord, without losing a word by the way, I'll warrant you.

Trusty. Oh, Lud, Madam! here's my lord just coming in.

Lady T. Do you get out of the way, then. [*Exit* TRUSTY.] I am afraid I want spirits; but he will soon give 'em me.

Enter LORD TOWNLY.

Lord T. How comes it, Madam, that a tradesman dares be clamorous in my house, for money due to him from you?

Lady T. You don't expect, my lord, that I should answer for other people's impertinence.

Lord T. I expect, Madam, you should answer for your own extravagancies, that are the occasion of it—I thought I had given you money three months ago, to satisfy all these sort of people.

Lady T. Yes; but you see they never are to be satisfied.

Lord T. Nor am I, Madam, longer to be abused thus; what's become of the last five hundred I gave you?

Lady T. Gone.

Lord T. Gone! what way, Madam?

Lady T. Half the town over, I believe, by this time.

Lord T. 'Tis well; I see ruin will make no impression, till it falls upon you.

Lady T. In short, my lord, if money is always to be the subject of our conversation, I shall make you no answer.

Lord T. Madam, Madam, I will be heard, and make you answer.

Lady T. Make me! Then I must tell you,

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my lord, this is a language I have not been used to, and I wont bear it.

Lord T. Come, come, Madam, you shall bear a great deal more, before I part with you.

Lady T. My lord, if you insult me, you will have as much to bear on your side, I can assure you.

Lord T. Pooh! your spirit grows ridiculous——you have neither honour, worth, or innocence to support it.

Lady T. You'll find, at least, I have resentment; and do you look well to the provocation.

Lord T. After those you have given me, Madam, 'tis almost infamous to talk with you.

Lady T. I scorn your imputation, and your menaces. The narrowness of your heart's your monitor; 'tis there, there, my lord, you are wounded: you have less to complain of than many thousands of an equal rank to you.

Lord T. Death, Madam! do you presume upon your corporal merit, that your person's less tainted than your mind? Is it there, there, alone, an honest husband can be injured?—Have you not every other vice that can debase your birth, or stain the heart of woman? Is not your health, your beauty, husband, fortune, family disclaimed, for nights consumed in riot and extravagance? The wanton does no more; if she conceals her shame, does less: and sure the dissolute avowed, as sorely wrongs my honour and my quiet.

Lady T. I see, my lord, what sort of wife might please you.

Lord T. Ungrateful woman! could you have seen yourself, you in yourself had seen her—I am amazed our legislature has left no precedent of a divorce, for this more visible injury, this adultery of the mind, as well as that of the person! When a woman's whole heart is alienated to pleasures I have no share in, what is it to me, whether a black ace or a powdered coxcomb has possession of it.

Lady T. If you have not found it yet, my lord, this is not the way to get possession of mine, depend upon it.

Lord T. That, Madam, I have long despaired of; and since our happiness cannot be mutual, 'tis fit that with our hearts, our persons too should separate.—This house you sleep no more in: though your content might grossly feed upon the dishonour of a husband; yet my desires would starve upon the features of a wife.

Lady T. Your style, my lord, is much of the same delicacy with your sentiments of honour.

Lord T. Madam, Madam, this is no time for compliments—I have done with you.

Lady T. If we had never met, my lord, I had not broke my heart for it: but have a care; I may not, perhaps, be so easily recalled as you may imagine.

Lord T. Recalled!—Who's there?

Enter Servant.

Desire my sister and Mr. Manly to walk up.

[*Exit* SERV.

Lady T. My lord, you may proceed as you please; but pray, what indiscretions have I committed, that are not daily practised by a hundred other women of quality?

Lord T. 'Tis not the number of ill wives, Madam, that makes the patience of a husband less contemptible: and though a bad one may be the best man's lot, yet he'll make a better figure in the world, that keeps his misfortunes out of doors, than he that tamely keeps them within.

Lady T. I don't know what figure you may make, my lord; but I shall have no reason to be ashamed of mine, in whatever company I may meet you.

Lord T. Be sparing of your spirit, Madam; you'll need it to support you.

Enter LADY GRACE *and* MANLY.

Mr. Manly, I have an act of friendship to beg of you, which wants more apologies than words can make for it.

Man. Then pray, make none, my lord, that I may have the greater merit in obliging you.

Lord T. Sister, I have the same excuse to intreat of you, too.

Lady G. To your request, I beg, my lord.

Lord T. Thus then—as you both were present at my ill-considered marriage, I now desire you each will be a witness of my determined separation—I know, Sir, your good-nature, and my sister's, must be shocked at the office I impose on you; but as I don't ask your justification of my cause, so I hope you are conscious—that an ill woman can't reproach you, if you are silent on her side.

Man. My lord, I never thought till now, it could be difficult to oblige you.

Lady G. [*Aside.*] Heavens, how I tremble.

Lord T. For you, my Lady Townly, I need not here repeat the provocations of my parting with you—the world, I fear, is too well informed of them—For the good lord, your dead father's sake, I will still support you as his daughter—As Lord Townly's wife, you have had every thing a fond husband could bestow, and (to our mutual shame I speak it), more than happy wives desire—But those indulgences must end; state, equipage, and splendour, but ill becomes the vices that misuse them—The decent necessaries of life shall be supplied—but not one article to luxury; not even the coach that waits to carry you from hence shall you ever use again. Your tender aunt, my lady Lovemore, with tears, this morning, has consented to receive you; where, if time, and your condition, brings you to a due reflection, your allowance shall be increased—but if you are still lavish of your little, or pine for past licentious pleasures, that little shall be less: nor will I call that soul my friend that names you in my hearing.

Lady G. My heart bleeds for her. [*Aside.*

Lord T. Oh, Manly, look there! turn back thy thoughts with me, and witness to my growing love. There was a time, when I believed that form incapable of vice or of decay; there I proposed the partner of an easy home; there I, for ever, hoped to find a cheerful companion, an agreeable intimate, a faithful friend, a useful helpmate, and a tender mother—but, oh, how bitter now the disappointment!

Man. The world is different in its sense of happiness; offended as you are, I know you will still be just.

Lord T. Fear me not.

Man. This last reproach, I see, has struck her. [*Aside.*

Lord T. No, let me not (though I this moment cast her from my heart for ever) let me

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not urge her punishment beyond her crimes—I know the world is fond of any tale that feeds its appetite of scandal: and as I am conscious severities of this kind seldom fail of imputations too gross to mention, I here, before you both, acquit her of the least suspicion, raised against the honour of my bed. Therefore, when abroad her conduct may be questioned, do her fame that justice.

Lady T. Oh, sister!

[*Turns to* LADY GRACE, *weeping.*

Lord T. When I am spoken of, where without favour this action may be canvassed, relate but half my provocations, and give me up to censure. [*Going.*

Lady T. Support me! save me! hide me from the world!

[*Falling on* LADY GRACE'S *neck.*

Lord T. [*Returning.*]—I had forgot me—You have no share in my resentment, therefore, as you have lived in friendship with her, your parting may admit of gentler terms than suit the honour of an injured husband.

[*Offers to go out.*

Man. [*Interposing.*] My lord, you must not, shall not leave her thus! One moment's stay can do your cause no wrong! If looks can speak the anguish of her heart, I'll answer with my life there's something labouring in her mind, that would you bear the hearing might deserve it.

Lord T. Consider! since we no more can meet, press not my staying to insult her.

Lady T. Yet stay, my lord—the little I would say will not deserve an insult; and undeserved, I know your nature gives it not. But as you've called in friends, to witness your resentment, let them be equal hearers of my last reply.

Lord T. I sha'n't refuse you that, Madam—be it so.

Lady T. My lord, you ever have complained I wanted love: but as you kindly have allowed I never gave it to another; so, when you hear the story of my heart, though you may still complain, you will not wonder at my coldness.

Lady G. This promises a reverse of temper.

[*Apart.*

Man. This, my lord, you are concerned to hear.

Lord T. Proceed, I am attentive.

Lady T. Before I was your bride, my lord, the flattering world had talked me into beauty; which at my glass, my youthful vanity confirmed. Wild with that fame, I thought mankind my slaves, I triumphed over hearts, while all my pleasure was their pain; yet was my own so equally insensible to all, that when a father's firm commands enjoined me to make choice of one, I even there declined the liberty he gave, and to his own election yielded up my youth—his tender care, my lord, directed him to you—Our hands were joined! But still my heart was wedded to its folly! My only joy was power, command, society, profuseness, and to lead in pleasures! The husband's right to rule I thought a vulgar law, which only the deformed or meanly-spirited obeyed! I knew no directors, but my passions; no master, but my will! Even you, my lord, some time o'ercome by love, was pleased with my delights! nor, then, foresaw this mad misuse of your indulgence—and, though I call myself ungrateful, while I own it, yet, as a truth it cannot be denied—that kind indulgence has undone me; it added strength to my habitual failings, and in an heart thus warm, in wild unthinking life, no wonder if the gentler sense of love was lost.

Lord T. Oh, Manly! where has this creature's heart been buried? [*Apart.*

Man. If yet recoverable—how vast the treasure. [*Apart.*

Lady T. What I have said, my lord, is not my excuse, but my confession; my errors (give 'em, if you please, a harder name) cannot be defended! No! What's in its nature wrong, no words can palliate, no plea can alter! What then remains in my condition, but resignation to your pleasure? Time only can convince you of my future conduct: therefore 'till I have lived an object of forgiveness, I dare not hope for pardon—The penance of a lonely contrite life were little to the innocent; but to have deserved this separation, will strew perpetual thorns upon my pillow.

Lady G. Oh, happy, heavenly hearing!

Lady T. Sister, farewell! [*Kissing her.*] Your virtue needs no warning from the shame that falls on me: but when you think I have atoned my follies past—persuade your injured brother to forgive them.

Lord T. No, Madam! your errors thus renounced, this instant are forgotten! So deep, so due a sense of them has made you, what my utmost wishes formed, and all my heart has sighed for.

Lady T. [*Turning to* LADY GRACE.] How odious does this goodness make me!

Lady G. How amiable your thinking so!

Lord T. Long parted friends, that pass through easy voyages of life, receive but common gladness in their meeting; but from a shipwreck saved we mingle tears with our embraces! [*Embracing* LADY TOWNLY.

Lady T. What words? what love? what duty can repay such obligations?

Lord T. Preserve but this desire to please, your power is endless.

Lady T. Oh!—'till this moment, never did I know, my lord, I had a heart to give you.

Lord T. By Heaven this yielding hand, when first it gave you to my wishes, presented not a treasure more desirable! Oh, Manly! sister! as you have often shared in my disquiet, partake of my felicity! my new-born joy! see here the bride of my desires! this may be called my wedding-day.

Lady G. Sister, (for now, methinks, that name is dearer to my heart than ever) let me congratulate the happiness that opens to you.

Man. Long, long, and mutual may it flow—

Lord T. To make our happiness complete, my dear, join here with me to give a hand, that amply will repay the obligation.

Lady T. Sister, a day like this—

Lady G. Admits of no excuse against the general joy. [*Gives her hand to* MANLY.

Man. A joy like mine—despairs of words to speak it.

Lord T. Oh, Manly, how the name of friend endears the brother! [*Embracing him.*

Man. Your words, my lord, will warm me to deserve them.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. My lord, the apartments are full of masqueraders—And some people of quality there desire to see your lordship and my lady.

Lady T. I thought, my lord, your orders had forbid their revelling?

Lord T. No, my dear, Manly has desired

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their admittance to-night, it seems, upon a particular occasion—Say we will wait upon them instantly. [*Exit* SERVANT.

Lady T. I shall be but ill company to them.

Lord T. No matter: not to see them, would on a sudden be too particular. Lady Grace will assist you to entertain them.

Lady T. With her, my lord, I shall be always easy—Sister, to your unerring virtue I now commit the guidance of my future days—

Never the paths of pleasure more to tread,
But where your guarded innocence shall lead;
For in the marriage state, the world must own,
Divided happiness was never known.
To make it mutual nature points the way:
Let husbands govern; gentle wives obey.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—Opening to another Apartment discovers a great number of people in masquerade, talking all together, and playing one upon another. LADY WRONGHEAD, *as a shepherdess;* JENNY *as a nun; the* 'SQUIRE *as a running footman; and the* COUNT *in a domino. After some time* LORD *and* LADY TOWNLY, *with* LADY GRACE, *enter to them unmasked.*

Lord T. So! here's a great deal of company.

Lady T. A great many people, my lord, but no company—as you'll find—for here's one now that seems to have a mind to entertain us.

[*A* MASK, *after some affected gesture, makes up to* LADY TOWNLY.

Mask. Well, dear Lady Townly, sha'n't we see you by and by?

Lady T. I don't know you, Madam.

Mask. Don't you seriously? [*In a squeaking tone.*

Lady T. Not I, indeed.

Mask. Well, that's charming; but can't you guess?

Lady T. Yes, I could guess wrong, I believe.

Mask. That's what I'd have you do.

Lady T. But, Madam, if I don't know you at all, is not that as well.

Mask. Ay, but you do know me.

Lady T. Dear sister, take her off o' my hands; there's no bearing this. [*Apart.*

Lady G. I fancy I know you, Madam.

Mask. I fancy you don't; what makes you think you do?

Lady G. Because I have heard you talk.

Mask. Ay, but you don't know my voice, I'm sure.

Lady G. There is something in your wit and humour, Madam, so very much your own, it is impossible you can be any body but my Lady Trifle.

Mask. [*Unmasking.*] Dear Lady Grace! thou art a charming creature.

Lady G. Is there nobody else we know here?

Mask. Oh dear, yes! I have found out fifty already.

Lady G. Pray who are they?

Mask. Oh, charming company! there's Lady Ramble—Lady Riot—Lady Kill-care—Lady Squander—Lady Strip—Lady Pawn—and the Dutchess of Single-Guinea.

Lord T. Is it not hard, my dear, that people of sense and probity are sometimes forced to seem fond of such company? [*Apart.*

Lady T. My lord, it will always give me pain to remember their acquaintance, but none to drop it immediately. [*Apart.*

Lady G. But you have given us no account of the men, Madam. Are they good for any thing?

Mask. Oh, yes, you must know, I always find out them by their endeavours to find out me.

Lady G. Pray, who are they?

Mask. Why, for your men of tip-top wit and pleasure, about town, there's my Lord—Bite—Lord Archwag—Young Brazen-wit—Lord Timberdown—Lord Joint-life—and—Lord Mortgage. Then for your pretty fellows only—there's Sir Powder-Peacock—Lord Lapwing—Billy Magpie—Beau Frightful—Sir Paul Plaister-crown, and the Marquis of Monkey-man.

Lady G. Right! and these are the fine gentlemen that never want elbow-room at an assembly.

Mask. The rest, I suppose, by their tawdry hired habits, are tradesmen's wives, inns-of-court beaux, Jews, and kept mistresses.

Lord T. An admirable collection!

Lady G. Well, of all our public diversions, I am amazed how this, that is so very expensive, and has so little to show for it, can draw so much company together.

Lord T. Oh, if it were not expensive, the better sort would not come into it: and because money can purchase a ticket, the common people scorn to be kept out of it.

Mask. Right, my lord. Poor Lady Grace! I suppose you are under the same astonishment that an opera should draw so much good company.

Lady G. Not at all, Madam; it's an easier matter sure to gratify the ear, than the understanding. But have you no notion, Madam, of receiving pleasure and profit at the same time?

Mask. Oh, quite none! unless it be sometimes winning a great stake; laying down a *vole sans prendre*, may come up, to the profitable pleasure you were speaking of.

Lord T. You seem attentive, my dear! [*Apart.*

Lady T. I am, my lord; and amazed at my own follies, so strongly painted in another woman. [*Apart.*

Lady G. But see, my lord, we had best adjourn our debate, I believe, for here are some masks that seem to have a mind to divert other people as well as themselves.

Lord T. The least we can do is to give them a clear stage then.

[*A dance of masks here in various characters.*

This was a favour extraordinary.

Enter MANLY.

Oh, Manly, I thought we had lost you.

Man. I ask pardon, my lord; but I have been obliged to look a little after my country-family.

Lord T. Well, pray, what have you done with them?

Man. They are all in the house here, among the masks, my lord; if your lordship has curiosity enough to step into a lower apartment, in three minutes I'll give you an ample account of them.

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Lord T. Oh, by all means; we'll wait upon you.

[*The Scene shuts upon the masks to a smaller apartment.*]

MANLY *re-enters with* SIR FRANCIS WRONGHEAD.

Sir F. Well, cousin, you have made my very hair stand on end! Waunds! if what you tell me be true, I'll stuff my whole family into a stage-coach, and trundle them into the country again on Monday morning.

Man. Stick to that, Sir, and we may yet find a way to redeem all. In the mean time, place yourself behind this screen, and for the truth of what I have told you, take the evidence of your own senses: but be sure you keep close till I give you the signal.

Sir F. Sir, I'll warrant you—Ah, my Lady! my Lady Wronghead! What a bitter business have you drawn me into.

Man. Hush! to your post; here comes one couple already.

[SIR FRANCIS *retires behind the screen.*
Exit MANLY.

Enter MYRTILLA *with* 'SQUIRE RICHARD.

'Squire R. Well, is this the doctor's chamber?

Myr. Yes, yes, speak softly.

'Squire R. Well, but where is he?

Myr. He'll be ready for us presently, but he says he can't do us the good turn without witnesses: so, when the count and your sister come, you know he and you may be fathers for one another.

'Squire R. Well, well, tit for tat! ay, ay, that will be friendly.

Myr. And see, here they come.

Enter COUNT BASSET, *and* MISS JENNY.

Count B. So, so, here's your brother and his bride, before us, my dear.

Jenny. Well, I vow, my heart's at my mouth still! I thought I should never have got rid of mamma; but while she stood gaping upon the dance, I gave her the slip! Lawd, do but feel how it beats here.

Count B. Oh, the pretty flutterer! I protest, my dear, you have put mine into the same palpitation!

Jenny. Ay, say you so——but let's see now—Oh, lud! I vow it thumps purely—well, well, well, I see it would do, and so where's the parson?

Count B. Mrs. Myrtilla, will you be so good as to see if the doctor's ready for us.

Myr. He only staid for you, Sir, I'll fetch him immediately. [*Exit.*

Jenny. Pray, Sir, am not I to take place of mamma, when I'm a countess?

Count B. No doubt on't, my dear.

Jenny. Oh, lud! how her back will be up then, when she meets me at an assembly, or you and I in our coach-and-six at Hyde-Park together!

Count B. Ay, or when she hears the box-keepers at an opera, call out—The Countess of Basset's servants!

Jenny. Well, I say it, that will be delicious! And then, mayhap, to have a fine gentleman, with a star and a what-d'ye-call-um ribbon, lead me to my chair, with his hat under his arm all the way! Hold up, says the chairman; and so, says I, my lord, your humble servant. I suppose, Madam, says he, we shall see you at my Lady Quadrille's? Ay, ay, to be sure, my lord, says I——So in swops me, with my hoop stuffed up to my forehead; and away they trot, swing! swang! with my tassels dangling, and my flambeaux blazing, and—Oh! it's a charming thing to be a woman of quality!

Count B. Well! I see that, plainly, my dear, there's ne'er a dutchess of them all will become an equipage like you.

Jenny. Well, well, do you find equipage, and I'll find airs, I warrant you.

SONG.

What though they call me country lass,
I read it plainly in my glass,
That for a dutchess I might pass;
Oh, could I see the day!
Would fortune but attend my call,
At park, at play, at ring and ball,
I'd brave the proudest of them all,
With a stand by—clear the way.

Surrounded by a croud of beaux,
With smart toupees, and powdered clothes,
At rivals I'd turn up my nose;
Oh, could I see the day!
I'd dart such glances from these eyes,
Should make some lord or duke my prize:
And then, oh, how I'd tyrannize,
With a stand by—clear the way.

Oh, then for every new delight,
For equipage and diamonds bright,
Quadrille, and plays, and balls all night;
Oh, could I see the day!
Of love and joy I'd take my fill,
The tedious hours of life to kill,
In every thing I'd have my will,
With a stand by—clear the way.

'Squire R. Troth! I think this masquerading's the merriest game that I ever saw in my life! Thof' in my mind, anti there were but a little wrestling or cudgel-playing naw, it would help it hugely. But what a rope makes the parson stay so?

Count B. Oh, here he comes, I believe.

Enter MYRTILLA, *with a* CONSTABLE.

Con. Well, Madam, pray which is the party that wants a spice of my office, here?

Myr. That's the gentleman.

[*Pointing to the* COUNT.

Count B. Hey-day! what, in masquerade, doctor.

Con. Doctor! Sir, I believe you have mistaken your man: but if you are called Count Basset, I have a billet-doux in my hand for you, that will set you right presently.

Count B. What the devil's the meaning of all this?

Con. Only my Lord Chief Justice's warrant against you for forgery, Sir.

Count B. Blood and thunder!

Con. And so, Sir, if you please to pull off your fool's frock there, I'll wait upon you to the next justice of peace immediately.

Jenny. Oh, dear me, what's the matter?

[*Trembling.*

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Count B. Oh, nothing, only a masquerading frolic, my dear.

'Squire R. Oh, ho, is that all?

Sir F. No, sirrah! that is not all.

[SIR FRANCIS *coming softly behind the* 'SQUIRE, *knocks him down with his cane.*

Enter MANLY.

'Squire R. Oh, lawd! Oh, lawd! he has beaten my brains out.

Man. Hold, hold, Sir Francis, have a little mercy upon my poor godson, pray Sir.

Sir F. Wounds, cousin, I ha'n't patience.

Count B. Manly! nay then I'm blown to the devil. [*Aside.*

'Squire R. Oh, my head! my head!

Enter LADY WRONGHEAD.

Lady W. What's the matter here, gentlemen! For Heaven's sake! What, are you murdering my children?

Const. No, no, Madam! no murder! only a little suspicion of felony, that's all.

Sir F. [*To* JENNY.] And for you, Mrs. Hot-upon't, I could find in my heart to make you wear that habit as long as you live, you jade you. Do you know, hussy, that you were within two minutes of marrying a pickpocket.

Count B. So, so, all's out I find. [*Aside.*

Jenny. Oh, the mercy! why, pray, papa, is not the count a man of quality, then?

Sir F. Oh, yes, one of the unhanged ones, it seems.

Lady W. [*Aside.*] Married! Oh, the confident thing! There was his urgent business then—slighted for her! I ha'n't patience!—and, for ought I know, I have been all this while making a friendship with a highwayman.

Man. Mr. Constable, secure there.

Sir F. Ah, my lady! my lady! this comes of your journey to London: but now I'll have a frolic of my own, Madam; therefore pack up your trumpery this very night, for the moment my horses are able to crawl, you and your brats shall make a journey into the country again.

Lady W. Indeed you are mistaken, Sir Francis—I shall not stir out of town yet, I promise you.

Sir F. Not stir! Waunds, Madam——

Man. Hold, Sir!—if you'll give me leave a little—I fancy I shall prevail with my lady to think better on't.

Sir F. Ah, cousin, you are a friend indeed!

Man. [*Apart to my* LADY.] Look you Madam, as to the favour you designed me, in sending this spurious letter inclosed to my Lady Grace, all the revenge I have taken, is to have saved your son and daughter from ruin—Now if you will take them fairly and quietly into the country again, I will save your ladyship from ruin.

Lady W. What do you mean, Sir?

Man. Why, Sir Francis—shall never know what is in this letter; look upon it. How it came into my hands you shall know at leisure.

Lady W. Ha! my billet-doux to the count! and an appointment in it! I shall sink with confusion!

Man. What shall I say to Sir Francis, Madam?

Lady W. Dear Sir, I am in such a trembling! preserve my honour, and I am all obedience. [*Apart to* MANLY.

Man. Sir Francis—my lady is ready to receive your commands for her journey, whenever you please to appoint it.

Sir F. Ah, cousin, I doubt I am obliged to you for it.

Man. Come, come, Sir Francis, take it as you find it. Obedience in a wife is a good thing, though it were never so wonderful! ——And, now, Sir, we have nothing to do but to dispose of this gentleman.

Count B. Mr. Manly; Sir, I hope you wont ruin me.

Man. Did not you forge this note for five hundred pounds, Sir?

Count B. Sir——I see you know the world, and therefore I shall not pretend to prevaricate—But it has hurt nobody yet, Sir; I beg you will not stigmatize me; since you have spoiled my fortune in one family, I hope you wont be so cruel to a young fellow, as to put it out of his power, Sir, to make it in another, Sir.

Man. Look you, Sir, I have not much time to waste with you, but if you expect mercy yourself, you must show it to one you have been cruel to.

Count B. Cruel, Sir!

Man. Have you not ruined this young woman!

Count B. I, Sir?

Man. I know you have——therefore you can't blame her, if, in the fact you are charged with, she is a principal witness against you.—However, you have one, and only one chance to get off with. Marry her this instant—and you take off her evidence.

Count B. Dear Sir!

Man. No words, Sir; a wife or a mittimus.

Count B. Lord, Sir! this is the most unmerciful mercy!

Man. A private penance, or a public one——Constable!

Count B. Hold, Sir, since you are pleased to give me my choice, I will not make so ill a compliment to the lady, as not to give her the preference.

Man. It must be done this minute, Sir; the chaplain you expected is still within call.

Count B. Well, Sir—since it must be so——Come, spouse—I am not the first of the fraternity that has run his head into one noose, to keep it out of another.

Myr. Come, Sir, don't repine: marriage is at worst but playing upon the square.

Count B. Ay, but the worst of the match too, is the devil.

Man. Well, Sir, to let you see it is not so bad as you think it; as a reward for her honesty, in detecting your practices, instead of the forged bill you would have put upon her, there's a real one of five hundred pounds to begin a new honey-moon with. [*Gives it to* MYRTILLA.

Count B. Sir, this is so generous an act—

Man. No compliments, dear Sir—I am not at leisure now to receive them. Mr. Constable, will you be so good as to wait upon this gentleman into the next room, and give this lady in marriage to him?

Const. Sir, I'll do it faithfully.

Count B. Well, five hundred will serve to make a handsome push with, however.

[*Exeunt* COUNT B. MYR. *and* CONSTABLE.

Sir F. And that I may be sure, my family's rid of him for ever—come, my lady, let's even

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take our children along with us, and be all witnesses of the ceremony.

[*Exeunt* SIR F. LADY. W. MISS, *and* 'SQUIRE.

Man. Now, my lord, you may enter.

Enter LORD *and* LADY TOWNLY. *and* LADY GRACE.

Lord T. So, Sir, I give you joy of your negociation.

Man. You overheard it all, I presume?

Lady G. From first to last, Sir.

Lord T. Never were knaves and fools better disposed of.

Man. A sort of poetical justice, my lord, not much above the judgment of a modern comedy.

Lord T. To heighten that resemblance, I think, sister, there only wants your rewarding the hero of the fable, by naming the day of his happiness.

Lady G. This day, to-morrow, every hour, I hope, of life to come, will show I want not inclination to complete it.

Man. Whatever I may want, Madam, you will always find endeavours to deserve you.

Lord T. Then all are happy.

Lady T. Sister, I give you joy consummate as the happiest pair can boast.

In you methinks, as in a glass, I see
The happiness that once advanced to me.
So visible the bliss, so plain the way,
How was it possible my sense could stray?
But now, a convert to this truth I come,
That married happiness is never found from home. [*Exeunt omnes*.

EPILOGUE.

METHINKS I hear some powder'd critic say,
"Damn it, this wife reform'd has spoil'd the play! [fashion,
The coxcomb should have drawn her more in
Have gratified her softer inclination, [cation."
Have tipt her a gallant, and clinch'd the provo-
But there our bard stopp'd short: for 'twere uncivil
To have a modern belle all o'er a devil!
He hoped, in honour of the sex, the age
Would hear one mended woman—on the stage.
From whence, you see, by common sense's rules,
Wives might be govern'd, were not husbands fools.
Whate'er by nature dames are prone to do,
They seldom stray but when they govern you.
When the wild wife perceives her deary tame,
No wonder then she plays him all the game.
But men of sense meet rarely that disaster;
Women take pride where merit is their master:
Nay, she that with a weak man wisely lives,
Will seem t' obey the due commands he gives!
Happy obedience is no more a wonder,
When men are men, and keep them kindly under.
But modern consorts are such high-bred creatures,
They think a husband's power degrades their features:
That nothing more proclaims a reigning beauty,
Than that she never was reproached with duty:
And that the greatest blessing Heaven e'er sent,
Is in a spouse, incurious and content.
To give such dames a different cast of thought,
By calling home the mind, these scenes were wrought.
If with a hand too rude the task is done,
We hope the scheme, by Lady Grace laid down,
Will all such freedom with the sex atone,
That virtue there unsoil'd by modish heart,
Throws out attractions for a Manly's art.
You, you, then, ladies, whose unquestion'd lives
Give you the foremost fame of happy wives,
Protect, for its attempt, this helpless play;
Nor leave it to the vulgar taste a prey;
Appear the frequent champions of its cause,
Direct the crowd, and give yourselves applause.

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INKLE AND YARICO:

AN OPERA,

IN THREE ACTS.

BY GEORGE COLMAN, ESQ.

REMARKS.

THE great success of this opera in every theatre of the kingdom, since its first representation at the Haymarket, is justified by its real merit. The dialogue is not a collection of trite common-places, to connect the music; but is replete with taste, judgment, and manly feeling:—the allusions to slavery (now so nobly abolished) correspond with every British, every liberal mind. The *mal-a-propos* offer of Inkle to sell his Yarico to Sir Christopher, is an admirable incident; and indeed all the characters are so forcibly drawn, that the most trifling part is effective.

The pathetic story of Inkle and Yarico first attracted sympathy, from the narrative of Mr. Addison, in the Spectator: to that affecting story, Mr. Colman was indebted only for the cold, calculating Inkle; and the gentle, affectionate Yarico—the rest of the characters, and the developement of the story are the offspring of his abundant invention.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	COVENT-GARDEN, 1790.	HAY MARKET, 1792.
INKLE,	*Mr. Johnstone.*	*Mr. J. Bannister.*
SIR CHRISTOPHER CURRY,	*Mr. Quick.*	*Mr. Parsons.*
CAMPLEY,	*Mr. Davies.*	*Mr. Davies.*
MEDIUM,	*Mr. Wewitzer.*	*Mr. Baddeley.*
TRUDGE,	*Mr. Edwin.*	*Mr. Edwin.*
MATE,	*Mr. Darley.*	*Mr. —eadows.*
YARICO,	*Mrs. Billington.*	*Mrs. Kemble.*
NARCISSA,	*Mrs. Mountain.*	*Mrs. Bannister.*
WOWSKI,	*Mrs. Martyr.*	*Miss George.*
PATTY,	*Mrs. Rock.*	*Mrs. Forster.*

SCENE.—First, on the Main of America: afterwards in Barbadoes.

ACT I.

SCENE 1.—An American Forest.

Med. [*Without.*] Hilli ho! ho!

Trudge. [*Without.*] Hip! hollo! ho!—Hip!—

Enter MEDIUM *and* TRUDGE.

Med. Pshaw! it's only wasting time and breath. Bawling wont persuade him to budge a bit faster. Things are all altered now; and, whatever weight it may have in some places, bawling, it seems, don't go for argument, here. Plague on't! we are now in the wilds of America.

Trudge. Hip, hillio—ho—hi!—

Med. Hold your tongue, you blockhead, or—

Trudge. Lord! Sir, if my master makes no more haste, we shall all be put to sword by the knives of the natives. I'm told they take off heads like hats, and hang 'em on pegs in their parlours. Mercy on us! my head aches with the very thoughts of it. Holo! Mr. Inkle! master; holo!

Med. Head aches! zounds, so does mine

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with your confounded bawling. It's enough to bring all the natives about us: and we shall be stripped and plundered in a minute.

Trudge. Ay; stripping is the first thing that would happen to us; for they seem to be wofully off for a wardrobe. I myself saw three, at a distance, with less clothes than I have when I get out of bed: all dancing about in black buff; just like Adam in mourning.

Med. This is to have to do with a schemer! a fellow who risks his life, for a chance of advancing his interest.—Always advantage in view! trying, here, to make discoveries that may promote his profit in England. Another Botany Bay scheme, mayhap. Nothing else could induce him to quit our foraging party, from the ship; when he knows every inhabitant here is not only as black as a pepper-corn, but as hot into the bargain—and I, like a fool, to follow him! and then to let him loiter behind. Why, nephew! why, Inkle! [*Calling.*

Trudge. Why, Inkle—Well! only to see the difference of men! he'd have thought it very hard, now, if I had let him call so often after me. Ah! I wish he was calling after me now, in the old jog-trot way, again. What a fool was I, to leave London for foreign parts!—That ever I should leave Threadneedle-street, to thread an American forest, where a man's as soon lost as a needle in a bottle of hay!

Med. Patience, Trudge! patience! If we once recover the ship—

Trudge. Lord, Sir, I shall never recover what I have lost in coming abroad. When my master and I were in London, I had such a mortal snug birth of it! why, I was factotum.

Med. Factotum to a young merchant is no such sinecure, neither.

Trudge. But then the honour of it. Think of that, Sir; to be clerk as well as own man. Only consider. You find very few city clerks made out of a man, now-a-days. To be king of the counting-house, as well as lord of the bed-chamber. Ah! if I had him but now in the little dressing-room behind the office; tying his hair, with a bit of red tape, as usual.

Med. Yes, or writing an invoice with lamp-black, and shining his shoes with an ink-bottle, as usual, you blundering blockhead!

Trudge. Oh! if I was but brushing the accounts, or casting up the coats! mercy on us! what's that?

Med. That! what?

Trudge. Didn't you hear a noise?

Med. Y—es—but—hush! Oh, Heavens be praised! here he is at last.

Enter INKLE.

Now, nephew?

Inkle. So, Mr. Medium.

Med. Zounds, one would think, by your confounded composure, that you were walking in St. James's Park, instead of an American forest; and that all the beasts were nothing but good company. The hollow trees, here, centry boxes, and the lions in 'em, soldiers; the jackalls, courtiers; the crocodiles, fine women; and the baboons, beaus. What the plague made you loiter so long?

Inkle. Reflection.

Med. So I should think; reflection generally comes lagging behind. What, scheming, I suppose; never quiet. At it again, eh: what a happy trader is your father, to have so prudent a son for a partner! why, you are the carefullest Co. in the whole city. Never losing sight of the main chance; and that's the reason, perhaps, you lost sight of us, here, on the main of America.

Inkle. Right, Mr. Medium. Arithmetic, I own, has been the means of our parting at present.

Trudge. Ha! a sum in division, I reckon. [*Aside.*

Med. And pray, if I may be so bold, what mighty scheme has just tempted you to employ your head, when you ought to make use of your heels?

Inkle. My heels! here's pretty doctrine! do you think I travel merely for motion? a fine expensive plan for a trader, truly. What, would you have a man of business come abroad, scamper extravagantly here and there and every where, then return home, and have nothing to tell, but that he has been here and there and every where? 'sdeath, Sir, would you have me travel like a lord? Travelling, uncle, was always intended for improvement; and improvement is an advantage; and advantage is profit, and profit is gain. Which, in the travelling translation of a trader, means, that you should gain every advantage of improving your profit. I have been comparing the land, here, with that of our own country.

Med. And you find it like a good deal of the land of our own country—cursedly encumbered with black legs, I take it.

Inkle. And calculating how much it might be made to produce by the acre.

Med. You were?

Inkle. Yes; I was proceeding algebraically upon the subject.

Med. Indeed!

Inkle. And just about extracting the square root.

Med. Hum!

Inkle. I was thinking too, if so many natives could be caught, how much they might fetch at the West Indian markets.

Med. Now let me ask you a question, or two, young cannibal catcher, if you please.

Inkle. Well.

Med. Aren't we bound for Barbadoes; partly to trade, but chiefly to carry home the daughter of the governor, Sir Christopher Curry, who has till now been under your father's care, in Threadneedle-street, for polite English education?

Inkle. Granted.

Med. And isn't it determined, between the old folks, that you are to marry Narcissa as soon as we get there?

Inkle. A fixed thing.

Med. Then what the devil do you do here, hunting old hairy negroes, when you ought to be ogling a fine girl in the ship? Algebra, too! you'll have other things to think of when you are married, I promise you. A plodding fellow's head, in the hands of a young wife, like a boy's slate after school, soon gets all its arithmetic wiped off: and then it appears in its true simple state; dark, empty, and bound in wood, Master Inkle.

Inkle. Not in a match of this kind. Why, it's a table of interest from beginning to end, old Medium.

Med. Well, well, this is no time to talk.—Who knows but, instead of sailing to a wedding, we may get cut up, here, for a wedding dinner: tossed up for a dingy duke perhaps, or stewed down for a black baronet, or eat raw by an inky commoner?

Inkle. Why, sure, you aren't afraid?

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Med. Who, I afraid! ha, ha, ha! no, not I! what the deuce should I be afraid of? thank Heaven, I have a clear conscience, and need not be afraid of any thing. A scoundrel might not be quite so easy on such an occasion; but it's the part of an honest man not to behave like a scoundrel: I never behaved like a scoundrel—for which reason I am an honest man, you know. But come—I hate to boast of my good qualities.

Inkle. Slow and sure, my good, virtuous, Mr. Medium! our companions can be but half a mile before us: and, if we do but double their steps, we shall overtake them at one mile's end, by all the powers of arithmetic.

Med. Oh, curse your arithmetic! how are we to find our way?

Inkle. That, uncle, must be left to the doctrine of chances. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—Another part of the forest. A ship at anchor in the bay, at a small distance.

Enter SAILORS *and* MATE, *as returning from foraging.*

Mate. Come, come, bear a hand, my lads. Tho'f the bay is just under our bowsprits, it will take a damned deal of tripping to come at it—there's hardly any steering clear off the rocks here. But do we muster all hands? all right, think ye?

1st Sail. All to a man—besides yourself, and a monkey—the three land lubbers, that edged away in the morning, goes for nothing, you know—they're all dead may-hap, by this.

Mate. Dead! you be—why, they're friends of the captain; and if not brought safe aboard to-night, you may all chance to have a salt eel for your supper—that's all.—Moreover, the young plodding spark, he with the grave, foul-weather face, there, is to man the tight little frigate, Miss Narcissa, what d'ye call her, that is bound with us for Barbadoes. Rot 'em for not keeping under way, I say! but come let's see if a song will bring 'em to. Let's have a full chorus to the good merchant ship, the Achilles, that's wrote by our captain.

The Achilles, though christen'd, good ship, 'tis surmised, [prized,
From that old man of war, great Achilles, so
Was he, like our vessel, pray, fairly baptized?
Ti tol lol, &c.

Poets sung that Achilles—if, now, they've an itch [which;
To sing this, future ages may know which is
And that one rode in Greece—and the other in pitch:

What though but a merchant ship—sure our supplies:
Now your men of war's gain in a lottery lies,
And how blank they all look, when they can't get a prize!

What are all their fine names? when no rhino's behind, [find;
The Intrepid and Lion look sheepish, you'll
Whilst, alas! the poor Æolus can't raise the wind!

Then the Thunderer's dumb; out of tune the Orpheus;
The Ceres has nothing at all to produce;
And the Eagle, I warrant you, looks like a goose.

But we merchant lads, though the foe we can't maul,
Nor are paid, like fine king-ships, to fight at a call,
Why we pay ourselves well, without fighting at all.

1st Sail. Avast! look a-head there. Here they come, chased by a fleet of black devils.

Midsh. And the devil a fire have I to give 'em. We han't a grain of powder left. What must we do, lad?

2d Sail. Do? Sheer off, to be sure.

All. Come, bear a hand, Mr. Marlinspike!

Midsh. [*Reluctantly.*] Well, if I must, I must. [*Going to the other side and halloing to* INKLE, *&c.*] Yoho, lubbers! crowd all the sail you can, d'ye mind me! [*Exit.*

Enter MEDIUM, *running as if pursued by the Blacks.*

Med. Nephew! Trudge! run—scamper!—scour—fly! zounds, what harm did I ever do, to be hunted to death by a pack of bloodhounds? why, nephew! Oh, confound your long sums in arithmetic! I'll take care of myself; and if we must have any arithmetic, dot and carry one for my money. [*Runs off.*

Enter INKLE *and* TRUDGE, *hastily.*

Trudge. Oh! that ever I was born, to leave pen, ink, and powder, for this!

Inkle. Trudge, how far are the sailors before us?

Trudge. I'll run and see, Sir, directly.

Inkle. Blockhead, come here. The savages are close upon us; we shall scarce be able to recover our party. Get behind this tuft of trees with me; they'll pass us, and we may then recover our ship with safety.

Trudge. [*Going behind.*] Oh! Threadneedle street, Thread!—

Inkle. Peace.

Trudge. [*Hiding.*]—needle-street. [*They hide behind trees. Natives cross. After a long pause,* INKLE *looks from the trees.*

Inkle. Trudge.

Trudge. Sir. [*In a whisper.*

Inkle. Are they all gone by?

Trudge. Wont you look and see?

Inkle. [*Looking round.*] So, all's safe at last. [*Coming forward.*] Nothing like policy in these cases; but you'd have run on, like a booby! A tree, I fancy, you'll find, in future, the best resource in a hot pursuit.

Trudge. Oh, charming! It's a retreat for a king, Sir. Mr. Medium, however, has not got up in it; your uncle, Sir, has run on like a booby; and has got up with our party by this time, I take it; who are now most likely at the shore. But what are we to do next, Sir?

Inkle. Reconnoitre a little, and then proceed.

Trudge. Then pray, Sir, proceed to reconnoitre; for, the sooner the better.

Inkle. Then look out, d'ye hear, and tell me if you discover any danger.

Trudge. Y—ye—s—yes; but— [*Trembling.*

Inkle. Well, is the coast clear!

Trudge. Eh! Oh lord!—Clear? [*Rubbing his eyes.*] Oh dear! oh dear! the coast will soon be clear enough now, I promise you—The ship is under sail, Sir!

Inkle. Confusion! my property carried off in the vessel.

Trudge. All, all, Sir, except me.

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Inkle. They may report me dead, perhaps; and dispose of my property at the next island. [*Vessel under sail.*

Trudge. Ah! there they go. [*A gun fired.*] ——That will be the last report we shall ever hear from 'em, I'm afraid.—That's as much as to say, Good by to ye. And here we are left —two fine, full-grown babes in the wood!

Inkle. What an ill-timed accident! just too, when my speedy union with Narcissa, at Barbadoes, would so much advance my interests. Something must be hit upon, and speedily; but what resource? [*Thinking.*

Trudge. The old one—a tree, Sir—'tis all we have for it now. What would I give, now, to be perched upon a high stool, with our brown desk squeezed into the pit of my stomach—scribbling away an old parchment!—But all my red ink will be spilt by on old black pin of a negro.

A voyage over seas had not enter'd my head,
Had I known but on which side to butter my bread.
Heigho! sure I—for hunger must die!
I've sail'd, like a booby; come here in a squall,
Where, alas! there's no bread to be butter'd at all!
Oho! I'm a terrible booby!
Oh, what a sad booby am I!

In London, what gay chop-house signs in the street!
But the only sign here, is of nothing to eat.
Heigho! that I—for hunger should die!
My mutton's all lost; I'm a poor starving elf;
And for all the world like a lost mutton myself.
Oho! I shall die a lost mutton!
Oh!. what a lost mutton am I!

For a neat slice of beef, I could roar like a bull;
And my stomach's so empty, my heart is quite full.
Heigho! that I—for hunger should die!
But, grave without meat, I must here meet my grave,
For my bacon I fancy, I never shall save.
Oho! I shall ne'er save my bacon!
I can't save my bacon, not I!

Hum! I was thinking——I was thinking, Sir—if so many natives could be caught, how much they might fetch at the West India markets!

Inkle. Scoundrel! is this a time to jest?

Trudge. No, faith, Sir! hunger is too sharp to be jested with. As for me, I shall starve for want of food. Now you may meet a luckier fate: you are able to extract the square root, Sir; and that's the very best provision you can find here to live upon. But I! [*Noise at a distance.*] Mercy on us! here they come again.

Inkle. Confusion! deserted on one side, and pressed on the other, which way shall I turn? —This cavern may prove a safe retreat to us for the present. I'll enter, cost what it will.

Trudge. Oh, Lord! no, don't, don't——We shall pay too dear for our lodging, depend on't.

Inkle. This is no time for debating. You are at the mouth of it; lead the way, Trudge.

Trudge. What! go in before your honour! I know my place better, I assure you—I might walk into more mouths than one, perhaps. [*Aside.*

Inkle. Coward! then follow me. [*Noise again.*

Trudge. I must, Sir; I must! Ah Trudge, Trudge! what a damned hole are you getting into! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III—A Cave. Decorated with skins of wild beasts, feathers, &c. A rude kind of curtain, as door to an inner part.

Enter INKLE *and* TRUDGE, *from mouth of the cavern.*

Trudge. Why, Sir! you must be mad to go any farther.

Inkle. So far, at least, we have proceeded with safety. Ha! no bad specimen of savage elegance. These ornaments would be worth something in England.—We have little to fear here, I hope: this cave rather bears the pleasing face of a profitable adventure.

Trudge. Very likely, Sir; but, for a pleasing face, it has the cursed'st ugly mouth I ever saw in my life. Now do, Sir, make off as fast as you can. If we once get clear of the natives' houses, we have little to fear from the lions and leopards; for, by the appearance of their parlours, they seem to have killed all the wild beasts in the country. Now pray, do, my good master, take my advice, and run away.

Inkle. Rascal! talk again of going out, and I'll flea you alive.

Trudge. That's just what I expect for coming in.—All that enter here appear to have had their skin stripped over their ears; and ours will be kept for curiosities——We shall stand here, stuffed for a couple of white wonders.

Inkle. This curtain seems to lead to another apartment: I'll draw it.

Trudge. No, no, no, don't; don't. We may be called to account for disturbing the company: you may get a curtain lecture, perhaps, Sir.

Inkle. Peace, booby, and stand on your guard.

Trudge. Oh! what will become of us! some grim, seven-foot fellow ready to scalp us.

Inkle. By Heaven! a woman!

[YARICO *and* WOWSKI, *discovered asleep.*

Trudge. A woman! [*Aside.*]—[*Loud.*] But let him come on; I'm ready—damme, I don't fear facing the devil himself—Faith, it is a woman—fast asleep, too.

Inkle. And beautiful as an angel!

Trudge. And, egad! there seems to be a nice, little, plump, bit in the corner; only she's an angel of rather darker sort.

Inkle. Hush! keep back—she wakes.

[YARICO *comes forward*—INKLE *and* TRUDGE *retire to the opposite side of the scene.*

Yar. When the chase of day is done,
And the shaggy lion's skin,
Which, for us, our warriors win,
Decks our cells, at set of sun;
Worn with toil, with sleep oppress'd,
I press my mossy bed, and sink to rest.

Then, once more, I see our train,
With all our chace renew'd again:

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Once more, 'tis day,
Once more, our prey
Gnashes his angry teeth, and foams in vain.
Again, in sullen haste, he flies,
Ta'en in the toil, again he lies,
Again he roars—and, in my slumbers, dies.

Inkle. Our language!

Trudge. Zounds, she has thrown me into a cold sweat.

Yar. Hark! I heard a noise! Wowski, awake! whence can it proceed?

[*She wakes* WOWSKI, *and they both come forward*—YARICO *towards* INKLE; WOWSKI *towards* TRUDGE.

Ah! what form is this?——are you a man?

Inkle. True flesh and blood, my charming heathen, I promise you.

Yar. What harmony in his voice! what a shape? How fair his skin too!—— [*Gazing.*

Trudge. This must be a lady of quality, by her staring.

Yar. Say, stranger, whence come you?

Inkle. From a far distant island; driven on this coast by distress, and deserted by my companions.

Yar. And do you know the danger that surrounds you here? our woods are filled with beasts of prey—my countrymen too——(yet, I think they couldn't find the heart)——might kill you.——It would be a pity if you fell in their way——I think I should weep if you came to any harm.

Trudge. O ho! it's time, I see, to begin making interest with the chambermaid.

[*Takes* WOWSKI *apart.*

Inkle. How wild and beautiful! sure, there's magic in her shape, and she has rivetted me to the place. But where shall I look for safety? let me fly, and avoid my death.

Yar. Oh! no—But——[*As if puzzled.*] well then, die stranger, but, don't depart——But I will try to preserve you; and if you are killed, Yarico must die too! Yet, 'tis I alone can save you: your death is certain without my assistance; and indeed, indeed, you shall not want it.

Inkle. My kind Yarico! what means, then, must be used for my safety?

Yar. My cave must conceal you: none enter it, since my father was slain in battle. I will bring you food, by day, then lead you to our unfrequented groves, by moonlight, to listen to the nightingale. If you should sleep, I'll watch you, and wake you when there's danger.

Inkle. Generous maid! then, to you I will owe my life; and whilst it lasts, nothing shall part us.

Yar. And sha'n't it, sha'n't it indeed?

Inkle. No, my Yarico! for, when an opportunity offers to return to my country, you shall be my companion.

Yar. What! cross the seas!

Inkle. Yes. Help me to discover a vessel, and you shall enjoy wonders. You shall be decked in silks, my brave maid, and have a house drawn with horses to carry you.

Yar. Nay, do not laugh at me—but is it so?

Inkle. It is, indeed!

Yar. Oh, wonder! I wish my countrywomen could see me——But wont your warriors kill us?

Inkle. No, our only danger, on land, is here.

Yar. Then let us retire further into the cave. Come—your safety is in my keeping.

Inkle. I follow you—Yet, can you run some risque in following me?

DUET.

Inkle. O say, simple maid, have you form'd any notion
Of all the rude dangers in crossing the ocean?
When winds whistle shrilly, ah! wont they remind you,
To sigh, with regret, for the grot left behind you?

Yar. Ah! no, I could follow, and sail the world over,
Nor think of my grot, when I look at my lover!
The winds which blow round us, your arms for my pillow,
Will lull us to sleep, whilst we're rock'd by each billow.

Both. O say then, my true love, we never will sunder,
Nor shrink from the tempest, nor dread the big thunder:
While constant, we'll laugh at all changes of weather,
And journey, all over the world, both together.

Trudge. Why, you speak English as well as I, my little Wowski.

Wows. Iss.

Trudge. Iss! and you learned it from a strange man, that tumbled from a big boat, many moons ago, you say?

Wows. Iss—teach me—teach good many.

Trudge. Then, what the devil made 'em so surprised at seeing us! was he like me? [Wows. *shakes her head.*] Not so smart a body, may-hap. Was his face, now, round, and comely, and—eh! [*Stroking his chin.*] Was it like mine?

Wows. Like dead leaf—brown and shrivel.

Trudge. Oh, oh, an old shipwrecked sailor, I warrant. With white and gray hair, eh, my pretty beauty spot?

Wows. Iss; all white. When night come, he put it in pocket.

Trudge. Oh! wore a wig. But the old boy taught you something more than English, I believe.

Wows. Iss.

Trudge. The devil he did! what was it?

Wows. Teach me put dry grass, red hot, in hollow white stick.

Trudge. Ay, what was that for?

Wows. Put in my mouth—go poff, poff.

Trudge. Zounds! did he teach you to smoke?

Wows. Iss.

Trudge. And what became of him at last? What did your countrymen do for the poor fellow?

Wows. Eat him one day—Our chief kill him.

Trudge. Mercy on us! what damned stomachs, to swallow a tough old tar! though, for the matter of that, there's many of our captains would eat all they kill, I believe! Ah, poor Trudge! your killing comes next.

Wows. No, no—not you—no—

[*Running to him anxiously.*

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Trudge. No? why what shall I do, if I get in their paws?

Wows. I fight for you!

Trudge. Will you? ecod she's a brave, good-natured, wench! she'll be worth a hundred of your English wives—Whenever they fight on their husband's account, it's with him instead of for him, I fancy. But how the plague am I to live here?

Wows. I feed you—bring you kid.

White man, never go away—
Tell me why need you?
Stay, with your Wowski, stay:
Wowski will feed you.
Cold moons are now coming in:
Ah don't go grieve me!
I'll wrap you in leopard's skin:
White man, don't leave me.

And when all the sky is blue,
Sun makes warm weather,
I'll catch you a cockatoo,
Dress you in feather.
When cold comes, or when 'tis hot,
Ah don't go grieve me!
Poor Wowski will be forgot——
White man, don't leave me!

Trudge. Zounds! leopard's skin for winter wear, and feathers for a summer's suit! Ha, ha! I shall look like a walking hammer-cloth, at Christmas, and an upright shuttle-cock, in the dog-days. And for all this, if my master and I find our way to England, you shall be part of our travelling equipage; and, when I get there, I'll give you a couple of snug rooms, on a first floor, and visit you every evening as soon as I come from the counting-house. Do you like it?

Wows. Iss.

Trudge. Damme, what a flashy fellow I shall seem in the city! I'll get her a white boy to bring up the tea-kettle. Then I'll teach you to write and dress hair.

Wows. You great man in your country?

Trudge. Oh, yes, a very great man. I'm head clerk of the counting-house, and first valet-de-chambre of the dressing-room. I pounce parchments, powder hair, black shoes, ink paper, shave beards, and mend pens. But, hold; I had forgot one material point—you aren't married, I hope?

Wows. No: you be my chum-chum!

Trudge. So I will. It's best, however, to be sure of her being single; for Indian husbands are not quite so complaisant as English ones, and the vulgar dogs might think of looking a little after their spouses. Well, as my master seems king of this palace, and has taken his Indian queen already, I'll e'en be usher of the black rod here. But you have had a lover or two in your time; eh, Wowski?

Wows. Oh iss—great many—I tell you.

DUET.

Wows. Wampum, Swampum, Yanko, Lanko, Nanko, Pownatowski,
Black men—plenty—twenty—fight for me.
White man, woo you true?

Trudge. Who?

Wows. You.

Trudge. Yes, pretty little Wowski!

Wows. Then, I leave all and follow thee.

Trudge. Oh then turn about, my little tawny tight one!
Don't you like me?

Wows. Iss, you're like the snow!
If you slight one:——

Trudge. Never, not for any white one:
You are beautiful as any sloe.

Wows. Wars, jars, scars, can't expose ye,
In our grot——

Trudge. So snug and cosey!

Wows. Flowers neatly
Pick'd shall sweetly
Make your bed.

Trudge. Coying, toying,
With a rosy posey,
When I'm dosey,
Bear-skin night-caps, too, shall warm my head.

Both. Bear-skin night-caps, &c. &c.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—The quay at Barbadoes.

Enter several PLANTERS.

1st Plan. I saw her this morning, gentlemen, you may depend on't. My telescope never fails me. I popped upon her as I was taking a peep from my balcony: A brave tight ship, I tell you, bearing down directly for Barbadoes here.

2d Plan. Ods my life! rare news! We have not had a vessel arrive in our harbour these six weeks.

3d Plan. And the last brought only Madam Narcissa, our governor's daughter, from England; with a parcel of lazy, idle, white folks about her. Such cargoes will never do for our trade, neighbour.

4th Plan. No, no: we want slaves. A terrible dearth of them in Barbadoes, lately! but your dingy passengers for my money. Give me a vessel like a collier, where all the lading tumbles out as black as my hat. But are you sure, now, you aren't mistaken?
[*To 1st* PLANTER.

1st Plan. Mistaken! 'sbud, do you doubt my glass? I can discover a gull by it six leagues off: I could see every thing as plain as if I was on board.

2d Plan. Indeed! and what were her colours?

1st Plan. Um! why English——or Dutch—or French——I don't exactly remember.

3d Plan. What were the sailors aboard?

1st Plan. Eh! why they were English too——or Dutch——or French——I can't perfectly recollect.

4th Plan. Your glass, neighbour, is a little like a glass too much: it makes you forget every thing you ought to remember.
[*Cry without, A sail, a sail.*

1st Plan. Egad, but I'm right though. Now, gentlemen!

All. Ay, ay; the devil take the hindmost.
[*Exit, hastily.*

Enter NARCISSA *and* PATTY.

Nar. Freshly now the breeze is blowing;
As yon ship at anchor rides,
Sullen waves incessant flowing,
Rudely dash against the sides:

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So my heart, its course impeded,
Beats in my perturbed breast;
Doubts, like waves by waves succeeded,
Rise, and still deny it rest.

Patty. Well, Ma'am, as I was saying——

Nar. Well, say no more of what you were saying—Sure, Patty, you forget where you are: a little caution will be necessary now, I think.

Patty. Lord, Madam, how is it possible to help talking? We are in Barbadoes, here, to be sure——but then, Ma'am, one may let out a little in a private morning's walk by ourselves.

Nar. Nay, it's the same thing with you indoors.

Patty. I never blab, Ma'am, never, as I hope for a gown.

Nar. And your never blabbing, as you call it, depends chiefly on that hope, I believe. The unlocking my chest, locks up all your faculties. An old silk gown makes you turn your back on all my secrets; a large bonnet blinds your eyes; and a fashionable high handkerchief covers your ears, and stops your mouth at once, Patty.

Patty. Dear Ma'am, how can you think a body so mercenary! am I always teasing you about gowns and gew-gaws, and fal-lals and finery? Or do you take me for a conjuror, that nothing will come out of my mouth but ribbons? I have told the story of our voyage, indeed, to old Guzzle, the butler, who is very inquisitive; and, between ourselves, is the ugliest old quiz I ever saw in my life.

Nar. Well, well, I have seen him; pitted with the small-pox, and a red face.

Patty. Right, Ma'am. It's for all the world like his master's cellar, full of holes and liquor. But, when he asks me what you and I think of the matter, why I look wise, and cry, like other wise people who have nothing to say—All's for the best.

Nar. And thus you lead him to imagine I am but little inclined to the match.

Patty. Lord, Ma'am, how could that be? Why, I never said a word about Captain Campley.

Nar. Hush! hush, for Heaven's sake.

Patty. Ay! there it is now.—There, Ma'am, I'm as mute as a mackarel—That name strikes me dumb in a moment. I don't know how it is, but Captain Campley some how or other has the knack of stopping my mouth oftener than any body else, Ma'am.

Nar. His name again!—Consider.—Never mention it; I desire you.

Patty. Not I, Ma'am, not I. But, if our voyage from England was so pleasant, it wasn't owing to Mr. Inkle, I'm certain. He didn't play the fiddle in our cabin, and dance on the deck, and come languishing with a glass of warm water in his hand, when we were sea-sick. Ah, Ma'am, that water warmed your heart, I'm confident. Mr. Inkle; no, no! Captain Cam——

Nar. There is no end to this! Remember, Patty, keep your secrecy, or you entirely lose my favour.

Patty. Never fear me, Ma'am. But if somebody I know is not acquainted with the governor, there's such a thing as dancing at balls, and squeezing hands when you lead up, and squeezing them again when you cast down, and walking on the quay on a morning. Oh, I wont utter a syllable. [*Archly*.] But remember, I'm as close as a patch-box. Mum's the word, Ma'am, I promise you.

This maxim let every one hear,
Proclaim'd from the north to the south;
Whatever comes in at your ear,
Should never run out at your mouth.
We servants, like servants of state,
Should listen to all, and be dumb;
Let others harangue and debate,
We look wise—shake our heads—and are mum.

The judge in dull dignity dress'd,
In silence hears barristers preach;
And then, to prove silence is best,
He'll get up, and give them a speech.
By saying but little, the maid
Will keep her swain under her thumb;
And the lover that's true to h s trade,
Is certain to kiss, and cry mum. [*Exit*.

Nar. How awkward is my present situation! promised to one, who, perhaps, may never again be heard of; and who, I am sure, if he ever appears to claim me, will do it merely on the score of interest—pressed too by another, who has already, I fear, too much interest in my heart—what can I do? What plan can I follow?

Enter CAMPLEY.

Cam. Follow my advice, Narcissa, by all means. Enlist with me, under the best banners in the world. General Hymen for my money! little Cupid's his drummer: he has been beating a round rub-a-dub on our hearts, and we have only to obey the word of command, fall into the ranks of matrimony, and march through life together.

Nar. Then consider our situation.

Cam. That has been duly considered. In short, the case stands exactly thus—your intended spouse is all for money: I am all for love: he is a rich rogue: I am rather a poor honest fellow. He would pocket your fortune; I will take you without a fortune in your pocket.

Nar. Oh! I am sensible of the favour, most gallant Captain Campley; and my father, no doubt, will be very much obliged to you.

Cam. Ay, there's the devil of it! Sir Christopher Curry's confounded good character—knocks me up at once. Yet I am not acquainted with him, neither; not known to him, even by sight; being here only as a private gentleman on a visit to my old relation, out of regimentals, and so forth; and not introduced to the Governor as other officers of the place: but then the report of his hospitality—his odd, blunt, whimsical, friendship—his whole behaviour——

Nar. All stare you in the face, eh, Campley?

Cam. They do, till they put me out of countenance: but then again, when I stare you in the face, I can't think I have any reason to be ashamed of my proceedings—I stick here, between my love and my principle, like a song between a toast and a sentiment.

Nar. And if your love and your principle were put in the scales, you doubt which would weigh most?

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Camp. Oh, no! I should act like a rogue, and let principle kick the beam; for love, Narcissa, is as heavy as lead, and, like a bullet from a pistol, could never go through the heart, if it wanted weight.

Nar. Or rather like the pistol itself, that often goes off without any harm done. Your fire must end in smoke, I believe.

Camp. Never, whilst——

Nar. Nay, a truce to protestations at present. What signifies talking to me, when you have such opposition from others? Why hover about the city, instead of boldly attacking the guard? Wheel about, captain! face the enemy! march! charge! rout 'em—Drive 'em before you, and then—

Camp. And then—

Nar. Lud have mercy on the poor city!

Mars would oft, his conquest over,
To the Cyprian goddess yield;
Venus gloried in a lover,
Who, like him, could brave the field.
Mars would oft, &c.

In the cause of battles hearty,
Still the god would strive to prove,
He who faced an adverse party
Fittest was to meet his love.

Hear then, captains, ye who bluster,
Hear the god of war declare,
Cowards never can pass muster;
Courage only wins the fair.

Enter PATTY, *hastily.*

Patty. Oh lud, Ma'am, I'm frightened out of my wits! sure as I'm alive, Ma'am, Mr. Inkle is not dead; I saw his man, Ma'am, just now, coming ashore in a boat with other passengers, from the vessel that's come to the island. [*Exit.*

Nar. [*To* CAMP.] Look'ye, Mr. Campley, something has happened which makes me wave ceremonies.—If you mean to apply to my father, remember that delays are dangerous.

Camp. Indeed!

Nar. I mayn't be always in the same mind, you know. [*Smiling.*

Camp. Nay, then—Gad, I'm almost afraid too—but living in this state of doubt is torment. I'll e'en put a good face on the matter; cock my hat; make my bow; and try to reason the Governor into compliance. Faint heart never won a fair lady.

Why should I vain fears discover,
Prove a dying, sighing swain?
Why turn shilly-shally lover,
Only to prolong my pain?

When we woo the dear enslaver,
Boldly ask, and she will grant;
How should we obtain a favour,
But by telling what we want?

Should the nymph be found complying,
Nearly then the battle's won;
Parents think 'tis vain denying,
When half the work is fairly done.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter TRUDGE *and* WOWSKI, *as from the ship; with a dirty* RUNNER, *from one of the inns.*

Run. This way, Sir; if you will let me recommend——

Trudge. Come along, Wows! Take care of your furs, and your feathers, my girl.

Wows. Iss.

Trudge. That's right.—Somebody might steal 'em, perhaps.

Wows. Steal!—What that?

Trudge. Oh, lord! see what one loses by not being born in a Christian country.

Run. If you would, Sir, but mention to your master, the house that belongs to my master: the best accommodations on the quay.—

Trudge. What's your sign, my lad?

Run. The Crown, Sir—Here it is.

Trudge. Well, get us a room for half an hour, and we'll come: and hark'ye! let it be light and airy, d'ye hear? My master has been used to your open apartments lately.

Run. Depend on it.—Much obliged to you, Sir. [*Exit.*

Wows. Who be that fine man? He great prince?

Trudge. A prince—Ha, ha!—No, not quite a prince—but he belongs to the crown. But how do you like this, Wows? Isn't fine?

Wows. Wonder!

Trudge. Fine men, eh!

Wows. Iss! all white; like you.

Trudge. Yes, all the fine men are like me: as different from your people as powder and ink, or paper and blacking.

Wows. And fine lady—Face like snow.

Trudge. What! the fine ladies' complexions? Oh, yes, exactly; for too much heat very often dissolves 'em! Then their dress, too.

Wows. Your countrymen dress so?

Trudge. Better, better, a great deal. Why, a young flashy Englishman will sometimes carry a whole fortune on his back. But did you mind the women? All here—and there; [*Pointing before and behind.*] they have it all from us in England.—And then the fine things they carry on their heads, Wowski.

Wows. Iss. One lady carry good fish—so fine, she call every body to look at her.

Trudge. Pshaw! an old woman bawling flounders. But the fine girls we meet here on the quay—so round, and so plump!

Wows. You not love me now.

Trudge. Not love you! Zounds, have not I given you proofs?

Wows. Iss. Great many: but now you get here, you forget poor Wowski!

Trudge. Not I: I'll stick to you like wax.

Wows. Ah, I fear! What make you love me now?

Trudge. Gratitude, to be sure.

Wows. What that?

Trudge. Ha! this it is, now, to live without education. The poor dull devils of her country are all in the practice of gratitude, without finding out what it means; while we can tell the meaning of it, with little or no practice at all.—Lord, lord what a fine advantage Christian learning is! Hark'ee, Wows!

Wows. Iss.

Trudge. Now we've accomplished our landing, I'll accomplish you. You remember the instructions I gave you on the voyage?

Wows. Iss.

Trudge. Let's see now—What are you to do, when I introduce you to the nobility, gentry, and others—of my acquaintance?

Wows. Make believe sit down; then get up.

Trudge. Let me see you do it. [*She makes a low courtesy.*] Very well! And how are you to recommend yourself when you have nothing to say, amongst all our great friends?

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Wows. Grin—show my teeth.

Trudge. Right! they'll think you lived with people of fashion. But suppose you meet an old shabby friend in misfortune, that you don't wish to be seen to speak to—what would you do?

Wows. Look blind—not see him.

Trudge. Why would you do that?

Wows. 'Cause I can't see good friend in distress.

Trudge. That's a good girl! and I wish every body could boast of so kind a motive for such cursed cruel behaviour.—Lord! how some of your flashy banker's clerks have cut me in Threadneedle-street.—But come, though we have got among fine folks, here, in an English settlement, I wont be ashamed of my old acquaintance: yet, for my own part, I should not be sorry, now, to see my old friend with a new face.—Odsbobs! I see Mr. Inkle—Go in, Wows;—call for what you like best.

Wows. Then, I call for you—ah! I fear I not see you often now. But you come soon—

Remember when we walk'd alone,
And heard, so gruff, the lion growl;
And when the moon so bright it shone,
We saw the wolf look up and howl;
I led you well, safe to our cell,
While, tremblingly,
You said to me,——
And kiss'd so sweet—dear Wowski tell,
How could I live without ye?

But now you come across the sea,
And tell me here no monsters roar;
You'll walk alone and leave poor me,
When wolves to fright you howl no more.
But, ah! think well on our old cell,
Where, tremblingly,
You kiss'd poor me——
Perhaps, you'll say—dear Wowski tell,
How can I live without ye?
[*Exit.*

Trudge. Eh! oh! my master's talking to somebody on the quay. Who have we here!

Enter first PLANTER.

Plan. Hark'ee, young man! Is that young Indian of yours going to our market?

Trudge. Not she—she never went to market in all her life.

Plan. I mean, is she for our sale of slaves? Our Black Fair?

Trudge. A black fair! ha, ha, ha! You hold it on a brown green, I suppose.

Plan. She's your slave, I take it?

Trudge. Yes; and I'm her humble servant, I take it.

Plan. Ay, ay; natural enough at sea.—But at how much do you value her?

Trudge. Just as much as she has saved me—My own life.

Plan. Pshaw! you mean to sell her?

Trudge. [*Staring.*] Zounds! what a devil of a fellow! Sell Wows!—my poor, dear, dingy wife!

Plan. Come, come, I've heard your story from the ship.—Don't let's haggle; I'll bid as fair as any trader amongst us: but no tricks upon travellers, young man, to raise your price.—Your wife, indeed! Why she's no Christian?

Trudge. No; but I am; so I shall do as I'd be done by, Master Black-market; and, if you were a good one yourself, you'd know, that fellow-feeling for a poor body, who wants your help, is the noblest mark of our religion.—I wouldn't be articled clerk to such a fellow for the world.

Plan. Hey-day! the booby's in love with her! Why, sure, friend, you would not live here with a black?

Trudge. Plague on't; there it is. I shall be laughed out of my honesty, here.—But you may be jogging, friend; I may feel a little queer, perhaps, at showing her face—but, dam'me, if ever I do any thing to make me ashamed of showing my own.

Plan. Why, I tell you, her very complexion—

Trudge. Rot her complexion——I'll tell you what, Mr. Fair-trader; if your head and heart were to change places, I've a notion you'd be as black in the face as an ink-bottle.

Plan. Pshaw! the fellow's a fool—a rude rascal—he ought to be sent back to the savages, again. He's not fit to live among us Christians. [*Exit.*

Trudge. Oh, here he is at last.

Enter INKLE, *and a second* PLANTER.

Inkle. Nay, Sir, I understand your customs well: your Indian markets are not unknown to me.

Plan. And, as you seem to understand business, I need not tell you that despatch is the soul of it. Her name you say is—

Inkle. Yarico: but urge this no more, I beg you. I must not listen to it: for to speak freely, her anxious care of me demands, that here,—though here it may seem strange—I should avow my love for her.

Plan. Lord help you, for a merchant!—It's the first time I ever heard a trader talk of love; except, indeed, the love of trade, and the love of the Sweet Molly, my ship.

Inkle. Then, Sir, you cannot feel my situation.

Plan. Oh, yes, I can! We have a hundred such cases just after a voyage; but they never last long on land. It's amazing how constant a young man is in a ship! But, in two words, will you dispose of her or no?

Inkle. In two words then, meet me here at noon, and we'll speak further on this subject; and lest you think I trifle with your business, hear why I wish this pause. Chance threw me, on my passage to your island, among a savage people. Deserted,—defenceless,—cut off from my companions,—my life at stake,—to this young creature I owe my preservation;—she found me, like a dying bough, torn from its kindred branches; which, as it drooped, she moistened with her tears.

Plan. Nay, nay, talk like a man of this world.

Inkle. Your patience.—And yet your interruption goes to my present feelings; for on our sail to this your island—the thoughts of time mispent—doubt—fears—for call it what you will—have much perplexed me; and as your spires arose, reflections still rose with them; for here, Sir, lie my interests, great connections, and other weighty matters—which now I need not mention——

Plan. But which her presence here will mar.

Inkle. Even so—And yet the gratitude I owe her!

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Plan. Pshaw! So because she preserved your life, your gratitude is to make you give up all you have to live upon.

Inkle. Why in that light indeed—This never struck me yet, I'll think on't.

Plan. Ay, ay, do so—Why what return can the wench wish more than taking her from a wild, idle, savage people, and providing for her, here, with reputable hard work, in a genteel, polished, tender, Christian country?

Inkle. Well, Sir, at noon——

Plan. I'll meet you—but remember, young gentleman, you must get her off your hands—you must indeed.—I shall have her a bargain, I see that—your servant!—Zounds, how late it is—but never be put out of your way for a woman—I must run—my wife will play the devil with me for keeping breakfast. [*Exit.*

Inkle. Trudge.

Trudge. Sir!

Inkle. Have you provided a proper apartment?

Trudge. Yes, Sir, at the Crown here; a neat, spruce room, they tell me. You have not seen such a convenient lodging this good while, I believe.

Inkle. Are there no better inns in the town?

Trudge. Um—Why there's the Lion, I hear, and the Bear, and the Boar—but we saw them at the door of all our late lodgings, and found but bad accommodations within, Sir.

Inkle. Well, run to the end of the quay, and conduct Yarico hither. The road is straight before you: you can't miss it.

Trudge. Very well, Sir. What a fine thing it is to turn one's back on a master, without running into a wolf's belly! One can follow one's nose on a message here, and be sure it wont be bit off by the way. [*Exit.*

Inkle. Let me reflect a little. Part with her—Justified!—Pshaw, my interest, honour, engagements to Narcissa, all demand it. My father's precepts, too—I can remember, when I was a boy, what pains he took to mould me!—Schooled me from morn to night—and still the burthen of his song was—prudence! Prudence, Thomas, and you'll rise.—Early he taught me numbers; which he said, and he said rightly, would give me a quick view of loss and profit; and banish from my mind those idle impulses of passion, which mark young thoughtless spendthrifts. His maxims rooted in my heart, and as I grew—they grew; till I was reckoned, among our friends, a steady, sober, solid, good young man; and all the neighbours called me the prudent Mr. Thomas. And shall I now, at once, kick down the character which I have raised so warily?—Part with her——The thought once struck me in our cabin, as she lay sleeping by me; but, in her slumbers, she past her arm around me, murmured a blessing on my name, and broke my meditations.

Enter YARICO *and* TRUDGE.

Yar. My love!

Trudge. I have been showing her all the wigs and bales of goods we met on the quay, Sir.

Yar. Oh! I have feasted my eyes on wonders.

Trudge. And I'll go feast on a slice of beef, in the inn, here. [*Exit.*

Yar. My mind has been so busy, that I almost forgot even you. I wish you had staid with me—You would have seen such sights!

Inkle. Those sights are grown familiar to me, Yarico.

Yar. And yet I wish they were not.—You might partake my pleasures—but now again, methinks, I will not wish so—for, with too much gazing, you might neglect poor Yarico.

Inkle. Nay, nay, my care is still for you.

Yar. I'm sure it is: and if I thought it was not, I'd tell you tales about our poor old grot—Did you remember our palm-tree near the brook, where in the shade you often stretched yourself, while I would take your head upon my lap, and sing my love to sleep. I know you'll love me then.

Our grotto was the sweetest place!
The bending boughs, with fragrance blowing,
Would check the brook's impetuous pace,
Which murmur'd to be stopp'd from flowing,
'Twas there we met, and gazed our fill.
Ah! think on this, and love me still.

'Twas then my bosom first knew fear,
—Fear, to an Indian maid a stranger——
The war-song, arrows, hatchet, spear,
All warn'd me of my lover's danger.
For him did cares my bosom fill;
Ah! think on this, and love me still.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—SIR CHRISTOPHER CURRY'S.

Enter SIR CHRISTOPHER *and* MEDIUM.

Sir C. I tell you, old Medium, you are all wrong. Plague on your doubts! Inkle shall have my Narcissa. Poor fellow! I dare say he's finely chagrined at this temporary parting—Eat up with the blue devils, I warrant.

Med. Eat up by the black devils, I warrant; for I left him in hellish hungry company.

Sir C. Pshaw! he'll arrive with the next vessel, depend on't—besides, have not I had this in view ever since they were children? I must and will have it so, I tell you. Is not it, as it were, a marriage made above? They shall meet, I'm positive.

Med. Shall they? Then they must meet where the marriage was made; for, hang me, if I think it will ever happen below.

Sir C. Ha!—and if that is the case—hang me, if I think you'll ever be at the celebration of it.

Med. Yet, let me tell you, Sir Christopher Curry, my character is as unsullied as a sheet of white paper.

Sir C. Well said, old fool's cap! and it's as mere a blank as a sheet of white paper. You are honest, old Medium, by comparison, just as a fellow sentenced to transportation is happier than his companion condemned to the gallows—Very worthy, because you are no rogue; tender hearted, because you never go to fires and executions; and an affectionate father and husband, because you never pinch your children, or kick your wife out of bed.

Med. And that, as the world goes, is more than every man can say for himself. Yet, since you force me to speak my positive qualities—but, no matter,—you remember me in London: didn't I, as member of the Humane Society, bring a man out of the New River, who, it was afterwards found, had done me an injury?

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Sir C. And dam'me, if I would not kick any man into the New River that had done me an injury. There's the difference of our honesty. Oons! if you want to be an honest fellow, act from the impulse of nature. Why, you have no more gall than a pigeon.

Med. Ha! You're always so hasty; among the hodge-podge of your foibles, passion is always predominant.

Sir C. So much the better.——Foibles, quotha? foibles are foils that give additional lustre to the gems of virtue. You have not so many foils as I, perhaps.

Med. And what's more, I don't want 'em, Sir Christopher, I thank you.

Sir C. Very true; for the devil a gem have you to set off with 'em.

Med. Well, well; I never mention errors; that, I flatter myself, is no disagreeable quality.—It don't become me to say you are hot.

Sir C. 'Sblood! but it does become you: it becomes every man, especially an Englishman, to speak the dictates of his heart.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. An English vessel, Sir, just arrived in the harbour.

Sir C. A vessel! Ods my life!—Now for the news—If it is but as I hope—Any despatches?

Serv. This letter, Sir, brought by a sailor from the quay. [*Exit.*

Med. Well, read, Sir Christopher.

Sir C. [*Opening the letter.*] Huzza! here it is. He's safe—safe and sound at Barbadoes. [*Reading.*] *Sir, My master, Mr. Inkle, is just arrived in your harbour.* Here, read, read! old Medium—

Med. [*Reading.*] Um—*Your harbour—We were taken up by an English vessel on the 14th ult. He only waits till I have puffed his hair, to pay his respects to you, and Miss Narcissa.—In the mean time, he has ordered me to brush up this letter for your honour, from your humble servant, to command.* TIMOTHY TRUDGE.

Sir C. Hey day! here's a style! the voyage has jumbled the fellow's brains out of their places; the water has made his head turn round. But no matter; mine turns round too. I'll go and prepare Narcissa directly, they shall be married, slap-dash, as soon as he comes from the quay. From Neptune to Hymen; from the hammock to the bridal bed—Ha! old boy!

Med. Well, well; don't flurry yourself—you're so hot!

Sir C. Hot! blood, arn't I in the West Indies? Arn't I Governor of Barbadoes? He shall have her as soon as he sets his foot on shore.—She shall rise to him like Venus out of the sea. His hair puffed! He ought to have been puffing, here, out of breath, by this time.

Med. Very true; but Venus's husband is always supposed to be lame, you know, Sir Christopher.

Sir C. Well, now do, my good fellow, run down to the shore, and see what detains him. [*Hurrying him off.*

Med. Well, well; I will, I will. [*Exit.*

Sir C. In the mean time, I'll get ready Narcissa, and all shall be concluded in a second. My heart's set upon it.—Poor fellow! after all his rambles, and tumbles, and jumbles, and fits of despair,—I shall be rejoiced to see him. I have not seen him since he was that high.—But zounds! he's so tardy!

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. A strange gentleman, Sir, come from the quay, desires to see you.

Sir C. From the quay? Ods my life!—'Tis he—'Tis Inkle! show him up, directly. [*Exit* SERVANT.] The rogue is expeditious after all.—I'm so happy.

Enter CAMPLEY.

My dear fellow! [*Embracing him.*] I'm rejoiced to see you. Welcome; welcome here with all my soul!

Camp. This reception, Sir Christopher, is beyond my warmest wishes.—Unknown to you—

Sir C. Ay, ay; we shall be better acquainted by and by. Well, and how, eh? Tell me!—But old Medium and I have talked over your affair a hundred times a day, ever since Narcissa arrived.

Camp. You surprise me! Are you then really acquainted with the whole affair?

Sir C. Every tittle.

Camp. And, can you, Sir, pardon what is past?——

Sir C. Pooh! How could you help it?

Camp. Very true—sailing in the same ship—and—

Sir C. Ay, ay; but we have had a hundred conjectures about you. Your despair and distress, and all that.—Yours must have been a damned situation to say the truth.

Camp. Cruel indeed, Sir Christopher! and I flatter myself will move your compassion. I have been almost inclined to despair, indeed, as you say, but when you consider the past state of my mind—the black prospect before me.—

Sir C. Ha, ha! Black enough, I dare say.

Camp. The difficulty I have felt in bringing myself face to face to you.

Sir C. That I am convinced of—but I knew you would come the first opportunity.

Camp. Very true: yet the distance between the governor of Barbadoes and myself. [*Bowing.*

Sir C. Yes—a devilish way asunder.

Camp. Granted, Sir: which has distressed me with the cruelest doubts as to our meeting.

Sir C. It was a toss up.

Camp. The old gentleman seems devilish kind.—Now to soften him. [*Aside.*] Perhaps, Sir, in your younger days, you may have been in the same situation yourself.

Sir C. Who? I! 'sblood! no, never in my life.

Camp. I wish you had, with all my soul, Sir Christopher.

Sir C. Upon my soul, Sir, I am very much obliged to you. [*Bowing.*

Camp. As what I now mention might have greater weight with you.

Sir C. Pooh! pry'thee! I tell you I pitied you from the bottom of my heart.

Camp. Indeed! If with your leave, I may still venture to mention Miss Narcissa—

Sir C. An impatient, sensible young dog! like me to a hair! Set your heart at rest, my boy. She's yours; yours before to-morrow morning.

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Camp. Amazement! I can scarce believe my senses.

Sir C. Zounds! you ought to be out of your senses: but despatch—make short work of it, ever while you live, my boy.

Enter NARCISSA *and* PATTY.

Here, girl: here's your swain. [*To* NARCISSA.

Camp. I just parted with my Narcissa, on the quay.

Sir C. Did you! Ah, sly dog—had a meeting before you came to the old gentleman.—But here—Take him, and make much of him—and, for fear of further separations, you shall e'en be tack'd together directly. What say you, girl?

Camp. Will my Narcissa consent to my happiness?

Nar. I always obey my father's commands, with pleasure, Sir.

Sir C. Od! I'm so happy, I hardly know which way to turn; but we'll have the carriage directly; drive down to the quay; trundle old Spintext into church; and hey for matrimony!

Camp. With all my heart, Sir Christopher; the sooner the better.

Sir C. Your Colinettes, and Arriettes,
Your Damons of the grove,
Who like Fallals, and Pastorals
Waste years in love!
But modern folks know better jokes,
And, courting once begun,
To church they hop at once—and pop—
Egad, all's done!

All. In life we prance a country dance,
Where every couple stands;
Their partners set——a while curvet—
But soon join hands.

Nar. When at our feet, so trim and neat,
The powder'd lover sues,
He vows he dies, the lady sighs,
But can't refuse.
Ah! how can she unmoved ere see
Her swain his death incur?
If once the Squire is seen expire,
He lives with her.

All. In life we prance, &c. &c.

Patty. When John and Bet are fairly met
John boldly tries his luck;
He steals a buss, without more fuss,
The bargain's struck.
Whilst things below are going so,
Is Betty pray to blame?
Who knows up stairs, her mistress fares
Just, just the same.

All. In life we prance, &c. &c. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—The Quay.

Enter PATTY.

Patty. Mercy on us! what a walk I have had of it! Well, matters go on swimmingly at the governor's—The old gentleman has order'd the carriage, and the young couple will be whisked, here, to church, in a quarter of an hour. My business is to prevent young sobersides, young Inkle, from appearing, to interrupt the ceremony.—Ha! here's the Crown, where I hear he is housed. So now to find Trudge, and trump up a story, in the true style of a chambermaid. [*Goes into the house.*] [PATTY, *within.*] I tell you it don't signify, and I will come up. [TRUDGE, *within.*] But it does signify, and you can't come up.

Re-enter PATTY, *with* TRUDGE.

Patty. You had better say at once, I sha'n't.

Trudge. Well then, you sha'n't.

Patty. Savage! Pretty behaviour you have picked up among the Hottypots! Your London civility, like London itself, will soon be lost in smoke, Mr. Trudge; and the politeness you have studied so long in Threadneedle-street, blotted out by the blacks you have been living with.

Trudge. No such thing; I practised my politeness all the while I was in the woods. Our very lodging taught me good manners; for I could never bring myself to go into it without bowing.

Patty. Don't tell me! A mighty civil reception you give a body, truly, after a six weeks parting.

Trudge. Gad, you're right; I am a little out here, to be sure. [*Kisses her.*] Well, how do you do?

Patty. Pshaw, fellow! I want none of your kisses.

Trudge. Oh! very well—I'll take it again. [*Offers to kiss her.*

Patty. Be quiet: I want to see Mr. Inkle; I have a message to him from Miss Narcissa. I shall get a sight of him, now, I believe.

Trudge. May be not. He's a little busy at present.

Patty. Busy—ha! Plodding! What he's at his multiplication again?

Trudge. Very likely; so it would be a pity to interrupt him, you know.

Patty. Certainly; and the whole of my business was to prevent his hurrying himself—Tell him, we sha'n't be ready to receive him, at the governor's, till to-morrow, d'ye hear?

Trudge. No?

Patty. No. Things are not prepared. The place isn't in order; and the servants have not had proper notice of the arrival.

Trudge. Oh! let me alone to give the servants notice—rat-tat-tat—It's all the notice we had in Threadneedle-street of the arrival of a visitor.

Patty. Threadneedle-street! Threadneedle nonsense! I'd have you to know we do every thing here with an air. Matters have taken another turn—Style! Style, Sir, is required here, I promise you.

Trudge. Turn—Style! And pray what style will serve your turn now, Madam Patty?

Patty. A due dignity and decorum, to be sure. Sir Christopher intends Mr. Inkle, you know, for his son-in-law, and must receive him in public form, (which can't be till to-morrow morning) for the honour of his governorship: why the whole island will ring of it.

Trudge. The devil it will!

Patty. Yes; they've talked of nothing but my mistress's beauty and fortune for these six weeks. Then he'll be introduced to the bride, you know.

Trudge. O, my poor master!

Patty. Then a public breakfast; then a procession; then, if nothing happens to prevent

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it, he'll get into church and be married in a crack.

Trudge. Then he'll get into a damned scrape, in a crack. Ah! poor Madam Yarico! My poor pilgarlic of a master, what will become of him! [*Half aside.*

Patty. Why, what's the matter with the booby?

Trudge. Nothing, nothing——he'll be hanged for poli-bigamy.

Patty. Polly who?

Trudge. It must out—Patty!

Patty. Well?

Trudge. Can you keep a secret?

Patty. Try me!

Trudge. Then [*Whispering.*] my master keeps a girl.

Patty. Oh monstrous! another woman?

Trudge. As sure as one and one makes two.

Patty. [*Aside.*] Rare news for my mistress! —Why I can hardly believe it; the grave, sly, steady, sober Mr. Inkle, do such a thing!

Trudge. Pooh! it's always your sly, sober fellows, that go the most after the girls.

Patty. Well; I should sooner suspect you.

Trudge. Me? Oh Lord! he, he!—Do you think any smart, tight, little, black-eyed wench, would be struck with my figure? [*Conceitedly.*

Patty. Pshaw! never mind your figure. Tell me how it happened?

Trudge. You shall hear: when the ship left us ashore, my master turned as pale as a sheet of paper. It isn't every body that's blessed with courage, Patty.

Patty. True!

Trudge. However, I bid him cheer up; told him, to stick to my elbow: took the lead, and began our march.

Patty. Well?

Trudge. We hadn't gone far, when a damned one-eyed black boar, that grinned like a devil, came down the hill in a jog trot! My master melted as fast as a pot of pomatum!

Patty. Mercy on us!

Trudge. But what does I do, but whips out my desk knife, that I used to cut the quills with at home; met the monster, and slit up his throat like a pen——The boar bled like a pig.

Patty. Lord! Trudge, what a great traveller you are!

Trudge. Yes; I remember we fed on the flitch for a week.

Patty. Well, well; but the lady.

Trudge. The lady? Oh, true. By and by we came to a cave—a large hollow room, underground, like a warehouse in the Adelphi—Well; there we were half an hour, before I could get him to go in; there's no accounting for fear, you know. At last, in we went to a place hung round with skins, as it might be a furrier's shop, and there was a fine lady, snoring on a bow and arrows.

Patty. What, all alone?

Trudge. Eh!——No—no—Hum—She had a young lion by way of a lap-dog.

Patty. Gemini; what did you do?

Trudge. Gave her a jog, and she opened her eyes—she struck my master immediately.

Patty. Mercy on us! with what?

Trudge. With her beauty, you ninny, to be sure: and they soon brought matters to bear. The wolves witnessed the contract—I gave her away—The crows croaked amen; and we had board and lodging for nothing.

Patty. And this is she he has brought to Barbadoes?

Trudge. The same.

Patty. Well; and tell me, Trudge;—she's pretty, you say——Is she fair or brown? or——

Trudge. Um! she's a good comely copper.

Patty. How! a tawney?

Trudge. Yes, quite dark; but very elegant; like a Wedgwood tea-pot.

Patty. Oh! the monster! the filthy fellow! Live with a blackamoor!

Trudge. Why, there's no great harm in't, I hope?

Patty. Faugh! I wouldn't let him kiss me for the world: he'd make my face all smutty.

Trudge. Zounds! you are mighty nice all of a sudden; but I'd have you to know, Madam Patty, that blackamoor ladies, as you call 'em, are some of the very few, whose complexions never rub off! S'bud, if they did, Wows and I should have changed faces by this time—But mum; not a word for your life.

Patty. Not I! except to the Governor and family. [*Aside.*] But I must run—and, remember, Trudge, if your master has made a mistake here, he has himself to thank for his pains. [*Exit.*

Trudge. Pshaw! these girls are so plagey proud of their white and red! but I wont be shamed out of Wows, that's flat. Master, to be sure, while we were in the forest, taught Yarico to read, with his pencil and pocket-book. What then? Wows comes on fine and fast in her lessons. A little awkward at first to be sure.—Ha, ha!—She's so used to feed with her hands, that I can't get her to eat her victuals, in a genteel, Christian way, for the soul of me; when she has stuck a morsel on her fork, she don't know how to guide it; but pops up her knuckles to her mouth, and the meat goes up to her ear. But, no matter—After all the fine, flashy London girls, Wowski's the wench for my money.

A clerk I was in London gay,
  Jemmy linkum feedle,
And went in boots to see the play,
  Merry fiddlem tweedle.
I march'd the lobby, twirl'd my stick,
  Diddle, daddle, deedle;
The girls all cried, 'He's quite the kick.'
  Oh, jemmy linkum feedle.

Hey! for America I sail,
  Yankee doodle deedle;
The sailor boys cried 'smoke his tail!'
  Jemmy linkum feedle.
On English belles I turn'd my back,
  Diddle daddle deedle;
And got a foreign Fair, quite black,
  O twaddle, twaddle, tweedle!

Your London girls, with roguish trip
  Wheedle, wheedle, wheedle,
May boast their pouting under-lip,
  Fiddle, faddle, feedle.
My Wows would beat a hundred such,
  Diddle, daddle, deedle,
Whose upper-lip pouts twice as much,
  O, pretty double wheedle!

Rings I'll buy to deck her toes;
  Jemmy linkum feedle;
A feather fine shall grace her nose;
  Waving siddle seedle.

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With jealousy I ne'er shall burst;
Who'd steal my bone of bone-a?
A white Othello, I can trust
A dingy Desdemona. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—A Room in the Crown.

Enter INKLE.

Inkle. I know not what to think—I have given her distant hints of parting; but still, so strong her confidence in my affection, she prattles on without regarding me. Poor Yarico! I must not—cannot quit her. When I would speak, her look, her mere simplicity disarms me: I dare not wound such innocence. Simplicity is like a smiling babe; which, to the ruffian that would murder it, stretching its little, naked, helpless arms, pleads, speechless, its own cause. And yet Narcissa's family—

Enter TRUDGE.

Trudge. There he is, like a beau bespeaking a coat—doubting which colour to choose—Sir—

Inkle. What now?

Trudge. Nothing unexpected, Sir:—I hope you wont be angry.

Inkle. Angry!

Trudge. I'm sorry for it; but I am come to give you joy, Sir.

Inkle. Joy!——of what?

Trudge. A wife, Sir; a white one.—I know it will vex you, but Miss Narcissa means to make you happy, to-morrow morning.

Inkle. To-morrow!

Trudge. Yes, Sir; and as I have been out of employ, in both my capacities, lately, after I have dressed your hair, I may draw up the marriage articles.

Inkle. Whence comes your intelligence, Sir?

Trudge. Patty told me all that has passed in the Governor's family, on the quay, Sir.—Women, you know, can never keep a secret.—You'll be introduced in form, with the whole island to witness it.

Inkle. So public too?——Unlucky!

Trudge. There will be nothing but rejoicings, in compliment to the wedding, she tells me; all noise and uproar! Married people like it, they say.

Inkle. Strange! That I should be so blind to my interest, as to be the only person this distresses!

Trudge. They are talking of nothing else but the match, it seems.

Inkle. Confusion! How can I, in honour, retract?

Trudge. And the bride's merits——

Inkle. True!—a fund of merits!—I would not—but from necessity—a case so nice as this—I—would not wish to retract.

Trudge. Then they call her so handsome.

Inkle. Very true! so handsome! the whole world would laugh at me: they'd call it folly to retract.

Trudge. And then they say so much of her fortune.

Inkle. O death! it would be madness to retract. Surely, my faculties have slept, and this long parting from my Narcissa, has blunted my sense of her accomplishments. 'Tis this alone makes me so weak and wavering. I'll see her immediately. [*Going.*

Trudge. Stay, stay, Sir; I am desired to tell you, the Governor went open his gates to us till to-morrow morning, and is now making preparations to receive you at breakfast, with all the honours of matrimony.

Inkle. Well, be it so; it will give me time, at all events, to put my affairs in train.

Trudge. Yes; it's a short respite before execution; and if your honour was to go and comfort poor Madam Yarico——

Inkle. Damnation! Scoundrel, how dare you offer your advice?—I dread to think of her!

Trudge. I've done, Sir, I've done—But know I should blubber over Wows all night if I thought of parting with her in the morning.

Inkle. Insolence! begone, Sir!

Trudge. Lord, Sir, I only——

Inkle. Get down stairs, Sir, directly.

Trudge. [*Going out.*] Ah! you may well put your hand to your head; and a bad head it must be, to forget that Madam Yarico prevented her countrymen from peeling off the upper part of it. [*Aside. Exit.*

Inkle. 'Sdeath, what am I about? How have I slumbered?—Is it I?—I—who, in London, laughed at the younkers of the town—and when I saw their chariots, with some fine, tempting girl, perked in the corner, come shopping to the city, would cry—Ah!—there sits ruin—there flies the Greenhorn's money! then wondered with myself how men could trifle time on women; or, indeed, think of any women without fortunes. And now, forsooth, it rests with me to turn romantic puppy, and give up all for love.—Give up!—Oh, monstrous folly!—thirty thousand pounds!

TRUDGE, *peeping in at the door.*

Trudge. May I come in, Sir?

Inkle. What does the booby want?

Trudge. Sir, your uncle wants to see you.

Inkle. Mr. Medium! show him up directly. [*Exit* TRUDGE.

He must not know of this. To-morrow!—I wish this marriage were more distant, that I might break it to her by degrees; she'd take my purpose better, were it less suddenly delivered.

Enter MEDIUM.

Med. Ah, here he is! Give me your hand, nephew! welcome, welcome to Barbadoes, with all my heart.

Inkle. I am glad to meet you here, uncle!

Med. That you are, that you are, I'm sure.—Lord! lord! when we parted last, how I wished we were in a room together, if it was but the black hole! I have not been able to sleep o'nights, for thinking of you. I've laid awake, and fancied I saw you sleeping your last, with your head in the lion's mouth, for a night-cap; and I've never seen a bear brought over, to dance about the street, but I thought you might be bobbing up and down in its belly.

Inkle. I am very much obliged to you.

Med. Ay, ay, I am happy enough to find you safe and sound, I promise you. But you have a fine prospect before you now, young man. I am come to take you with me to Sir Christopher, who is impatient to see you.

Inkle. To-morrow, I hear he expects me.

Med. To-morrow! directly—this—moment—in half a second.—I left him standing on tiptoe, as he calls it, to embrace you; and he's

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standing on tip-toe now in the great parlour, and there he'll stand till you come to him.

Inkle. Is he so hasty?

Med. Hasty! he's all pepper—and wonders you are not with him, before it's possible to get at him. Hasty indeed! Why, he vows you shall have his daughter this very night.

Inkle. What a situation!

Med. Why, it's hardly fair just after a voyage. But come, bustle, bustle, he'll think you neglect him. He's rare and touchy, I can tell you; and if he once takes it in his head that you show the least slight to his daughter, it would knock up all your schemes in a minute.

Inkle. Confusion! if he should hear of Yarico! [*Aside.*

Med. But at present you are all and all with him; he has been telling me his intention these six weeks: you'll be a fine warm husband, I promise you.

Inkle. This cursed connexion! [*Aside.*

Med. It is not for me, though, to tell you how to play your cards; you are a prudent young man, and can make calculations in a wood.

Inkle. Fool, fool, fool! [*Aside.*

Med. Why, what the devil is the matter with you?

Inkle. It must be done effectually, or all is lost; mere parting would not conceal it. [*Aside.*

Med. Ah! now he's got to his damned square root again, I suppose, and old Nick would not move him—why, nephew!

Inkle. The planter that I spoke with cannot be arrived—but time is precious—the first I meet—common prudence now demands it. I'm fixed; I'll part with her. [*Aside. Exit.*

Med. Damn me, but he's mad! the woods have turned the poor boy's brains; he's scalped, and gone crazy! hoho! Inkle! nephew! gad, I'll spoil your arithmetic, I warrant you. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—The Quay.

Enter SIR CHRISTOPHER CURRY.

Sir C. Ods my life! I can scarce contain my happiness. I have left them safe in church in the middle of the ceremony. I ought to have given Narcissa away, they told me; but I capered about so much for joy, that old Spintext advised me to go and cool my heels on the quay, till it was all over. Od, I'm so happy; and they shall see, now, what an old fellow can do at a wedding.

Enter INKLE.

Inkle. Now for despatch! hark'ee, old gentleman! [*To the Governor.*

Sir C. Well, young gentleman!

Inkle. If I mistake not, I know your business here.

Sir C. 'Egad I believe half the island knows it, by this time.

Inkle. Then to the point—I have a female, whom I wish to part with.

Sir C. Very likely; it's a common case now-a-days, with many a man.

Inkle. If you could satisfy me you would use her mildly, and treat her with more kindness than is usual—for I can tell you she's of no common stamp—perhaps we might agree.

Sir C. Oho! a slave! faith now I think on't my daughter may want an attendant or two extraordinary; and as you say she's a delicate girl, above the common run, and none of your thick lipped, fat nosed, squabby, dumpling dowdies, I don't much care if—

Inkle. And for her treatment—

Sir C. Look ye, young man; I love to be plain: I shall treat her a good deal better than you would, I fancy; for, though I witness this custom every day, I can't help thinking the only excuse for buying our fellow creatures, is to rescue them from the hands of those who are unfeeling enough to bring them to market.

Inkle. Fair words, old gentleman; an Englishman wont put up an affront.

Sir C. An Englishman! more shame for you! men, who so fully feel the blessings of liberty, are doubly cruel in depriving the helpless of their freedom.

Inkle. Let me assure you, Sir, 'tis not my occupation; but for a private reason—an instant pressing necessity—

Sir C. Well, well, I have a pressing necessity too; I can't stand to talk now; I expect company here presently; but if you'll ask for me to-morrow, at the castle—

Inkle. The castle!

Sir C. Ay, Sir, the castle; the Governor's castle; known all over Barbadoes.

Inkle. 'Sdeath, this man must be on the Governor's establishment: his steward, perhaps, and sent after me, while Sir Christopher is impatiently waiting for me. I've gone too far; my secret may be known—— As 'tis I'll win this fellow to my interest. [*To him.*] One word more, Sir: my business must be done immediately; and as you seem acquainted at the castle, if you should see me there——and there I mean to sleep to-night—

Sir C. The devil you do!

Inkle. Your finger on your lips; and never breathe a syllable of this transaction.

Sir C. No! why not?

Inkle. Because for reasons, which perhaps you'll know to-morrow, I might be injured with the Governor, whose most particular friend I am.

Sir C. So! here's a particular friend of mine, coming to sleep at my house, that I never saw in my life. I'll sound this fellow. [*Aside.*] I fancy, young gentleman, as you are such a bosom friend of the Governor's, you can hardly do any thing to alter your situation with him.

Inkle. Oh! pardon me; but you'll find that hereafter—besides, you, doubtless know his character?

Sir C. Oh, as well as my own. But let's understand one another. You must trust me, now you've gone so far. You are acquainted with his character, no doubt, to a hair?

Inkle. I am—I see we shall understand each other. You know him too, I see, as well as I.—A very touchy, testy, hot, old fellow.

Sir C. Here's a scoundrel! I hot and touchy! zounds! I can hardly contain my passion!—but I wont discover myself. I'll see the bottom of this—[*To him.*] Well now, as we seem to have come to a tolerable explanation—let's proceed to business—bring me the woman.

Inkle. No; there you must excuse me. I rather would avoid seeing her more; and wish it to be settled without my seeming interference. My presence might distress her—— You conceive me?

Sir C. Zounds, what an unfeeling rascal!—the poor girl's in love with him, I suppose. No, no, fair and open. My dealing's with

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you, and you only: I see her now, or I declare off.

Inkle. Well then, you must be satisfied: yonder's my servant—ha—a thought has struck me. Come, here Sir.

Enter TRUDGE.

I'll write my purpose, and send it her by him. It is lucky that I taught her to decypher characters: my labour now is paid. [*Takes out his pocket-book and writes.*]—This is somewhat less abrupt; 'twill soften matters. [*To himself.*]—Give this to Yarico; then bring her hither with you.

Trudge. I shall, Sir. [*Going.*

Inkle. Stay; come back. This soft fool, if uninstructed, may add to her distress: his drivelling sympathy may feed her grief, instead of soothing it. When she has read this paper, seem to make light of it; tell her it is a thing of course, done purely for her good. I here inform her that I must part with her. D'ye understand your lesson?

Trudge. Pa—part with Ma—dam Ya-ric-o!

Inkle. Why does the blockhead stammer! I have my reasons. No muttering—and let me tell you, Sir, if your rare bargain were gone too, 'twould be the better: she may babble our story of the forest, and spoil my fortune.

Trudge. I'm sorry for it, Sir: I have lived with you a long while; I've half a year's wages too due the 25th ultimo, due for dressing your hair and scribbling your parchments: but, take my scribbling, take my frizzing, take my wages; and I and Wows will take ourselves off together. She saved my life, and rot me if any thing but death shall part us.

Inkle. Impertinent! Go, and deliver your message.

Trudge. I'm gone, Sir. Lord! lord! I never carried a letter with such ill will in all my born days. [*Exit.*

Sir C. Well—shall I see the girl?

Inkle. She'll be here presently. One thing I had forgot: when she is yours, I need not caution you, after the hints I've given, to keep her from the castle. If Sir Christopher should see her, 'twould lead, you know, to a discovery of what I wish concealed.

Sir C. Depend upon me—Sir Christopher will know no more of our meeting than he does at this moment.

Inkle. Your secrecy shall not be unrewarded: I'll recommend you, particularly, to his good graces.

Sir C. Thank ye, thank ye; but I'm pretty much in his good graces, as it is: I don't know any body he has a greater respect for.

Re-enter TRUDGE.

Inkle. Now, Sir, have you performed your message?

Trudge. Yes: I gave her the letter.

Inkle. And where is Yarico? Did she say she'd come? Didn't you do as you were ordered? Didn't you speak to her?

Trudge. I couldn't, Sir, I couldn't: I intended to say what you bid me—but I felt such a pain in my throat, I couldn't speak a word, for the soul of me; so, Sir, I fell a crying.

Inkle. Blockhead!

Sir C. 'Sblood! but he's a very honest blockhead. Tell me, my good fellow, what said the wench?

Trudge. Nothing at all, Sir. She sat down with her two hands clasped on her knees, and looked so pitifully in my face, I could not stand it. Oh, here she comes. I'll go and find Wows: if I must be melancholy, she shall keep me company. [*Exit.*

Sir C. Ods my life, as comely a wench as ever I saw.

Enter YARICO, *who looks for some time in* INKLE'S *face, bursts into tears, and falls on his neck.*

Inkle. In tears! nay, Yarico! why this?

Yar. Oh, do not—do not leave me!

Inkle. Why, simple girl! I'm labouring for your good. My interest here is nothing: I can do nothing from myself, you are ignorant of our country's customs. I must give way to men more powerful, who will not have me with you. But see, my Yarico, ever anxious for your welfare, I've found a kind, good person, who will protect you.

Yar. Ah! why not you protect me?

Inkle. I have no means—how can I?

Yar. Just as I sheltered you. Take me to yonder mountain, where I see no smoke from tall, high houses, filled with your cruel countrymen. None of your princes, there, will come to take me from you. And should they stray that way, we'll find a lurking place, just like my own poor cave; where many a day I sat beside you, and blessed the chance that brought you to it—that I might save your life.

Sir C. His life! Zounds! my blood boils at the scoundrel's ingratitude!

Yar. Come, come, let's go. I always feared these cities. Let's fly and seek the woods; and there we'll wander hand in hand together. No cares shall vex us then—We'll let the day glide by in idleness; and you shall sit in the shade, and watch the sun beam playing on the brook, while I sing the song that pleases you. —No cares, love, but for food—and we'll live cheerily, I warrant—In the fresh, early morning, you shall hunt down our game, and I will pick you berries—and then, at night, I'll trim our bed of leaves, and lie me down in peace—Oh! we shall be so happy!

Inkle. Hear me, Yarico. My countrymen and yours differ as much in minds as in complexions. We were not born to live in woods and caves—to seek subsistence by pursuing beasts.—We Christians, girl, hunt money; a thing unknown to you.—But, here, 'tis money which brings us ease, plenty, command, power, every thing; and of course happiness. You are the bar to my attaining this; therefore 'tis necessary for my good—and which I think you value—

Yar. You know I do; so much, that it would break my heart to leave you.

Inkle. But we must part: if you are seen with me, I shall lose all.

Yar. I gave up all for you—my friends—my country: all that was dear to me; and still grown dearer since you sheltered there.—All, all was left for you—and were it now to do again—again I'd cross the seas, and follow you, all the world over.

Inkle. We idle time; Sir, she is yours. See you obey this gentleman; 'twill be the better for you. [*Going.*

Yar. O, barbarous! [*Holding him.*] Do not, do not abandon me!

Inkle. No more.

Yar. Stay but a little: I sha'n't live long to be a burden to you: your cruelty has cut me to the heart. Protect me but a little—or I'll

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obey this man, and undergo all hardships for your good: stay but to witness 'em.—I soon shall sink with grief; tarry till then; and hear me bless your name when I am dying; and beg you, now and then, when I am gone, to heave a sigh for your poor Yarico.

Inkle. I dare not listen. You, Sir, I hope, will take good care of her. [*Going.*

Sir C. Care of her!—that I will—I'll cherish her like my own daughter; and pour balm into the heart of a poor, innocent girl, that has been wounded by the artifices of a scoundrel.

Inkle. Ha! 'Sdeath, Sir, how dare you!—

Sir C. 'Sdeath, Sir, how dare you look an honest man in the face?

Inkle. Sir, you shall feel—

Sir C. Feel!—It's more than ever you did, I believe. Mean, sordid wretch! dead to all sense of honour, gratitude, or humanity—I never heard of such barbarity! I have a son-in-law who has been left in the same situation; but, if I thought him capable of such cruelty, dam'me if I would not turn him to sea, with a peck loaf, in a cockle shell.—Come, come, cheer up, my girl! You sha'n't want a friend to protect you, I warrant you.

[*Taking* Yarico *by the hand.*

Inkle. Insolence! The governor shall hear of this insult.

Sir C. The governor! liar! cheat! rogue! impostor! breaking all ties you ought to keep, and pretending to those you have no right to. The governor never had such a fellow in the whole catalogue of his acquaintance—the governor disowns you—the governor disclaims you—the governor abhors you; and to your utter confusion, here stands the governor to tell you so. Here stands old Curry, who never talked to a rogue without telling him what he thought of him.

Inkle. Sir Christopher!—Lost and undone!

Med. [*Without.*] Hole! Young Multiplication! Zounds! I have been peeping in every cranny of the house. Why, young Rule of Three! [*Enters from the inn.*] Oh, here you are at last—Ah, Sir Christopher! what, are you there! too impatient to wait at home. But here's one that will make you easy, I fancy.

[*Tapping* Inkle *on the shoulder.*

Sir C. How came you to know him?

Med. Ha! ha! well that's curious enough too. So you have been talking here, without finding out each other.

Sir C. No, no; I have found him out with a vengeance.

Med. Not you. Why this is the dear boy. It's my nephew, that is; your son-in-law, that is to be. It's Inkle!

Sir C. It's a lie; and you're a purblind old booby—and this dear boy is a damned scoundrel.

Med. Hey-dey, what's the meaning of this! One was mad before, and he has bit the other, I suppose.

Sir C. But here comes the dear boy—the true boy—the jolly boy, piping hot from church, with my daughter.

Enter Campley, Narcissa, *and* Patty.

Med. Campley!

Sir C. Who? Campley;—it's no such thing.

Camp. That's my name, indeed, Sir Christopher.

Sir C. The devil it is! and how came you, Sir, to impose upon me, and assume the name of Inkle! A name which every man of honesty ought to be ashamed of.

Camp. I never did, Sir.—Since I sailed from England with your daughter, my affection has daily encreased: and when I came to explain myself to you, by a number of concurring circumstances, which I am now partly acquainted with, you mistook me for that gentleman. Yet had I even then been aware of your mistake, I must confess, the regard for my own happiness, would have tempted me to let you remain undeceived.

Sir C. And did you, Narcissa, join in—

Nar. How could I, my dear Sir, disobey you?

Patty. Lord, your honour, what young lady could refuse a captain?

Camp. I am a soldier, Sir Christopher. Love and War is the soldier's motto; though my income is trifling to your intended son-in-law's, still the chance of war has enabled me to support the object of my love above indigence. Her fortune, Sir Christopher, I do not consider myself by any means entitled to.

Sir C. 'Sblood! but you must though. Give me your hand, my young Mars, and bless you both together!—Thank you, thank you for cheating an old fellow into giving his daughter to a lad of spirit, when he was going to throw her away upon one, in whose breast the mean passion of avarice smothers the smallest spark of affection, or humanity.

Inkle. Confusion!

Nar. I have this moment heard a story of a transaction in the forest, which, I own, would have rendered compliance with your former commands very disagreeable.

Patty. Yes, Sir, I told my mistress he had brought over a hotty-pot gentlewoman.

Sir C. Yes, but he would have left her for you; [*To* Narcissa.] and you for his interest; and sold you, perhaps, as he has this poor girl, to me, as a requital for preserving his life.

Nar. How!

Enter Trudge *and* Wowski.

Trudge. Come along, Wows! take a long, last leave of your poor mistress: throw your pretty ebony arms about her neck.

Wows. No, no;—she not go; you not leave poor Wowski.

[*Throwing her arms about* Yarico.

Sir C. Poor girl! a companion, I take it!

Trudge. A thing of my own, Sir. I couldn't help following my master's example in the woods——Like master, like man, Sir.

Sir C. But you would not sell her, and be hanged to you, you dog, would you?

Trudge. Hang me like a dog, if I would, Sir.

Sir C. So say I, to every fellow that breaks an obligation due to the feelings of a man. But, old Medium, what have you to say for your hopeful nephew?

Med. I never speak ill of my friends, Sir Christopher.

Sir C. Pshaw!

Inkle. Then let me speak: hear me defend a conduct——

Sir C. Defend! Zounds! plead guilty at once——it's the only hope left of obtaining mercy.

Inkle. Suppose, old gentleman, you had a son?

Sir C. 'Sblood! then I'd make him an honest fellow; and teach him that the feeling heart never knows greater pride than when it's employed in giving succour to the unfortunate.

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I'd teach him to be his father's own son to a hair.

Inkle. Even so my father tutored me: from infancy, bending my tender mind, like a young sapling, to his will——Interest was the grand prop round which he twined my pliant green affections: taught me in childhood to repeat old sayings——all tending to his own fixed principles, and the first sentence that I ever lisped, was charity begins at home.

Sir C. I shall never like a proverb again, as long as I live.

Inkle. As I grew up, he'd prove——and by example——were I in want, I might even starve, for what the world cared for their neighbours; why then should I care for the world! men now lived for themselves. These were his doctrines: then, Sir, what would you say, should I, in spite of habit, precept, education, fly into my father's face, and spurn his counsels?

Sir C. Say! why, that you were a damned honest, undutiful fellow. O curse such principles! principles, which destroy all confidence between man and man—Principles, which none but a rogue could instil, and none but a rogue could imbibe—Principles——

Inkle. Which I renounce.

Sir C. Eh!

Inkle. Renounce entirely. I'll-founded precept too long has steeled my breast—but still 'tis vulnerable—this trial was too much—Nature, against habit combating within me, has penetrated to my heart; a heart, I own, long callous to the feelings of sensibility; but now it bleeds——and bleeds for my poor Yarico. Oh, let me clasp her to it, while 'tis glowing, and mingle tears of love and penitence.

[*Embracing her.*

Trudge. [*Capering about.*] Wows, give me a kiss! [WOWSKI *goes to* TRUDGE.

Yar. And shall we—shall we be happy?

Inkle. Ay; ever, ever, Yarico.

Yar. I knew we should——and yet I feared——but shall I still watch over you? Oh! love, you surely gave your Yarico such pain, only to make her feel this happiness the greater.

Wows. [*Going to* YARICO.] Oh Wowski so happy!——and yet I think I not glad neither.

Trudge. Eh, Wows! How!—why not?

Wows. 'Cause I can't help cry.——

Sir C. Then, if that's the case——curse me, if I think I'm very glad either. What the plague's the matter with my eyes?——Young man, your hand—I am now proud and happy to shake it.

Med. Well, Sir Christopher, what do you say to my hopeful nephew now?

Sir C. Say! why, confound the fellow, I say, that is ungenerous enough to remember the bad action of a man who has virtue left in his heart to repent it.—As for you, my good fellow, [*To* TRUDGE.] I must, with your master's permission, employ you myself.

Trudge. O rare!——Bless your honour!——Wows! you'll be lady, you jade, to a governor's factotum.

Wows. Iss—I Lady Jactotum.

Sir C. And now, my young folks, we'll drive home, and celebrate the wedding. Ods my life! I long to be shaking a foot at the fiddles, and I shall dance ten times the lighter, for reforming an Inkle, while I have it in my power to reward the innocence of a Yarico.

FINALE.

Cam. Come, let us dance and sing,
While all Barbadoes' bells shall ring:
Love scrapes the fiddle string,
And Venus plays the lute;
Hymen gay, foots away,
Happy at our wedding-day,
Cocks his chin, and figures in,
To tabor, fife, and flute.

Chorus. Come then, &c.

Nar. Since thus each anxious care
Is vanished into empty air,
Ah! how can I forbear
To join the jocund dance?
To and fro, couples go,
On the light fantastic toe,
While with glee, merrily,
The rosy hours advance.

Yar. When first the swelling sea
Hither bore my love and me,
What then my fate would be,
Little did I think—
Doom'd to know care and wo,
Happy still is Yarico;
Since her love will constant prove,
And nobly scorn to shrink.

Wows. Whilst all around rejoice,
Pipe and tabor raise the voice,
It can't be Wowski's choice,
Whilst Trudge's, to be dumb.
No, no, dey blithe and gay,
Shall like massy, missy play,
Dance and sing, hey ding, ding,
Strike fiddle and beat drum.

Trudge. 'Sbobs! now I'm fixed for life,
My fortune's fair, though black's my wife,
Who fears domestic strife—
Who cares now a sous!
Merry cheer my dingy dear
Shall find with her Factotum here;
Night and day, I'll frisk and play
About the house with Wows.

Inkle. Love's convert here behold.
Banish'd now my thirst of gold,
Bless'd in these arms to hold
My gentle Yarico.
Hence all care, all doubt and fear,
Love and joy each want shall cheer,
Happy night, pure delight,
Shall make our bosoms glow.

Patty Let Patty say a word—
A chambermaid may sure be heard—
Sure men are grown absurd,
Thus taking black for white;
To hug and kiss a dingy miss,
Will hardly suit an age like this,
Unless, here, some friends appear,
Who like this wedding night.

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MAHOMET,

THE IMPOSTOR:

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY THE REV. MR. MILLER.

REMARKS.

VOLTAIRE'S celebrated tragedy of this name is the prototype of the present production, which was first acted at Drury Lane Theatre in 1744. Dr. John Hoadly is said to have assisted the author; who was in so declining a state while completing his work, that he died during the first run of success it experienced; and his widow was complimented by a benefit-night, in addition to the usual remuneration of the author; when (notwithstanding some disputes between the theatre and the town, in the style of modern O. P. disturbances) she cleared upwards of one hundred pounds; at that time considered a handsome sum on such an occasion.

In 1753 this play, through some passages which were applied to party purposes, caused a disturbance; which ended in Mr. Sheridan's abdication of his managerial throne, and the shutting up of his theatre, in Smock Alley, Dublin. It was revived in London, at Drury Lane, in 1765.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	As originally acted at DRURY LANE, in 1744.	DRURY LANE. 1796.	COVENT GARDEN.
MAHOMET,	*Mr. Delane.*	*Mr. Palmer.*	*Mr. Pope.*
MIRVAN,	*Mr. Bridges.*	*Mr. Barrymore.*	*Mr. Toms.*
ALI,	*Mr. Green.*	*Mr. Caulfield.*	*Mr. Davenport.*
HERCIDES,		*Mr. Phillimore*	*Mr. Cranfield.*
AMMON,		*Mr. Maddocks.*	*Mr. Lee.*
ZAPHNA,	*Mr. Garrick.*	*Mr. Kemble.*	*Mr. Hargrave.*
ALCANOR,	*Mr. Giffard.*	*Mr. Bensley.*	*Mr. Murray.*
PHARON,	*Mr. Winstone.*	*Mr. Packer.*	*Mr. Macready.*
CITIZENS,		*Mr. Webb.*	*Mr. Blurton.*
		Mr. Cooke.	*Mr. Abbot.*
		Mr. Evans.	*Mr. Wild.*
		Mr. Burton.	*Mr. Thompson.*
PALMIRA,	*Mrs. Giffard.*	*Mrs. Siddons.*	*Miss Allingham.*

PROLOGUE.

To point what lengths credulity has run,
What counsels shaken, and what states undone;
What hellish fury wings th' enthusiast's rage,
And makes the troubled earth one tragic stage;
What blasphemies imposture dare advance,
And build what terrors on weak ignorance;
How fraud alone rage to religion binds,
And makes a pandemonium of our minds;
Our Gallic bard, fired with these glorious views,
First to his crusade led the tragic muse;

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Her power through France his charming numbers bore;
But France was deaf—for all her priests were sore. [stand,
On English ground she makes a firmer
And hopes to suffer by no hostile hand;
No clergy here usurp the free-born mind,
Ordain'd to teach, and not enslave mankind;
Religion here bids persecution cease;
Without, all order—and within, all peace;
Truth guards her happy pale with watchful care, [there.
And frauds, though pious, find no entrance
Religion, to be sacred, must be free;
Men will suspect—where bigots keep the key;
Hooded and train'd like hawks th' enthusiasts fly,
And the priests' victims in their pounces die:
Like whelps born blind, by mother-church they're bred, [led;
Nor wake to sight, to know themselves mis-
Murder's the game—and to the sport unpress'd,
Proud of the sin, and in the duty bless'd,
The layman's but the blood-hound of the priest. [vance,
Whoe'er thou art that dar'st such themes ad-
To priest-rid Spain repair, or slavish France;
For Judas' hire there do the devil's task,
And trick up slavery in religion's mask.
England still free no surer means requires
To sink their sottish souls, and damp their martial fires.
Britons! these numbers to yourselves you owe; [bow;
Voltaire hath strength to shoot in Shakspeare's
Fame led him at his Hypocrene to drink,
And taught to write with nature as to think;
With English freedom English wit he knew,
And from the inexhausted stream profusely drew:
Cherish the noble bard yourselves have made,
Nor let the frauds of France steal all our trade.
Now of each prize the winner has the wearing,
E'en send our English stage a privateering;
With your commission we'll our sails unfold,
And from their lords of dross import some gold.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—An Apartment in the Temple of Mecca.

Enter ALCANOR *and* PHARON.

Alc. Pharon, no more—shall I
Fall prostrate to an arrogant impostor,
Homage, in Mecca, one I banish'd thence,
And incense the delusions of a rebel?
No! blast Alcanor, righteous Heaven, if e'er
This hand, yet free and uncontaminate,
Shall league with fraud, or adulate a tyrant!
Pha. August and sacred chief of Ishmael's senate,
This zeal of thine, paternal as it is,
Is fatal now—our impotent resistance
Controls not Mahomet's unbounded progress,
But, without weakening, irritates the tyrant.
When once a citizen, you well condemn'd him
As an obscure, seditious innovator;
But now he is a conqueror, prince, and pontiff,
Whilst nations, numberless, embrace his laws,
And pay him adoration—even in Mecca
He boasts his proselytes.
Alc. Such proselytes
Are worthy of him—low, untutor'd reptiles,
Most credulous still
Of what is most incredible.
Pha. Be such
Disdain'd, my lord! but mayn't the pest spread upwards, [sound?
And seize the head?—Say, is the senate
I fear some members of that reverend class
Are mark'd with the contagion; who, from
Of higher power and rank, [views
Worship this rising sun, and give a sanction
To his invasions.
Alc. If, ye powers divine!
Ye mark the movements of this nether world,
And bring them to account, crush, crush those vipers,
Who, singled out by a community
To guard their rights, shall, for a grasp of ore
Or paltry office, sell them to the foe!
Pha. Each honest citizen, I grant is thine,
And, grateful for thy boundless blessings on them, [approach
Would serve thee with their lives; but the
Of this usurper to their very walls,
Strikes them with such a dread, that even these
Implore thee to accept his proffer'd peace.
Alc. Oh, people lost to wisdom, as to glory!
Go, bring in pomp, and serve upon your knees
This idol, that will crush you with its weight.
Mark, I abjure him! by his savage hand
My wife and children perish'd, whilst in vengeance
I carried carnage to his very tent;
Transfix'd to earth his only son, and wore
His trappings, as a trophy of my conquest.
This torch of enmity, thus lighted 'twixt us,
The hand of time itself can ne'er extinguish.
Pha. Extinguish not, but smother for a while
Its fatal flame, and greatly sacrifice
Thy private sufferings to the public welfare.
Alc. My wife and children lost, my country's now
My family.
Pha. Then let not that be lost.
Alc. Pharon, desist.
Pha. My noble lord, I cannot,
Must not desist, will not, since you're possess'd
Of means to bring this insolent invader
To any terms you'll claim.
Alc. What means?
Pha. Palmira,
That blooming fair, the flower of all his camp,
By thee borne off in our last skirmish with him,
Seems the divine ambassadress of peace,
Sent to procure our safety. Mahomet
Has, by his heralds, thrice proposed her ran-
And bade us fix the price. [som,
Alc. I know it, Pharon: [sure
And wouldst thou then restore this noble trea-
To that barbarian,
And render beauty the reward of rapine?
Nay, smile not, friend.
Pha. My lord——
Alc. This heart, by age and grief congeal'd,
Is no more sensible to love's endearments,
Than are our barren rocks to morn's sweet dew,
That, balmy, trickles down their rugged cheeks.

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Pha. My noble chief, each masterpiece of nature
Commands involuntary homage from us.
Alc. I own, a tenderness unfelt before,
A sympathetic grief, with ardent wishes
To make her happy, fill'd my widow'd bosom:
I dread her being in that monster's power,
And burn to have her hate him, like myself.
'Twas on this hour, I, at her modest suit,
Promised her audience in my own pavilion.
Pharon, go thou mean while, and see the senate
Assembled straight—I'll sound them as I ought.
[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.—A Room of State.

PALMIRA *discovered.*

Pal. What means this boding terror, that usurps,
In spite of me, dominion o'er my heart?
Oh, holy prophet!
Shall I ne'er more attend thy sacred lessons?
Oh, Zaphna! much-loved youth! I feel for thee
As for myself—But hold, my final audit
Is now at hand—I tremble for th' event!
Here comes my judge—Now liberty, or bondage!

Enter ALCANOR.

Alc. Palmira, whence those tears? trust me, fair maid,
Thou art not fall'n into barbarians' hands:
What Mecca can afford of pomp or pleasure,
To call attention from misfortune's lap,
Demand, and share it.
Pal. No, my generous victor!
My suit's for nothing Mecca can afford;
Prisoner these two long months beneath your roof,
I've tasted such benignity and candour,
That oft I've call'd my tears ingratitude.
Alc. If aught remains that's in my power to smooth
The rigour of your fate, and crown your wishes,
Why, 'twould fill
The furrows in my cheeks, and make old age
Put on its summer's garb.
Pal. Thus, low I bless thee. [*Kneels.*
It is on you, on you alone, Alcanor,
My whole of future happiness depends:
Have pity then;
Pity, Alcanor, one who's torn from all
That's dear or venerable to her soul;
Restore me then, restore me to my country;
Restore me to my father, prince, and prophet.
Alc. Is slavery dear then? is fraud venerable?
What country? a tumultuous, wandering camp!
Pal. My country, Sir, is not a single spot
Of such a mould, or fix'd to such a clime;
No, 'tis the social circle of my friends,
The loved community in which I'm link'd,
And in whose welfare all my wishes centre.
Alc. Excellent maid! Then Mecca be thy country.
Robb'd of my children, would Palmira deign
To let me call her child, the toil I took,
To make her destiny propitious to her,
Would lighten the rough burden of my own:
But no—you scorn my country and my laws.
Pal. Can I be yours, when not my own?—your bounties
Claim and share my gratitude; but Mahomet
Claims right o'er me of parent, prince, and prophet.
Alc. Of parent, prince, and prophet! Heavens! that robber
Who, a scaped felon, emulates a throne,
And, scoffer at all faiths, proclaims a new one!
Pal. Oh cease, my lord! this blasphemous abuse
On one, whom millions, with myself, adore,
Does violence to my ear! such black profaneness [brance
'Gainst Heaven's interpreter, blots out remem-
Of favours past, and nought succeeds but horror!
Alc. Oh, superstition! thy pernicious rigours,
Inflexible to reason, truth, and nature,
Banish humanity the gentlest breast!
Palmira, I lament to see thee plunged
So deep in error!
Pal. Do you then reject
My just petition? can Alcanor's goodness
Be deaf to suffering virtue?
Name but the ransom,
And Mahomet will treble what you ask.
Alc. There is no ransom Mahomet can offer,
Proportion'd to the prize.

Enter PHARON.

What wouldst thou, Pharon?
Pha. From yon western gate,
Which opens on Moradia's fertile plains,
Mahomet's general, Mirvan, hastes to greet thee.
Alc. Mirvan, that vile apostate!
Pha. In one hand
He holds a scymitar, the other bears
An olive branch, which to our chiefs he waves,
An emblem of his suit—a martial youth,
Zaphna by name, attends him for our hostage.
Pal. Zaphna! mysterious Heaven! [*Aside.*
Pha. Mirvan advances
This way, my lord, to render you his charge.
Alc. Palmira, thou retire—Pharon, be present. [*Exit* PALMIRA.

Enter MIRVAN.

After six years of infamous rebellion
Against thy native country, dost thou, Mirvan,
Again profane, with thy detested presence,
These sacred walls, which once thy hands defended,
But thy bad heart has vilely since betray'd?
Thou poor deserter of thy country's gods!
Thou base invader of thy country's rights!
What wouldst thou have with me?
Mir. I'd pardon thee.—
Out of compassion to thy age and sufferings,
And high regard for thy experienced valour,
Heaven's great apostle offers thee, in friendship, [mission'd
A hand could crush thee; and I come com-
To name the terms of peace he deigns to tender.
Alc. He deigns to tender! insolent impostor!
Dost thou not, Mirvan, blush
To serve this wretch, this base of soul, as birth?
Mir. Mahomet's grandeur's in himself: he shines not
With borrow'd lustre.
Plunged in the night of prejudice, and bound
In fetters of hereditary faith,

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My judgment slept: but when I found him born
To mould anew the prostrate universe,
I started from my dream, join'd his career,
And shared his arduous and immortal labours.
Come, embrace our faith, reign with Mahomet,
And clothed in terrors, make the vulgar tremble.
Alc. 'Tis Mahomet, and tyrants like to Mahomet,
'Tis Mirvan, and apostates like to Mirvan,
I only would make tremble!—Is it, say'st thou,
Religion that's the parent of this rapine,
This virulence and rage?—No; true religion
Is always mild, propitious, and humane;
Plays not the tyrant, plants no faith in blood;
But stoops to polish, succour, and redress,
And builds her grandeur on the public good.
Mir. If clemency delights thee, learn it here.
Though banish'd by thy voice his native city,
Though by thy hand robb'd of his only son,
Mahomet pardons thee; nay, further, begs
The hatred burning 'twixt you be extinguish'd,
With reconciliation's generous tear.
Alc. I know thy master's arts; his generous tears,
Like the refreshing breeze, that previous fall
To the wild outrage of o'erwhelming earthquakes,
Only forerun destruction.
Pha. Leagues he will make too——
Alc. Like other grasping tyrants, till he eyes
A lucky juncture to enlarge his bounds;
Then he'll deride them, leap o'er every tie
Of sacred guarantee, or sworn protection;
And when the oppress'd ally implores assistance, [realms,
Beneath that mask, invade the wish'd-for
And, from pure friendship, take them to himself.
Mir. Mahomet fights Heaven's battles, bends the bow [faith
To spread Heaven's laws, and to subject to
The iron neck of error.
Alc. Lust and ambition, Mirvan, are the springs
Of all his actions; whilst, without one virtue,
Dissimulation, like a flattering painter,
Bedecks them with the colouring of them all:
This is thy master's portrait—But no more——
My soul's inexorable, and my hate
Immortal as the cause from whence it sprang.
Mir. What cause?
Alc. The difference between good and evil.
Mir. Thou talk'st to me, Alcanor, with an air
Of a stern judge, that from his dread tribunal
Intimidates the criminal beneath him:
Resume thy temper, act the minister,
And treat with me as with th' ambassador
Of Heaven's apostle, and Arabia's king.
Alc. Arabia's king! what king! who crown'd him?
Mir. Conquest.——
Whilst to the style of conqueror, and of monarch, [price
Patron of peace he'd add. Name then the
Of peace, and of Palmira. Boundless treasures,
The spoils of vanquish'd monarchs, and the stores
Of rifled provinces, are thrown before thee.
Our troops with matchless ardour hasten hither,
To lay in ruin this rebellious city;
Stem then the rushing torrent; Mahomet,
In person, comes to claim a conference with
For this good purpose. [thee
Alc. Who? Mahomet?
Mir. Yes, he conjures thou'lt grant it.
Alc. Traitor! were I sole ruler here, in Mecca,
I'd answer thee with chastisement!
Mir. Hot man!
I pity thy false virtue—But farewell!
And since the senate share thy power in Mecca,
To their serener wisdoms I'll appeal. [*Exit.*
Alc. I'll meet thee there—Ye sacred powers,
My country's gods, that for three thousand years [mael!
Have reign'd protectors of the tribe of Ish-
Oh, support my spirit
In that firm purpose it has always held!
To combat violence, fraud and usurpation,
To pluck the spoil from the oppressor's jaws,
And keep my country as I found it—free!
[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—PALMIRA'S *Apartment.*

Enter PALMIRA.

Pal. Cease, cease, ye streaming instruments of wo,
From your ignoble toil! Take warmth, my heart! [fortune.
Collect thy scatter'd powers, and brave mis-
In vain the storm-tost mariner repines;
Impatience only throws
Discredit on mischance, and adds a shame
To our affliction.

Enter ZAPHNA.

Ha! all-gracious Heaven!
Thou, Zaphna! Is it thou? what pitying angel
Guided thy steps in these abodes of bondage?
Zaph. Thou sovereign of my soul, and all its powers,
Object of every fear, and every wish,
Friend, sister, love, companion, all that's dear?
Do I once more behold thee, my Palmira?
Oh, I will set it down the whitest hour
That Zaphna e'er was bless'd with.
Pal. Say, my hero,
Are my ills ended then?—They are, they are!
Now Zaphna's here, I am no more a captive,
Except to him—Oh, bless'd captivity!
Zaph. Those smiles are dearer to my raptured breast,
Sweeter those accents to my listening heart,
Than all Arabia's spices to the sense!
Pal. No wonder that my soul was so elate,
No wonder that the cloud of grief gave way,
When thou, my son of comfort, wert so nigh.
Zaph. Since that dire hour, when on Saberia's strand
The barbarous foe deprived me of Palmira,
In what a gulf of horror and despair
Have thy imagined perils plunged my soul!
Stretch'd on expiring corses for awhile,
To the deaf stream I poured out my complaint,
And begg'd I might be number'd with the dead
That strew'd its banks; then, starting from despair,
With rage I flew to Mahomet for vengeance.

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He, for some high mysterious purpose, known
To Heaven and him alone, at length despatch'd
The valiant Mirvan to demand a truce:
Instant, on wings of lightning I pursued him,
And enter'd as his hostage—fix'd, Palmira,
Or to redeem, or die a captive with thee.
Pal. Heroic youth!
Zaph. But how have these barbarians
Treated my fair?
Pal. With high humanity.
I in my victor found a friend—Alcanor
Has made me feel captivity in nothing
But absence from my Zaphna and my friends.
Zaph. I grieve, a soul so generous is our foe:
But now, presented as an hostage to him,
His noble bearing and humanity
Made captive of my heart: I felt, methought,
A new affection lighted in my breast,
And wonder'd whence the infant ardour sprang.
Pal. Yet generous as he is, not all my prayers
Not all the tears I lavish at his feet,
Can move him to restore me.
Zaph. But he shall;
Let the barbarian know he shall, Palmira,
The god of Mahomet, our divine protector,
Whose still triumphant standard I have borne
O'er piles of vanquish'd infidels—that power
Which brought unnumber'd battlements to earth,
Will humble Mecca too.

Enter MIRVAN.

Well, noble Mirvan,
Do my Palmira's chains sit loose upon her?
Say, is it freedom? This presumptuous senate——
Mir. Has granted all we ask'd—all we could wish.
The truce obtain'd, the gates to Mahomet
Flew open.
Zaph. Mahomet in Mecca, say'st thou?
Once more in Mecca!
Pal. Transport! bid him welcome.
Zaph. Thy sufferings then are o'er, the ebb is past,
And a full tide of hope flows in upon us.
Pal. But where's the prophet?
Mir. Reclined in yonder grot, that joins the temple,
Attended by his chiefs.
Zaph. There let us haste,
With duteous step, and bow ourselves before him. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A spacious Grotto.*

MAHOMET *discovered with the Alcoran before him.*

Mah. Glorious hypocrisy! what fools are they,
Who, fraught with lustful or ambitious views,
Wear not thy specious mask—Thou, alcoran!
Hast won more battles, ta'en more cities for me,
Than thrice my feeble number had achieved,
Without the succour of thy sacred impulse.

Enter HERCIDES, AMMON, *and* ALI.

Invincible supporters of our grandeur!
My faithful chiefs, Hercides, Ammon, Ali!
Go, and instruct this people in my name:
That faith may dawn, and, like a morning star,
Be herald to my rising.—Lo, Palmira!
[*Exeunt* HERCIDES, AMMON, *and* ALI.
Her angel-face, with unfeign'd blushes spread,
Proclaims the purity that dwells within.

Enter MIRVAN, ZAPHNA, *and* PALMIRA.

The hand of war was ne'er before so barbarous,
Never bore from me half so rich a spoil,
As thee, my fair. [*To* PALMIRA.
Pal. Joy to my heavenly guardian!
Joy to the world, that Mahomet's in Mecca!
Mah. My child, let me embrace thee—How's this? Zaphna!
Thou here!
Zaph. [*Kneels.*] My father, chief, and holy pontiff!
The god, that thou'rt inspired by, march'd before me.
Ready, for thee, to wade through seas of danger,
Or cope with death itself, I hither hasten'd
To yield myself an hostage, and with zeal
Prevent thy order.
Mah. 'Twas not well, rash boy!
He that does more than I command him, errs
As much as he who falters in his duty.
I obey
My god—implicitly obey thou me.
Pal. Pardon, my gracious lord, his well-meant ardour,
Brought up from tender infancy, beneath
The shelter of thy sacred patronage,
Zaphna and I've been animated still
By the same sentiments.
Mah. Palmira, 'tis enough; I read thy heart—
Be not alarm'd; though burden'd with the cares
Of thrones and altars, still my guardian eye
Will watch o'er thee, as o'er the universe.
Follow my generals, Zaphna. Fair Palmira,
Retire, and pay your powerful vows to Heaven,
And dread no wrongs, but from Alcanor.
[*Exeunt* ZAPHNA *and* PALMIRA.
Mirvan——
Attend thou here. 'Tis time, my trusty soldier,
My long-tried friend, to lay unfolded to thee
The close resolves and councils of my heart.
Prepossession, friend,
Reigns monarch of the million—Mecca's crowd
Gaze at my rapid victories, and think
Some awful power directs my arm to conquest;
But whilst our friends once more renew their efforts
To win the wavering people to our interest,
What think'st thou, say, of Zaphna and Palmira?
Mir. As of thy most resign'd and faithful vassals.
Mah. Oh, Mirvan! They're the deadliest of my foes!
Mir. How?
Mah. Yes, they love each other.
Mir. Well—what crime?
Mah. What crime, dost say? learn all my frailty, then—
My life's a combat: keen austerity
Subjects my nature to abstemious bearings:
Or on the burning sands, or desert rocks,
With thee I bear the inclemency of climates,
Freeze at the pole, or scorch beneath the line,

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For all these toils love only can retaliate,
The only consolation or reward,
Fruit of my labours, idol of my incense,
And sole divinity that I adore;
Know then that I prefer this young Palmira,
To all the ripen'd beauties that attend me,
Dwell on her accents, dote upon her smiles,
And am not mine but hers. Now judge, my friend,
How vast the jealous transports of thy master,
When, at his feet, he daily hears this charmer,
Avow a foreign love, and, insolent,
Give Mahomet a rival!

Mir. How! and Mahomet
Not instantly revenge——

Mah. Ah! should he not?
But, better to detest him, know him better:
Learn then, that both my rival and my love,
Sprang from the loins of this audacious tyrant.

Mir. Alcanor!

Mah. Is their father; old Hercides,
To whose sage institution I commit
My captive infants, late reveal'd it to me.
Perdition! I myself lit up their flame,
And fed it till I set myself on fire.
Well, means must be employ'd: but see, the father;
He comes this way, and launches from his eye
Malignant sparks of enmity and rage.
Mirvan, see all ta'en care of; let Hercides,
With his escort, beset yon gate; bid Ali
Make proper disposition round the temple;
This done, return and render me account
Of what success we meet with 'mongst the people:
Then, Mirvan, we'll determine or to loose
Or bridle in our vengeance as it suits.

[*Exit* MIRVAN.

Enter ALCANOR.

Why dost thou start, Alcanor? whence that horror? [Heaven,
Approach, old man, without a blush, since
For some high end, decrees our future union.

Alc. I blush not for myself, but thee, thou tyrant; [guile,
For thee, bad man! who com'st with serpent
To sow dissention in the realms of peace.
Thy very name sets families at variance,
'Twixt son and father bursts the bonds of nature, [pillow!
And scares endearment from the nuptial
And is it, insolent dissembler! thus
Thou com'st to give the sons of Mecca peace,
And me an unknown god?

Mah. Were I to answer any but Alcanor,
That unknown god should speak in thunder for me;
But here with thee I'd parley as a man.

Alc. What canst thou say? what urge in thy defence? [faiths,
What right hast thou received to plant new
Or lay a claim to royalty and priesthood?

Mah. The right that a resolved and towering spirit [gar——
Has o'er the grovelling instinct of the vul-

Alc. Patience, good Heavens! have I not known thee, Mahomet,
When void of wealth, inheritance, or fame,
Rank'd with the lowest of the low at Mecca?

Mah. Dost thou not know, thou haughty, feeble man,
That the low insect, lurking in the grass,
And the imperial eagle, which aloft
Ploughs the ethereal plain, are both alike
In the eternal eye?

Alc. What sacred truth! from what polluted lips! [*Aside.*

Mah. Hear me; thy Mecca trembles at my name;
If therefore thou wouldst save thyself or city,
Embrace my proffer'd friendship.——What to-day
I thus solicit, I'll command to-morrow.

Alc. Contract with thee a friendship! frontless man!
Know'st thou a god can work that miracle?

Mah. I do—necessity—thy interest.

Alc. Interest is thy god, equity is mine.
Propose the tie of this unnatural union;
Say, is't the loss of thy ill-fated son,
Who in the field fell victim to my rage;
Or the dear blood of my poor captive children,
Shed by thy butchering hands?

Mah. Ay, 'tis thy children. [secret,
Mark me then well, and learn the important
Which I'm sole master of——Thy children live.

Alc. Live!

Mah. Yes—both live.

Alc. What say'st thou? Both?

Mah. Ay, both.

Alc. And dost thou not beguile me?

Mah. No, old man.

Alc. Propitious Heavens! Say, Mahomet, for now [thee,
Methinks I could hold endless converse with
Say what's their portion, liberty or bondage?

Mah. Bred in my camp, and tutor'd in my law,
I hold the balance of their destinies;
And now 'tis on the turn——their lives or deaths——
'Tis thine to say which shall preponderate.

Alc. Mine! can I save them? name the mighty ransom—
If I must bear their chains, double the weight,
And I will kiss the hand that puts them on;
Or if my streaming blood must be the purchase,
Drain every sluice and channel of my body;
My swelling veins will burst to give it passage!

Mah. I'll tell thee then:—Renounce thy pagan faith,
Abolish thy vain gods, and——

Alc. Ha!

Mah. Nay, more:
Surrender Mecca to me, quit this temple,
Assist me to impose upon the world,
Thunder my koran to the gazing crowd,
Proclaim me for their prophet and their king,
And be a glorious pattern of credulity
To Korah's stubborn tribe. These terms perform'd,
Thy son shall be restored, and Mahomet's self
Will deign to wed thy daughter.

Alc. Hear me, Mahomet——
I am a father, and this bosom boasts
A heart as tender as e'er parent bore.
After a fifteen years of anguish for them,
Once more to view my children, clasp them to me,
And die in their embraces—melting thought!
But were I doom'd or to enslave my country,
And help to spread black error o'er the earth,
Or to behold these blood embrued hands
Deprive me of them both—know me then, Mahomet,
I'd not admit a doubt to cloud my choice—

[*Looks earnestly at* MAHOMET *for some time before he speaks.*

Farewell! [*Exit.*

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Mah. Why, fare thee well then, churlish dotard!
Inexorable fool! Now, by my arms,
I will have great revenge: I'll meet thy scorn
With treble retribution!

Re-enter MIRVAN.

Well, my Mirvan,
What say'st thou to it now?
Mir. Why, that Alcanor,
Or we, must fall.
Mah. Fall then the obdurate rebel!
Mir. The truce expires to-morrow; when Alcanor
Again is Mecca's master, and has vow'd
Destruction on thy head; the senate too
Have pass'd thy doom.
Mah. Those heart-chill'd, paltry babblers,
Placed on the bench of sloth, with ease can nod, [cowards
And vote a man to death. Why don't the
Stand me in yonder plain?—With half their numbers, [ter.
I drove them headlong to their walls for shel-
Perish Alcanor!
He marbled up, the pliant populace,
Those dupes of novelty, will bend before us,
Like osiers to a hurricane.
Mir. No time
Is to be lost.
Mah. But for a proper arm——
Mir. What think'st thou then of Zaphna?
Mah. Of Zaphna, say'st thou?
Mir. Yes, Alcanor's hostage.
He can in private do thee vengeance on him:
He's a slave
To thy despotic faith; and, urged by thee,
However mild his nature may appear,
Howe'er humane and noble is his spirit,
Or strong his reason, where allow'd to reason,
He would, for Heaven's sake, martyr half mankind.
Mah. The brother of Palmira?
Mir. Yes, that brother,
The only son of thy outrageous foe,
And the incestuous rival of thy love.
Mah. I hate the stripling, loathe his very name;
The manes of my son too cry for vengeance
On the cursed sire; but then thou know'st my love,
Know'st from whose blood she sprang: this staggers, Mirvan;
And yet I'm here surrounded with a gulf
Ready to swallow me; come too in quest
Of altars and a throne—what must be done?—
My warring passions, like contending clouds,
When fraught with thunder's fatal fuel, burst
Upon themselves, and rend me with the shock.
Mirvan, sound this youth.
Touch not at once upon the startling purpose,
But make due preparation.
Mir. I'll attack him
With all the forces of enthusiasm.
There lies our strength.
Mah. First then, a solemn vow
To act whatever Heaven by me enjoins him;
Next, omens, dreams, and visions may be pleaded;
Hints too of black designs by this Alcanor
Upon Palmira's virtue, and his life——
But to the proof—Be now propitious, fortune;
Then love, ambition, vengeance, jointly triumph. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A grand Apartment.

Enter ZAPHNA *and* PALMIRA.

Zaph. Alcanor claims a private conference with us!
What has he to unfold?
Pal. I tremble, Zaphna.
Zaph. Time press'd too, did he say?
Pal. He did; then cast
A look so piercing on me, it o'erwhelm'd
My face with deep confusion: this he mark'd;
Then, starting, left me.
Zaph. Ha! this gives me fear [ed;
That Mirvan's jealousies are too well ground-
But I must not distract her tender bosom
With visionary terrors. [*Aside.*] Both in private?
Pal. In private both.
Zaph. Her virtue, and my life!
It cannot be; so reverend a form
Could ne'er be pander to such black devices.
[*Aside.*
Pal. But let us shun it, Zaphna; much I fear
Alcanor has deceived us: dread the treachery
Of this blood-thirsty senate. Trust me, Zaphna,
They have sworn the extirpation of our faith,
Nor care by what vile means——
Zaph. My soul's best treasure,
For whose security my every thought
Is up in arms, regardless of my own,
Shun thou Alcanor's presence. This hour, Palmira,
Mirvan, by order of our royal pontiff,
Prepares to solemnize some act of worship,
Of a more hallow'd and mysterious kind
Than will admit of vulgar eye; myself
Alone am honour'd to assist.
Pal. Alone!
Zaph. Yes, to devote myself by solemn vow,
For some great act, of which my fair's the prize.
Pal. What act?
Zaph. No matter, since my loved Palmira
Shall be the glorious recompense.
Pal. Oh, Zaphna!
Methinks I do not like this secret vow.
Why must not I be present? Were I with thee,
I should not be so anxious; [
For trust me, Zaphna, my affection for thee
Is of that pure, disinterested nature,
So free from passion's taint, I have no one wish [friend,
To have thee more than thus, have thee my
Share thy loved converse, wait upon thy welfare,
And view thee with a sister's spotless eye.
Zaph. Angelic excellence!
Pal. And let me tell thee, [rors.
This Mirvan, this fierce Mirvan, gives me ter-
So far from tendering consolation to me,
His theme is blood and slaughter. As I met him
His eyes flamed fury, whilst in dubious phrase
He thus bespoke me: "The destroying angel
Must be let loose.—Palmira, Heaven ordains
Some glorious deed for thee yet hid in darkness;
Learn an implicit reverence for its will;
And above all, I warn thee, fear for Zaphna."
Zaph. What could he mean? Can I believe, Alcanor,

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Thy fair deportment but a treacherous mask?
Yet, spite of all the rage that ought to fire me
Against this rebel to our faith and prophet,
I have held me happy in his friendship,
And bondage wore the livery of choice.
Pal. How has heaven fraught our love-link'd hearts, my Zaphna,
With the same thoughts, aversions, and desires!
But for thy safety and our dread religion,
That thunders hatred to all infidels,
With great remorse I should accuse Alcanor.
Zaph. Let us shake off this vain remorse, Palmira, [sure.
Resign ourselves to Heaven, and act its plea-
The hour is come that I must pledge my vow:
Doubt not but the Supreme, who claims this service,
Will prove propitious to our chaste endearments.
Farewell, my love; I fly to gain the summit
Of earth's felicity—to gain Palmira. [*Exit.*
Pal. Where'er I turn, 'tis all suspicion:
Like one benighted midst a place of tombs,
I gaze around me, start at ever motion,
And seem hemm'd in by visionary spectres.
All-righteous power, whom trembling I adore,
And blindly follow, oh, deliver me
From these heart-rending terrors!—Ha! who's here?

Enter MAHOMET.

'Tis he! 'tis Mahomet himself! kind Heaven
Has sent him to my aid.—My gracious lord!
Protect the dear, dear idol of my soul;
Save Zaphna; guard him from——
Mah. From what?—why, Zaphna?
Whence this vain terror? Is he not with us?
Pal. Oh, Sir, you double now my apprehensions!
Those broken accents, and that eager look,
Show you have anguish smothering at the heart,
And prove for once that Mahomet's a mortal.
Mah. Ah! shall I turn a traitor to myself? [*Aside.*
Oh, woman! woman!—Hear me—ought I not
To be enraged at thy profane attachment!
How could thy breast, without the keenest sting,
Harbour one thought not dictated by me!
Is that young mind, I took such toil to form,
Turn'd an ingrate and infidel at once?
Away, rebellious maid!
Pal. What dost thou say,
My royal lord? thus, prostrate at your feet,
Let me implore forgiveness, if in aught
I have offended: talk not to me thus;
A frown from thee, my father and my king,
Is death to poor Palmira. Say then, Mahomet,
Didst thou not, in this very place, permit him
To render me his vows?
Mah. How the soft traitress racks me! [*Aside.*] Rise, Palmira——
Down, rebel love! I must be calm. [*Aside.*] come hither:
Beware, rash maid, of such imprudent steps;
They lead to guilt. What wild, pernicious errors
Mayn't the heart lead to if not greatly watch'd!
Pal. In loving Zaphna, sure it cannot err.
Mah. Zaphna again! Furies! I shall relapse,
And make her witness of my weakness! [*Aside.*
Pal. Sir!
What sudden start of passion arms that eye?
Mah. Oh, nothing: pray retire awhile: take courage:
I'm not at all displeased: 'twas but to sound
The depth of thy young heart. I praise thy choice:
Trust then thy dearest interest to my bosom;
But know, your fate depends on your obedience.
If I have been a guardian to your youth,
If all my lavish bounties past weigh aught,
Deserve the future blessings which await you.
Howe'er the voice of Heaven dispose of Zaphna,
Confirm him in the path where duty leads,
That he may keep his vow, and merit thee.
Pal. Distrust him not, my sovereign; noble Zaphna,
Disdains to lag in love or glory's course.
Mah. Enough of words——
Pal. As boldly I've avow'd
The love I bear that hero at your feet,
I'll now to him, and fire his generous breast,
To prove the duty he has sworn to thee. [*Exit.*
Mah. What could I say! Such sweet simplicity
Lured down my rage, and innocently wing'd
The arrow through my heart. And shall I bear this?
Be made the sport of cursed Alcanor's house?
Check'd in my rapid progress by the sire,
Supplanted in my love by this rash boy,
And made a gentle pander to the daughter?
Perdition on the whole detested race!

Enter MIRVAN.

Mir. Now, Mahomet, is the time to seize on Mecca;
Crush this Alcanor, and enjoy Palmira!
This night the old enthusiast offers incense
To his vain gods, in sacred Caaba: [thee,
Zaphna, who flames with zeal for Heaven and
May be won o'er to seize that lucky moment.
Mah. He shall; it must be so; he's born to act
The glorious crime; and let him be at once
The instrument and victim of the murder.
My law, my love, my vengeance, my own safety, [think
Have doom'd it so.—But, Mirvan, dost thou
His youthful courage, nursed in superstition,
Can e'er be work'd——
Mir. I tell thee, Mahomet,
He's tutor'd to accomplish thy design.
Palmira too, who thinks thy will is Heaven's,
Will nerve his arm to execute thy pleasure.
Mah. Didst thou engage him by a solemn vow?
Mir. I did, with all the enthusiastic pomp
Thy law enjoins; then gave him, as from thee,
A consecrated sword to act thy will.
Oh, he is burning with religious fury!
Mah. But hold! he comes——
[*Exit* MIRVAN.

Re-enter ZAPHNA.

Child of that awful and tremendous power,
Whose laws I publish, whose behests proclaim,
Listen whilst I unfold his sacred will:

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'Tis thine to vindicate his way to man,
'Tis thine his injured worship to avenge.
Zaph. Thou lord of nations, delegate of Heaven,
Sent to shed day o'er the benighted world,
Oh, say in what can Zaphna prove his duty!
Instruct me how a frail earth-prison'd mortal
Can or avenge or vindicate a god.
Mah. By thy weak arm he deigns to prove his cause,
And launch this vengeance on blaspheming rebels.
Zaph. What glorious action, what illustrious danger
Does that supreme, whose image thou, demand?
Place me, oh place me in the front of battle,
'Gainst odds innumerable! try me there;
Or, if a single combat claim my might,
The stoutest Arab may step forth, and see
If Zaphna fail to greet him as he ought.
Mah. Oh, greatly said, my son! 'tis inspiration!
But heed me: 'tis not by a glaring act
Of human valour Heaven has will'd to prove thee;
This infidels themselves may boast, when led
By ostentation, rage, or brute-like rashness.
To do whate'er Heaven gives in sacred charge,
Nor dare to sound its fathomless decrees,
This, and this only's meritorious zeal.
Attend, adore, obey; thou shalt be arm'd
By death's remorseless angel, which awaits me.
Zaph. Speak out, pronounce! what victim must I offer?
What tyrant sacrifice? whose blood requir'st thou?
Mah. The blood of a detested infidel;
A murderer, a foe to Heaven and me;
A wretch who slew my child, blasphemes my god,
And, like a huge Colossus, bears a world
Of impious opposition to my faith:
The blood of cursed Alcanor!
Zaph. I! Alcanor!
Mah. What! dost thou hesitate? Rash youth, beware!
He, that deliberates, is sacrilegious.
Far, far from me, be those audacious mortals,
Who for themselves would impiously judge,
Or see with their own eyes; who dares to think,
Was never born a proselyte for me.
Know who I am; know, on this very spot,
I've charged thee with the just decree of Heaven.
And when that Heaven requires of thee no more
Than the bare offering of its deadliest foe,
Nay, thy foe too, and mine, why dost thou balance
As thy own father were the victim claim'd?
Go, vile idolater! false Mussulman!
Go, seek another master, a new faith!
Zaph. Oh, Mahomet!
Mah. Just when the prize is ready,
When fair Palmira's destined to thy arms——
But what's Palmira? or what's heaven to thee,
Thou poor weak rebel to thy faith and love?
Go, serve and cringe to our detested foe!
Zaph. Oh pardon, Mahomet! methinks I hear
The oracle of Heaven—it shall be done!
Mah. Obey then, strike! and, for his impious blood,
Palmira's charms and Paradise be thine.
[*Exit.*

Zaph. Soft! let me think—This duty wears the face
Of something more than monstrous——Pardon, Heaven!
To sacrifice an innocent old man,
Weigh'd down with age, unsuccour'd, and unarm'd!
When I am hostage for his safety too!——
No matter——Heaven has chose me for the duty;
My vow is past, and must be straight fulfill'd.
Ye stern, relentless ministers of wrath,
Spirits of vengeance! by whose ruthless hands
The haughty tyrants of the earth have bled,
Come to my succour, to my flaming zeal
Join your determined courage!
And thou, angel
Of Mahomet, exterminating angel!
That mow'st down nations to prepare his passage,
Support my faltering will, harden my heart,
Lest nature pity, plead Alcanor's cause.
And wrest the dagger from me.
Ha! who comes here?

Enter ALCANOR.

Alc. Whence; Zaphna, that deep gloom,
That, like a blasting mildew on the ear
Of promised harvest, blackens o'er thy visage?
Grieve not that here, through form, thou art confined;
I hold thee not as hostage, but as friend,
And make thy safety partner with my own.
Zaph. And make my safety partner with thy own! [*Aside.*
Alc. The bloody carnage, by this truce suspended
For a few moments, like a torrent, check'd
In its full flow, will with redoubled strength
Bear all before it——
In this impending scene of public horror,
Be then, dear youth, these mansions thy asylum!
I'll be thy hostage now, and, with my life,
Will answer that no mischief shall befall thee.
I know not why, but thou art precious to me.
Zaph. Heaven! duty! gratitude! humanity! [*Aside.*
What dost thou say, Alcanor? Did'st thou say
That thy own roof should shield me from the tempest?
That thy own life stood hostage for my safety?
Alc. Why thus amazed at my compassion for thee?
I am a man myself, and that's enough
To make me feel the woes of other men,
And labour to redress them——
Zaph. What melody these accents make! [*Aside.*
Can then a foe to Mahomet's sacred law
Be virtue's friend?
Alc. Thou know'st but little, Zaphna,
If thou dost think true virtue is confined
To climes or systems; no, it flows spontaneous,
Like life's warm stream, throughout the whole creation,
And beats the pulse of every healthful heart.
How can'st thou, Zaphna, worship for thy god
A being claiming cruelty and murders
From his adorers? Such is thy master's god.
Zaph. Oh, my relenting soul! thou'rt almost thaw'd
From thy resolve. [*Aside.*]—I pray you, Sir, no more.
Peace, reason, peace!

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Alc. The more I view him, talk with him, observe
His understanding towering 'bove his age,
The more my breast takes interest in his welfare. [*Aside.*
Zaphna, come near—I oft have thought to ask thee [blood
To whom thou owest thy birth, whose generous
Swells thy young veins, and mantles at thy heart?
Zaph. That dwells in darkness; no one friendly beam [cended.
E'er gave me glimpse from whom I am des-
The camp of godlike Mahomet has been
My cradle and my country; whilst, of all
His captive infants, no one more has shared
The sunshine of his clemency and care.
Alc. I do not blame thy gratitude, young man:
But why was Mahomet thy benefactor?
Why was not I? I envy him that glory.
Why then this impious man has been a father
Alike to thee and to the fair Palmira.
Zaph. Oh!
Alc. What's the cause, my Zaphna, of that sigh,
And all the language of a smother'd anguish?
Why didst thou snatch away thy cordial eye,
That shone on me before?
Zaph. Oh, my torn heart!
Palmira's name revives the racking thought
Of my near-blunted purpose. [*Aside.*
Alc. Come, my friend,
The flood-gates of destruction soon thrown ope,
Will pour in ruin on that curse of nations.
If I can save but thee and fair Palmira,
From this o'erflowing tide, let all the rest
Of his abandon'd minions be the victims
For your deliverance—I must save your blood.
Zaph. Just Heaven! and is't not I must shed his blood? [*Aside.*
Alc. Nay, tremble if thou dar'st to hesitate.
Follow me straight.

Enter PHARON.

Pha. Alcanor, read that letter,
Put in my hands this moment by an Arab,
With utmost stealth, and air bespeaking somewhat
Of high importance.
Alc. [*Reads.*] Whence is this?—Hercides!
Cautious, my eyes! be sure you're not mistaken
In what you here insinuate. Gracious Heaven!
Will then thy providence at length o'errule
My wayward fate, and, by one matchless blessing,
Sweeten the sufferings of a threescore years?
[*Looks for some time earnestly at* ZAPHNA.
Follow me.
Zaph. Thee!—But Mahomet—
Alc. Thy life,
And all its future bliss, dwells on this moment.
Follow, I say.
[*Exeunt* ALCANOR *and* PHARON.

Re-enter MIRVAN, *with his Attendants, hastily, on the other side of the Stage.*

Mir. Traitor, turn back! what means
This conference with the foe? To Mahomet
Away this instant; he commands thy presence.
[*To* ZAPHNA.
Zaph. Where am I? Heavens! how shall I now resolve?
How act? a precipice on every side
Awaits me, and the first least step's perdition.
[*Aside.*
Mir. Young man, our prophet brooks not such delay;
Go, stop the bolt that's ready to be launch'd
On thy rebellious head.
Zaph. Yes, and renounce,
This horrid vow that's poison to my soul.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—The Temple.

Enter ZAPHNA, *with a drawn sword in his hand.*

Zaph. Well then it must be so; I must discharge
This cruel duty—Mahomet enjoins it,
And Heaven, through him, demands it of my hands. [back,
Horrid, though sacred act!—my soul shrinks
And wont admit conviction.
Oh, dire obedience!
Why, duty, art thou thus at war with nature?

Enter PALMIRA.

Thou here, Palmira? Oh, what fatal transport
Leads thee to this sad place, these dark abodes,
Sacred to death? Thou hast no business here.
Pal. Oh, Zaphna, fear and love have been my guides!
What horrid sacrifice is this enjoin'd thee?
What victim does the god of Mahomet
Claim from thy tender hand?
Zaph. Oh, my guardian angel,
Speak, resolve me;
How can assassination be a virtue?
How can the gracious Parent of mankind
Delight in mankind's sufferings? Mayn't this prophet,
This great announcer of his heavenly will,
Mistake it once?
Pal. Oh, tremble to examine.
He sees our hearts. To doubt is to blasphemy.
Zaph. Be steady then, my soul, firm to thy purpose.
Come forth, thou foe to Mahomet and Heaven,
And meet the doom thy rebel faith deserves:
Come forth, Alcanor.
Pal. Who? Alcanor?
Zaph. Yes.
Pal. The good Alcanor?
Zaph. Curse on his pagan virtues! he must die;
So Mahomet commands: and yet methinks
Some other deity arrests my arm,
And whispers to my heart—"Zaphna, forbear!"
Pal. Distracting state!
Zaph. Alas! my dear Palmira,
I'm weak, and shudder at this bloody business.
Help me, oh help, Palmira! I am torn,
Distracted, with this conflict.
Zeal, horror, love, and pity, seize my breast,
And drag it different ways. Alas, Palmira,

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You see me tossing on a sea of passions;
'Tis thine, my angel, to appease this tempest,
Fix my distracted will, and teach me——
Pal. What? [sions?
What can I teach thee in this strife of pas-
O Zaphna! I revere our holy prophet,
Think all his laws are register'd in Heaven,
And every mandate minted in the skies.
Zaph. But then to break through hospitality,
And murder him by whom we are protected!
Pal. Oh, poor Alcanor? generous, good Alcanor!
My heart bleeds for thee!
Zaph. Know then, unless I act this horrid scene,
Unless I plunge this dagger in the breast
Of that old man, I must—I must—
Pal. What?
Zaph. Must, Palmira——
(O agonizing thought!) lose thee for ever!
Pal. Am I the price of good Alcanor's blood?
Zaph. So Mahomet ordains.
Pal. Horrible dowery!
Zaph. Thou know'st the curse our prophet has denounced,
Of endless tortures on the disobedient;
Thou know'st with what an oath I've bound myself
To vindicate his laws, extirpate all
That dare oppose his progress. Say then, fair one,
Thou tutoress divine, instruct me how,
How to obey my chief, perform my oath,
Yet list to mercy's call.
Pal. This rends my heart.
Zaph. How to avoid being banish'd thee for ever.
Pal. Oh, save me from that thought! must that e'er be?
Zaph. It must not: thou hast now pronounced his doom.
Pal. What doom?—Have I?
Zaph. Yes, thou hast seal'd his death.
Pal. I seal his death!—Did I?
Zaph. 'Twas Heaven spoke by thee; thou'rt its oracle;
And I'll fulfil its laws. This is the hour
In which he pays, at the adjoining altar,
Black rites to his imaginary gods.
Follow me not, Palmira.
Pal. I must follow;
I will not, dare not, leave thee.
Zaph. Gentle maid,
I beg thee fly these walls; thou canst not bear
This horrid scene—Oh, these are dreadful moments!
Be gone—quick—this way—
Pal. No, I follow thee,
Retread thy every footstep, though they lead
To the dark gulf of death.
Zaph. Thou matchless maid!—to the dire trial then. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—The inner part of the Temple, with a Pagan Altar and Images.

ALCANOR *discovered, addressing himself to the Idols.*

Alc. Eternal powers! that deign to bless these mansions,
Protectors of the sons of Ishmael,
Crush, crush this blasphemous invader's force,
And turn him back with shame. If power be yours,
Oh! shield your injured votaries, and lay
Oppression bleeding at your altar's foot.

Enter ZAPHNA *and* PALMIRA.

Pal. Act not this bloody deed: oh, save him, save him! [*Apart to* ZAPHNA.
Zaph. Save him, and lose both Paradise and thee! [*Apart.*
Pal. Ha! yonder he stands—Oh! Zaphna, all my blood
Is frozen at the sight! [*Apart.*
Alc. 'Tis in your own behalf that I implore
The terrors of your might; swift, swiftly
Pour vengeance on this vile apostate's head!
Zaph. Hear how the wretch blasphemes! So, now—— [*Apart.*
Pal. Hold, Zaphna! [*Apart.*
Zaph. Let me go. [*Apart.*
Pal. I cannot—cannot. [*Apart.*
Alc. But if, for reasons which dim-sighted mortals
Can't look into, you'll crown this daring rebel
With royalty and priesthood, take my life:
And if, ye gracious powers! you've aught of bliss
In store for me, at my last hour permit me
To see my children, pour my blessing on them,
Expire in their dear arms, and let them close
These eyes, which then would wish no after sight.
Pal. His children, did he say? [*Apart.*
Zaph. I think he did. [*Apart.*
Alc. For this I'll at your altar pay my vows,
And make it smoke with incense.
[*Retires behind the altar.*
Zaph. [*Draws his sword.*] Now let me strike!
Pal. Stay but one moment, Zaphna.
Zaph. It must not be—unhand me.
Pal. What to do?
Zaph. To serve my god and king, and merit thee.
[*Breaks from* PALMIRA, *and going towards the Altar, he starts, and stops short.*
Ha! what are ye, ye terrifying shades?
What means this lake of blood that lies before me?
Pal. Oh Zaphna! let us fly these horrid roofs.
Zaph. No, no—Go on, ye ministers of death;
Lead me the way; I'll follow ye.
Pal. Stay, Zaphna;
Heap no more horrors on me; I'm expiring
Beneath the load.
Zaph. Be hush'd—the altar trembles!
What means that omen? does it spur to murder,
Or would it rein me back? No,—'tis the voice
Of Heaven itself, that chides my lingering hand.
Now send up thither all thy vows, Palmira,
Whilst I obey its will, and give the stroke.
[*Goes behind the Altar, after* ALCANOR.
Pal. What vows? Will Heaven receive a murderer's vows? [der.
For sure I'm such, whilst I prevent not mur-
Why beats my heart thus? what soft voice is this [cy!
That's waken'd in my soul, and preaches mer-
If Heaven demands his life, dare I oppose?
Is it my place to judge?—Ha! that dire groan
Proclaims the bloody business is about.
Zaphna! oh, Zaphna!

Re-enter ZAPHNA *from behind the Altar.*

Zaph. Ha! where am I?

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Who calls me? Where's Palmira? She's not here.
What fiend has snatch'd her from me?
Pal. Heavens! he raves! [lives
Dost thou not know me, Zaphna? her, who
For thee alone!—Why dost thou gaze thus on me?
Zaph. Where are we?
Pal. Hast thou then discharged
The horrid duty?
Zaph. What dost thou say?
Pal. Alcanor——
Zaph. Alcanor! what Alcanor?
Pal. Gracious Heaven,
Look down upon him!
Let's be gone, my Zaphna—
Let's fly this place.
Zaph. Oh! whither fly? to whom?
D'ye see these hands? who will receive these hands?
Pal. Oh, come, and let me wash them with my tears!
Zaph. Who art thou? let me lean on thee—I find
My powers returning. Is it thou, Palmira?
Where have I been? what have I done?
Pal. I know not.
Think on't no more.
Zaph. But I must think, and talk on't too, Palmira.
I seized the victim by his hoary locks—
(Thou, Heaven, didst will it)
Then, shuddering with horror, buried straight
The poinard in his breast. I had redoubled
The bloody plunge——
But that the venerable sire pour'd forth
So piteous a groan!—look'd so, Palmira——
And with a feeble voice cried—"Is it Zaphna?" [love,
I could no more. Oh! hadst thou seen, my
The fell, fell dagger in his bosom—view'd
His dying face, where sat such dignity,
Clothed with compassion towards his base assassin,—
[*Throws himself on the ground.*
The dire remembrance weighs me to the earth—
Here let me die!
Pal. Rise, my loved Zaphna! rise,
And let us fly to Mahomet for protection:
If we are found in these abodes of slaughter,
Tortures and death attend us!—let us fly!
Zaph. [*Starting up.*] I did fly at that blasting sight, Palmira,
When, drawing out the fatal steel, he cast
Such tender looks! I fled—the fatal steel,
The voice, the tender looks, the bleeding victim,
Blessing his murderer—I could not fly:
No, they clung to me, rived my throbbing heart, [done?
And set my brain on fire!—What have we
Pal. Hark! what's that noise? I tremble for thy life!
Oh! in the name of love, by all the ties,
Those sacred ties, that bind thee mine for ever,
I do conjure thee, follow me!

Re-enter ALCANOR *from behind the Altar, leaning against it, with the bloody sword in his hand.*

Zaph. Ha! look, Palmira! see, what object's that,
Which bears upon my tortured sight? Is't he,
Or is't his bloody manes come to haunt us?
Pal. 'Tis he himself, poor wretch! struggling with death,
And feebly crawling towards us. Let me fly,
And yield what help I can! let me support thee,
Thou much-lamented, injured, good old man!
Zaph. Why don't I move? my feet are rooted here,
And all my frame is struck and wither'd up
As with a lightning's blast!
Alc. My gentle maid,
Wilt thou support me?
Weep not, my Palmira.
Pal. I could weep tears of blood, if that would serve thee.
Alc. [*Sitting down.*] Zaphna, come hither; thou hast ta'en my life, [thee,
For what offence, or what one thought towards
That anger or malevolence gave birth, [so.
Heaven knows I am unconscious. Do not look
I see thou dost relent.

Enter PHARON, *hastily.*

Pha. [*Starting back.*] Ha! 'tis too late then!
Alc. Would I could see Hercides!—Pharon, lo,
Thy martyr'd friend, by his distemper'd hand,
Is now expiring.
Pha. Dire, unnatural crime!
Oh, wretched parricide!—Behold thy father! [*Pointing to* ALCANOR.
Zaph. My father!
Pal. Father? ha!
Alc. Mysterious Heaven!
Pha. Hercides, dying by the hand of Mirvan,
Who slew him lest he should betray the secret,
Saw me approach, and in the pangs of death,
Cried, fly, and save Alcanor; wrest the sword
From Zaphna's hands, if 'tis not yet too late,
That's destined for his death; then let him know
That Zaphna and Palmira are his children.
Pal. Dost hear that, Zaphna?
Zaph. 'Tis enough, my fate!
Canst thou aught more?
Alc. Oh, nature! oh, my children!
By what vile instigations wert thou driven,
Unhappy Zaphna, to this bloody action?
Zaph. [*Falling at his father's feet.*] Oh, I cannot speak!
Restore me, Sir, restore that damned weapon,
That I, for once, may make it, as I ought,
An instrument of justice.
Pal. [*Kneels.*] Oh, my father!
Strike here!—the crime was mine! 'twas I, alone,
That work'd his will to this unnatural deed!
Zaph. Strike your assassins——
Alc. I embrace my children,
And joy to see them, though my life's the forfeit.
Rise, children, rise and live! live to revenge
Your father's death!—But, in the name of nature,
By the remains of this paternal blood,
That's oozing from my wound, raise not your hands
'Gainst your own being. Zaphna, wouldst thou do me
A second deadlier mischief?
Self-slaughter can't atone for parricide.
Thy undermined arm han't quite fulfill'd
Its bigot purpose; I hope to live, to animate
Our friends 'gainst this impostor; lead them, Zaphna,
To root out a rapacious baneful crew,

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Whose zeal is frenzy, whose religion, murder!
Zaph. Swift, swift, ye hours, and light me to revenge!
Come, thou infernal weapon.
[*Snatches the bloody Sword.*
I'll wash off thy foul stain with the heart's blood
Of that malignant sanctified assassin!
[*As* ZAPHNA *is going off, enter* MIRVAN *and his Followers, who stop him.*
Mir. Seize Zaphna!
Help you the good Alcanor—Hapless man!
Our prophet, in a vision, learn'd to-night,
The mournful tale of thy untimely end,
And sent me straight to seize the vile assassin,
That he might wreak severest justice on him;
Mahomet comes to vindicate the laws,
Not suffer with impunity their breach.
Alc. Heavens! what accumulated crimes are here!
Zaph. Where is the monster? bear me instant to him,
That I may blast him with my eye!—may curse him
With my last hesitating voice!
Pal. Thou traitor!
Did not thy own death-doing tongue enjoin
This horrid deed?
Mir. Off with him, [*To the Soldiers.*
And see him well secured!
Pal. Let me go with him; I will share thy fate,
Unhappy Zaphna, for I share thy guilt!
Mir. No more—you must to Mahomet:
Our great prophet
Will take you under his divine protection.
Pal. Oh, death! deliver me from such protection! [*Aside.*
Mir. Away!
[*To the Soldiers who hold* ZAPHNA.
You, this way. [*To* PALMIRA.
Zaph. Pardon!
Pal. Oh, pardon!
[*They are led off by degrees, looking alternately at their Father and each other.*
Alc. Oh, insupportable!
Both from me torn, then when I wanted most
Their consolation! [*A shout.*
Pha. Hark!
The citizens are roused, and all in arms
Rush on to your defence.
Alc. Pharon, support me
Some moments longer—Help—conduct me tow'rds them;
Bare this wound to them; let that speak the cause— [me;
The treacherous cause, for words begin to fail
Then, if in death I can but serve my country,
Save my poor children from this tiger's gripe!
What patriot, or parent, but would wish,
In so divine a cause to fall a martyr! [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Room.

Enter MAHOMET *and* MIRVAN.

Mah. Wrong will be ever nursed and fed with blood—
So this boy bigot held his pious purpose!
Mir. Devoutly.
Mah. What a reasonless machine
Can superstition make the reasoner, man!
Alcanor lies there, on his bed of earth?
Mir. This moment he expired; and Mecca's youth
In vain lament their chief,
The silent and desponding crowd,
Broke out in murmurs, plaints, and last, in shouts;
And each mechanic grew a Mussulman.
Mah. But, say, is not our army at their gates?
Mir. Omar commands
Their nightly march, through unsuspected paths,
And with the morn appears.
Mah. At sight of them,
The weak remaining billows of this storm
Will lash themselves to peace—But where is Zaphna?
Mir. Safe in a dungeon, where he dies apace,
Unconscious of his fate: for well thou know'st,
Ere at the altar's foot he slew his sire,
In his own veins he bore his guilt's reward,
A deadly draught of poison.
Mah. I would be kind, and let him die deceived,
Nor know that parent blood defiles his soul.
Mir. He cannot know it: if the grave be silent,
I'm sure Hercides is——
Mah. Unhappy Zaphna!
Something like pity checks me for thy death.
My safety claim'd his life,
And all the heaven of fair Palmira's charms
Shall be my great reward.
Mir. My noble lord,
Palmira is at hand, and waits your pleasure.
Mah. At hand! how, Mirvan couldst thou let me talk
On themes of guilt, when that pure angel's near?
Mir. The weeping fair, led on by flattering hopes
Of Zaphna's life, attends your sacred will:
A silent pale dejection shrouds her cheeks,
And, like the lily in a morning shower,
She droops her head, and locks up all her sweets.
Mah. Say Mahomet awaits, and then
Assemble all our chiefs, and on this platform
Let them attend me straight. [*Exit* MIRVAN.

Enter PALMIRA.

Pal. Where have they led me?
Methinks, each step I take the mangled corpse
Of my dear father, by poor Zaphna mangled.
Lies in my way, and all I see is blood. [*Starts.*
'Tis the impostor's self!—Burst, heart, in silence! [*Aside.*
Mah. Maid, lay aside this dread. Palmira's fate.
And that of Mecca, by my will is fix'd. [ror,
This great event, that fills thy soul with horIs mystery to all, but Heaven and Mahomet.
Pal. Oh, ever righteous Heaven, canst thou suffer
This sacrilegious hypocrite, this spoiler,
To steal thy terrors and blaspheme thy name,
Nor doom him instant dead?
Mah. Child of my care,
At length from galling chains I've set thee free,
And made thee triumph in a just revenge?
Think then thou'rt dear to me, and Mahomet
Regards thee with a more than father's eye;
Then know, if thou'lt deserve the mighty boon,
A higher name a nobler fate awaits thee.

Pal. What would the tyrant?
Mah. Raise thy thoughts to glory:
And sweep this Zaphna from thy memory,
With all that's past—Let that mean flame expire
Before the blaze of empire's radiant sun.
Thy grateful heart must answer to my bounties, [quests.
Follow, my laws, and share in all my con-
Pal. What laws, what bounties, and what conquests, tyrant?
Fraud is thy law, the tomb thy only bounty;
Thy conquests, fatal as infected air,
Dispeopling half the globe!—See here, good Heaven!
The venerable prophet I revered,
The king I served, the god that I adored!
Mah. [*Approaches her.*] Whence this unwonted language, this wild frenzy?
Pal. Where is the spirit of my martyr'd father?
Where Zaphna's? where Palmira's innocence?
Blasted by thee—by thee, infernal monster!
Thou found'st us angels and hast made us fiends!— [virtue!
Give, give us back our lives, our fame, our
Thou canst not, tyrant!—yet thou seek'st my love— [love!
Seek'st with Alcanor's blood, his daughter's
Mah. Horror and death! the fatal secret's known! [*Aside.*

Re-enter MIRVAN.

Mir. Oh, Mahomet! all's lost, thy glory tarnish'd,
And the insatiate tomb ripe to devour us!
Hercides' parting breath divulged the secret.
The prison's forced, the city all in arms:
See, where they bear aloft their murder'd chief,
Fell Zaphna in their front, death in his looks,
Rage all his strength. Spite of the deadly draught,
He holds in life but to make sure of vengeance.
Mah. What dost thou here then? instant with our guards,
Attempt to stem their progress, till the arrival
Of Omar with the troops.
Mir. I haste, my lord. [*Exit.*
Pal. Now, now, my hour's at hand!
Hear'st thou those shouts, that rend the ambient air? [horrors
See'st thou those glancing fires, that add new
To the night's gloom?——Fresh from thy murdering poniard,
My father's spirit leads the vengeful shades
Of all the wretches whom thy sword has butcher'd!
Mah. What terror's this, that hangs upon her accents?
I feel her virtue, though I know her weakness. [*Aside.*
Pal. Thou ask'st my love; go, seek it in the grave
Of good Alcanor—Talk'st of grateful minds;
Bid Zaphna plead for thee, and I may hear thee:
Till then thou art my scorn——May'st thou, like me,
Behold thy dearest blood spilt at thy feet.
Mecca, Medina, all our Asian world,
Join, join to drive the impostor from the earth,
Blush at his chains, and shake them off in vengeance!
Mah. Be still, my soul, nor let a woman's rage
Ruffle thy wonted calm. [*Aside.*]—Spite of thy hate
Thou'rt lovely still, and charming even in madness.
[*A shout and noise of fighting.*
My fair, retire—nor let thy gentle soul
Shake with alarms; thou'rt my peculiar care:
I go to quell this traitorous insurrection,
And will attend thee straight.
Pal. No, tyrant, no!
I'll join my brother, help to head our friends,
And urge them on. [*A shout.*
Roll, roll your thunders, Heaven, and aid the storm!
Now, hurl your lightning on the guilty head,
And plead the cause of injured innocence! [*Exit.*

Enter ALI.

Mah. Whence, Ali, that surprise?
Ali. My royal chief,
The foe prevails—Thy troops, led on by Mirvan,
Are all cut off, and valiant Mirvan's self,
By Zaphna slain, lies weltering in his blood:
The guard, that to our arms should ope the gates,
Struck with the common frenzy, vow thy ruin;
And death and vengeance is the general cry.
Mah. Can Ali fear? Then, Mahomet, be thyself!
Ali. See, thy few friends, whom wild despair hath arm'd,
But arm'd in vain, are come to die beside thee.
Mah. Ye heartless traitors! Mahomet alone
Shall be his own defender, and your guard
Against the crowds of Mecca—Follow me!

Re-enter PALMIRA, *with* ZAPHNA, PHARON, *Citizens, and the Body of* ALCANOR *on a Bier.*

Ha!
Zaph. See, my friends, where the impostor stands,
With head erect, as if he knew not guilt;
As if no tongue spake from Alcanor's wound,
Nor call'd for vengeance on him!
Mah. Impious man!
Is't not enough to have spilt thy parent blood,
But, with atrocious and blaspheming lips,
Dar'st thou arraign the substitute of Heaven?
Zaph. The substitute of Heaven! so is the sword,
The pestilence, the famine—such art thou!
Such are the blessings Heaven has sent to man,
By thee, its delegate!
How couldst thou damn us thus?
Mah. Babbler, avaunt!
Zaph. Well thou upbraid'st me, for to parley with thee
Half brands me coward. Oh, revenge me, friends!
Revenge Alcanor's massacre! revenge
Palmira's wrongs, and crush the rancorous monster!
Mah. Hear me, ye slaves! born to obey my will—
Pal. Ah! hear him not—fraud dwells upon his tongue!
Zaph. Have at thee, fiend!—Ha! Heaven!
[*Advances, reels, and reclines on his sword.*
What cloud is this

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That thwarts upon my sight? My head grows dizzy,
My joints unloose—sure, 'tis the stroke of fate!
Mah. The poison works—then triumph, Mahomet! [*Aside.*
Zaph. Off, off, base lethargy!
Pal. Brother, dismay'd!
Hast thou no power but in a guilty cause,
And only strength to be a parricide?
Zaph. Spare that reproach—Come on—It will not be.
[*Hangs down his sword, and reclines on* PHARON.
Some cruel power unnerves my willing arm,
Blasts my resolves, and weighs me down to earth.
Mah. Such be the fate of all who brave our law [now
Nature and death have heard my voice, and
Let Heaven be judge 'twixt Zaphna and myself,
And instant blast the guilty of the two!
Pal. Brother! Oh, Zaphna!
Zaph. Zaphna, now no more.
[*Sinks down by* ALCANOR'S *Body, and leans on the Bier;* PHARON *kneels down with him, and supports him.*
Down, down, good Pharon—Thou, poor injured corse,
May I embrace thee?- Wont thy pallid wound
Purple anew at the unnatural touch,
And ooze fresh calls for vengeance?
Pal. Oh, my brother!
Zaph. In vain's the guiltless meaning of my heart;
High Heaven detests th' involuntary crime,
And dooms for parricide—Then tremble, tyrant!
If the Supreme can punish error thus,
What new-invented tortures must await
Thy soul, grown leprous with such foul offences!
But soft—now fate and nature are at strife—
Sister, farewell! with transport should I quit
This toilsome, perilous, delusive stage,
But that I leave thee on't—leave thee, Palmira,
Exposed to what is worse than fear can image--
That tyrant's mercy—Look on her, Heaven!
Guide her, and——Oh!—— [*Dies.*
Pal. Think not, ye men of Mecca,
This death inflicted by the hand of Heaven;
'Tis he—that viper!
Mah. Know, ye faithless wretches!
'Tis mine to deal the bolts of angry Heaven!
Behold them there; and let the wretch who doubts, [homet
Tremble at Zaphna's fate, and know that Ma-
Can read his thoughts, and doom him with a look.
Go then, and thank your pontiff, and your prince,
For each day's sun he grants you to behold.
Hence, to your temples, and appease my rage!
[*The People go off.*
Pal. Ah, stay! my brother's murder'd by this tyrant!
By poison, not by piety, he kills.
Mah. 'Tis done—Thus ever be our law received! [*Aside.*
Now, fair Palmira—
Pal. Monster! is it thus
Thou mak'st thyself a god, by added crimes,
And murders, justified by sacrilege?
Mah. Think, exquisite Palmira, for thy sake——
Pal. Thou'st been the murderer of all my race.
See where Alcanor, see where Zaphna lies!
Do they not call for me too, at thy hands!
Oh that they did!—But I can read thy thoughts;
Palmira's saved for something worse than death;
This to prevent—Zaphna, I follow thee!
[*Stabs herself with* ZAPHNA'S *Sword.*
Mah. What hast thou done?
Pal. A deed of glory, tyrant!
Thou'st left no object worth Palmira's eye,
And when I shut out light, I shut out thee.
[*Dies.*
Mah. Farewell, dear victim of my boundless passion!
Oh, justice, justice!
In vain are glory, worship, and dominion!
All conqueror as I am, I am a slave,
And, by the world adored, dwell with the damn'd!
My crimes have planted scorpions in my breast—
Here, here I feel them! 'Tis in vain to brave
The host of terrors that invade my soul—
I might deceive the world, myself I cannot.
Ali. Be calm awhile, my lord; think what you are.
Mah. Ha! what am I?
[*Turns to the Bodies.*
Ye breathless family!
Let your loud-crying wounds say what I am?
Oh, snatch me from that sight! quick, quick transport me
To nature's loneliest mansion, where the sun
Ne'er enter'd! where the sound of human tread
Was never heard—But wherefore? still, I there,
There still shall find myself—Ay, that's the hell!——
I'll none on't—— [*Draws his Sword.*
Ali. Heaven's! help—hold him!
[ALI, *&c. disarm him.*
Mah. Paltry dastards!
You fled the foe, but can disarm your master.
Angel of death, whose power I've long proclaim'd,
Now aid me, if thou canst!—now, if thou canst,
Draw the kind curtain of eternal night,
And shroud me from the horrors that beset me! [*Exeunt* MAHOMET, *&c.*
Phar. Oh! what a curse is life, when self-conviction
Flings our offences hourly in our face,
And turns existence torturer to itself!
Here let the mad enthusiast turn his eyes,
And see, from bigotry, what horrors rise!
Here, in the blackest colours, let him read,
That zeal, by craft misled, may act a deed,
By which both innocence and virtue bleed.
[*Exeunt*

EPILOGUE.

LONG has the shameful license of the age
With senseless ribaldry disgraced the stage:

So much indecencies have been in vogue,
They pleaded custom in an epilogue;
As if the force of reason was a yoke;
So heavy——they must ease it with a joke;
Disarm the moral of its virtuous sway,
Or else the audience go displeased away.
How have I blush'd to see a tragic queen
With ill-timed mirth disgrace the well-wrote scene,
From all the sad solemnity of wo
Trip nimbly forth—to ridicule a beau;
Then, as the loosest airs she had been gleaning,
Coquet the fan, and leer a double meaning!
Shame on those arts that prostitute the bays!
Shame on the bard who this way hopes for praise!
The bold but honest author of to-night
Disdains to please you if he please not right;
If in his well-meant scene you chance to find
Aught to ennoble or enlarge the mind,
If he has found the means, with honest art,
To fix the noblest wishes in the heart,
In softer accents to inform the fair
How bright they look when virtue drops the tear,
Enjoy with friendly welcome the repast,
And keep the heartfelt relish to the last.

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THE DRUMMER;

OR,

THE HAUNTED HOUSE:

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY JOSEPH ADDISON.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SIR GEORGE TRUMAN.
TINSEL.
FANTOME, the Drummer.
VELLUM, Sir George's Steward.
BUTLER.
COACHMAN.
GARDENER.
LADY TRUMAN.
ABIGAIL.

PROLOGUE.

In this grave age, when comedies are few,
We crave your patronage for one that's new;
Though 'twere poor stuff, yet bid the Author fair,
And let the scarceness recommend the ware.
Long have your ears been fill'd with tragic parts,
Blood and blank-verse have harden'd all your hearts:
If e'er you smile, 'tis at some party strokes;
Round-heads and wooden-shoes are standing jokes;
The same conceit gives claps and hisses birth,
You're grown such politicians in your mirth!
For once we try (though 'tis, I own, unsafe)
To please you all, and make both parties laugh.
Our Author, anxious for his fame to-night,
And bashful in his first attempt to write,
Lies cautiously obscure and unreveal'd,
Like ancient actors in a mask conceal'd.
Censure, when no man knows who writes the play,
Were much good malice merely thrown away.
The mighty critics will not blast, for shame,
A raw young thing, who dares not tell his name:
Good-natured judges will th' unknown defend,
And fear to blame, lest they should hurt a friend;
Each wit may praise it for his own dear sake,
And hint he writ it, if the thing should take.
But, if you're rough, and use him like a dog,
Depend upon it——he'll remain *incog.*
If you should hiss, he swears he'll hiss as high,
And, like a culprit, join the hue and cry.
If cruel men are still averse to spare
These scenes, they fly for refuge to the fair.
Though with a ghost our Comedy be beighten'd,
Ladies, upon my word, you sha'n't be frighten'd.
Oh, 'tis a ghost that seems to be uncivil,
A well spread, lusty, jointure-hunting devil;
An amorous ghost, that's faithful, fond, and true,
Made up of flesh and blood—as much as you.
Then every evening come in flocks, undaunted;
We never think this house is too much haunted.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A great Hall.

Enter the BUTLER, COACHMAN, *and* GARDENER.

But. There came another coach to town last

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night, that brought a gentleman to inquire about this strange noise we hear in the house. This spirit will bring a power of custom to the George——If so be he continues his pranks, I design to sell a pot of ale, and set up the sign of the Drum.

Coach. I'll give Madam warning, that's flat——I've always lived in sober families. I'll not disparage myself to be a servant in a house that's haunted.

Gard. I'll e'en marry Nell, and rent a bit of ground of my own, if both of you leave Madam; not but that Madam's a very good woman——if Mrs. Abigail did not spoil her——Come, here's her health.

But. 'Tis a very hard thing to be a Butler in a house that is disturbed. He made such a racket in the cellar last night, that I'm afraid he'll sour all the beer in my barrels.

Coach. Why then, John, we ought to take it off as fast as we can. Here's to you——He rattled so loud under the tiles last night, that I verily thought the house would have fallen over our heads. I durst not go up into the cock-loft this morning, if I had not got one of the maids to go along with me.

Gard. I thought I heard him in one of my bed-posts——I marvel, John, how he gets into the house, when all the gates are shut.

But. Why look ye, Peter, your spirit will creep you into an auger-hole——he'll whisk ye through a key-hole, without so much as jostling against one of the wards.

Coach. Poor Madam is mainly frighted, that's certain; and verily believes it is my master that was killed in the last campaign.

But. Out of all manner of question, Robin, 'tis Sir George; Mrs. Abigail is of opinion it can be none but his honour: he always loved the wars; and you know was mightily pleased from a child with the music of a drum.

Gard. I wonder his body was never found after the battle.

But. Found! Why, ye fool, is not his body here about the house? dost thou think he can beat his drum without hands and arms?

Coach. 'Tis master as sure as I stand here alive; and I verily believe I saw him last night in the town close.

Gard. Ay! how did he appear.

Coach. Like a white horse.

But. Pho, Robin, I tell thee he has never appeared yet but in the shape of the sound of a drum.

Coach. This makes one almost afraid of one's own shadow. As I was walking from the stable t'other night, without my lanthorn, I fell across a beam that lay in my way, and faith my heart was in my mouth——I thought I had stumbled over a spirit.

But. Thou might'st as well have stumbled over a straw. Why, a spirit is such a little thing, that I have heard a man, who was a great scholar, say, that he'll dance ye a Lancashire hornpipe upon the point of a needle——As I sat in the pantry last night, counting my spoons, the candle, methought, burnt blue, and the spayed bitch looked as if she saw something.

Coach. Ay, poor cur, she's almost frightened out of her wits.

Gard. Ay, I warrant ye, she hears him many a time, and often, when we don't.

But. My lady must have him laid, that's certain, whatever it cost her.

Gard. I fancy when one goes to market, one might hear of somebody that can make a spell.

Coach. Why may not the parson of our parish lay him?

But. No, no, no; our parson cannot lay him.

Coach. Why not he as well as another man?

But. Why, ye fool, he is not qualified—He has not taken the oaths.

Gard. Why, d'ye think, John, that the spirit would take the law of him?——Faith, I could tell you one way to drive him off.

Coach. How's that?

Gard. I'll tell you immediately. [*Drinks.*]—I fancy Mrs. Abigail might scold him out of the house.

Coach. Ay, she has a tongue that would drown his drum, if any thing could.

But. Pugh, this is all froth; you understand nothing of the matter——The next time it makes a noise, I tell you what ought to be done—I would have the steward speak Latin to it.

Coach. Ay, that would do, if the steward had but courage.

Gard. There you have it——He's a fearful man. If I had as much learning as he, and I met the ghost, I'd tell him his own: but alack, what can us poor men do with a spirit, that can neither write nor read?

But. Thou art always cracking and boasting, Peter; thou dost not know what mischief it might do thee, if such a silly dog as thee should offer to speak to it: for aught I know, he might flea thee alive, and make parchment of thy skin to cover his drum with.

Gard. A fiddlestick! tell not me—I fear nothing, not I! I never did harm in my life; I never committed murder.

But. I verily believe thee: keep thy temper, Peter; after supper we'll drink each of us a double mug, and then let come what will.

Gard. Why that's well said, John: An honest man that is not quite sober, has nothing to fear.—Here's to ye—Why, how if he should come this minute, here would I stand. Ha! what noise is that?

But. and Coach. Ha! where?

Gard. The devil! the devil! Oh no; 'tis Mrs. Abigail.

But. Ay, faith! 'tis she; 'tis Mrs. Abigail! A good mistake! 'tis Mrs. Abigail.

Enter ABIGAIL.

Abi. Here are your drunken sots for you! Is this a time to be guzzling, when gentry are come to the house? Why don't you lay your cloth? How come you out of the stables? Why are you not at work in your garden?

Gard. Why, yonder's the fine Londoner and Madam fetching a walk together; and methought they looked as if they should say they had rather have my room than my company.

But. And so forsooth, being all three met together, we are doing our endeavours to drink this same drummer out of our heads.

Gard. For you must know, Mrs. Abigail, we are all of opinion that one can't be a match for him, unless one be as drunk as a drum.

Coach. I am resolved to give Madam warning to hire herself another coachman; for I came to serve my master, d'ye see, while he was alive; but do suppose that he has no further occasion for a coach, now he walks.

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But. Truly, Mrs. Abigail, I must needs say, that this same spirit is a very odd sort of a body, after all, to fright Madam and his old servants at this rate.

Gard. And truly, Mrs. Abigail, I must needs say, I served my master contentedly, while he was living; but I will serve no man living (that is, no man that is not living) without double wages.

Abi. Ay, 'tis such cowards as you that go about with idle stories, to disgrace the house, and bring so many strangers about it: You first frighten yourselves, and then your neighbours.

Gard. Frightened! I scorn your words. Frightened, quoth-a!

Abi. What, you sot, are you grown pot-valiant?

Gard. Frightened with a drum! that's a good one! It will do us no harm, I'll answer for it: It will bring no bloodshed along with it, take my word. It sounds as like a train-band drum as ever I heard in my life.

But. Pr'ythee, Peter, don't be so presumptuous.

Abi. Well, these drunken rogues take it as I could wish. [*Aside*.

Gard. I scorn to be frightened, now I am in for't; if old Dub-a-dub should come into the room, I would take him——

But. Pr'ythee hold thy tongue.

Gard. I would take him——

[*The drum beats: The* GARDENER *endeavours to get off, and falls*.

But. and Coach. Speak to it, Mrs. Abigail.

Gard. Spare my life, and take all I have.

Coach. Make off, make off, good Butler; and let us go hide ourselves in the cellar.

[*They all run off*.

Abi. So now the coast is clear, I may venture to call out my drummer——But first let me shut the door, lest we be surprised. Mr. Fantome, Mr. Fantome! [*He beats*.] Nay, nay, pray come out: the enemy's fled——I must speak with you immediately—Don't stay to beat a parley.

The back scene opens, and discovers FANTOME *with a drum*.

Fan. Dear Mrs. Nabby, I have overheard all that has been said, and find thou hast managed this thing so well, that I could take thee in my arms and kiss thee—if my drum did not stand in my way.

Abi. Well, o' my conscience, you are the merriest ghost! and the very picture of Sir George Truman.

Fan. There you flatter me, Mrs. Abigail: Sir George had that freshness in his looks, that we men of the town cannot come up to.

Abi. Oh! death may have altered you, you know—Besides, you must consider, you lost a great deal of blood in the battle.

Fan. Ay, that's right; let me look never so pale, this cut cross my forehead will keep me in countenance.

Abi. 'Tis just such a one as my master received from a cursed French trooper, as my lady's letter informed her.

Fan. It happens luckily that this suit of cloaths of Sir George's fits me so well——I think I can't fail hitting the air of a man with whom I was so long acquainted.

Abi. You are the very man—I vow I almost start when I look upon you.

Fan. But what good will this do me, if I must remain invisible?

Abi. Pray what good will your being visible do you? The fair Mr. Fantome thought no woman could withstand him——But when you were seen by my lady in your proper person, after she had taken a full survey of you, and heard all the pretty things you could say, she very civilly dismissed you for the sake of that empty, noisy creature, Tinsel. She fancies you have been gone from hence this fortnight.

Fan. Why really I loved the lady so well, that though I had no hopes of gaining her for myself, I could not bear to see her given to another, especially to such a wretch as Tinsel.

Abi. Well, tell me truly, Mr. Fantome, have not you a great opinion of my fidelity to my dear lady, that I would not suffer her to be deluded in this manner for less than a thousand pound?

Fan. Thou art always reminding me of my promise——Thou shalt have it, if thou can'st bring our project to bear: Dost not know that stories of ghosts and apparitions generally end in a pot of money.

Abi. Why, truly now, Mr. Fantome, I should think myself a very bad woman, if I had done what I do for a farthing less.

Fan. Dear Abigail! how I admire thy virtue!

Abi. No, no, Mr. Fantome, I defy the worst of my enemies to say, I love mischief for mischief's sake.

Fan. But is thy lady persuaded that I am the ghost of her deceased husband?

Abi. I endeavour to make her believe so; and tell her, every time your drum rattles, that her husband is chiding her for entertaining this new lover.

Fan. Pr'ythee make use of all thy art: for I'm tired to death with strolling round this wide old house like a rat behind the wainscoat.

Abi. Did not I tell you 'twas the purest place in the world for you to play your tricks in? There's none of the family that knows every hole and corner in it, besides myself.

Fan. Ah, Mrs. Abigail, you have had your intrigues—

Abi. For you must know when I was a romping young girl, I was a mighty lover of hide and seek.

Fan. I believe by this time, I am as well acquainted with the house as yourself.

Abi. You are very much mistaken, Mr. Fantome. But no matter for that; here is to be your station to-night. This place is unknown to any one living besides myself, since the death of the joiner, who, you must understand, being a lover of mine, contrived the wainscot to move to and fro, in the manner you find it. I designed it for a wardrobe for my lady's cast clothes. Oh! the stomachers, stays, petticoats, commodes, laced shoes, and good things that I have had in it!——Pray take care you don't break the cherry brandy bottle that stands up in the corner.

Fan. Well, Mrs. Abigail, I hire your closet of you but for this one night——A thousand pounds, you know, is a very good rent.

Abi. Well, get you gone: you have such a way with you, there's no denying you any thing!

Fan. I'm thinking how Tinsel will stare,

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when he sees me come out of the wall; for I am resolved to make my appearance to-night.

Abi. Get you in, get you in, my lady's at the door.

Fan. Pray take care she does not keep me up so late as she did last night, or depend upon it I'll beat the tattoo. [*Knocking.*

Abi. I'm undone, I'm undone—[*As he's going in.*] Mr Fantome, Mr. Fantome, have you put the thousand pound bond into my brother's hand?

Fan. Thou shalt have it; I tell thee thou shalt have it. [FANTOME *goes in.*

Abi. No more words——Vanish, vanish.

Enter LADY.

Abi. [*Opening the door.*] Oh dear, Madam, was it you that made such a knocking? My heart does so beat——I vow you have frighted me to death——I thought verily it had been the drummer.

Lady. I have been showing the garden to Mr. Tinsel: he's most insufferably witty upon us about this story of the drum.

Abi. Indeed, Madam, he's a very loose man: I'm afraid 'tis he that hinders my poor master from resting in his grave.

Lady. Well, an infidel is such a novelty in the country, that I am resolved to divert myself a day or two at least with the oddness of his conversation.

Abi. Ah, Madam! the drum began to beat in the house as soon as ever this creature was admitted to visit you.—All the while Mr. Fantome made his addresses to you, there was not a mouse stirring in the family more than used to be——

Lady. This baggage has some design upon me, more than I can yet discover. [*Aside.*]——Mr. Fantome was always thy favourite.

Abi. Ay, and should have been yours too, by my consent! Mr. Fantome was not such a slight fantastic thing as this is—Mr. Fantome was the best built man one should see in a summer's day! Mr. Fantome was a man of honour, and loved you. Poor soul, how has he sighed when he has talked to me of my hard-hearted lady—Well! I had as lief as a thousand pound you would marry Mr. Fantome.

Lady. To tell thee truly, I loved him well enough till I found he loved me so much. But Mr. Tinsel makes his court to me with so much neglect and indifference, and with such an agreeable sauciness—Not that I say I'll marry him.

Abi. Marry him, quoth-a!—No, if you should, you'll be awakened sooner than married couples generally are——You'll quickly have a drum at your window.

Lady. I'll hide my contempt of Tinsel for once, if it be but to see what this wench drives at. [*Aside.*

Abi. Why, suppose your husband after this fair warning he has given you, should sound you an alarm at midnight; then open your curtains with a face as pale as my apron, and cry out with a hollow voice, What dost thou do in bed with this spindle-shanked fellow?

Lady. Why wilt thou needs have it to be my husband? He never had any reason to be offended at me. I always loved him while he was living; and should prefer him to any man were he so still. Mr. Tinsel is indeed very idle in his talk; but I fancy, Abigail, a discreet woman might reform him.

Abi. That's a likely matter indeed! Did you ever hear of a woman who had power over a man when she was his wife, that had none while she was his mistress! Oh! there's nothing in the world improves a man in his complaisance, like marriage!

Lady. He is, indeed, at present, too familiar in his conversation.

Abi. Familiar! Madam: in troth he's downright rude.

Lady. But that, you know, Abigail, shows he has no dissimulation in him——Then he is apt to jest a little too much upon grave subjects.

Abi. Grave subjects! he jests upon the church.

Lady. But that, you know, Abigail, may be only to show his wit——Then it must be owned he's extremely talkative.

Abi. Talkative, d'ye call it! he's downright impertinent.

Lady. But that, you know, Abigail, is a sign he has been used to good company—Then, indeed, he is very positive.

Abi. Positive! why, he contradicts you in every thing you say.

Lady. But then, you know, Abigail, he has been educated at the inns of court.

Abi. A blessed education indeed! it has made him forget his catechism!

Lady. You talk as if you hated him.

Abi. You talk as if you loved him.

Lady. Hold your tongue, here he comes.

Enter TINSEL.

Tin. My dear widow!

Abi. My dear widow! marry come up! [*Aside.*

Lady. Let him alone, Abigail; so long as he does not call me my dear wife, there's no harm done.

Tin. I have been most ridiculously diverted since I left you——Your servants have made a convert of my booby; his head is so filled with this foolish story of a drummer, that I expect the rogue will be afraid, hereafter, to go upon a message by moon-light.

Lady. Ah, Mr. Tinsel, what a loss of billet-doux will that be to many a fine lady!

Abi. Then you still believe this to be a foolish story? I thought my lady had told you, that she had heard it herself.

Tin. Ha, ha, ha!

Abi. Why, you would not persuade us out of our senses.

Tin. Ha, ha, ha!

Abi. There's manners for you, Madam. [*Aside.*

Lady. Admirably rallied! that laugh is unanswerable! Now I'll be hanged if you could forbear being witty upon me, if I should tell you I heard it no longer ago than last night.

Tin. Fancy!

Lady. But what if I should tell you my maid was with me!

Tin. Vapours! vapours! Pray, my dear widow, will you answer me one question?——Had you ever this noise of a drum in your head, all the while your husband was living?

Lady. And pray, Mr. Tinsel, will you let me ask you another question? Do you think we can hear in the country, as well as you do in town?

Tin. Believe me, Madam, I could prescribe you a cure for these imaginations.

Abi. Don't tell my lady of imaginations, Sir; I have heard it myself.

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Tin. Hark thee, child—art thou not an old maid?

Abi. Sir, if I am, it is my own fault.

Tin. Whims! freaks! megrims! indeed, Mrs. Abigail.

Abi. Marry, Sir, by your talk one would believe you thought every thing that was good is a megrim.

Lady. Why truly I don't very well understand what you meant by your doctrine to me in the garden just now, that every thing we saw was made by chance.

Abi. A very pretty subject indeed for a lover to divert his mistress with.

Lady. But I suppose that was only a taste of the conversation you would entertain me with after marriage.

Tin. Oh, I shall then have time to read you such lectures of motions, atoms, and nature—that you shall learn to think as freely as the best of us, and be convinced in less than a month, that all about us is chance work.

Lady. You are a very complaisant person indeed; and so you would make your court to me, by persuading me that I was made by chance?

Tin. Ha, ha, ha! well said, my dear! why, faith, thou wert a very lucky hit, that's certain!

Lady. Pray, Mr. Tinsel, where did you learn this odd way of talking?

Tin. Ah, widow, 'tis your country innocence makes you think it an odd way of talking.

Lady. Though you give no credit to stories of apparitions, I hope you believe there are such things as spirits!

Tin. Simplicity!

Abi. I fancy you don't believe women have souls, d'ye, Sir?

Tin. Foolish enough!

Lady. I vow, Mr. Tinsel, I'm afraid malicious people will say I'm in love with an atheist.

Tin. Oh, my dear, that's an old fashioned word—I'm a free-thinker, child!

Abi. I'm sure you are a free-speaker.

Lady. Really, Mr. Tinsel, considering that you are so fine a gentleman, I'm amazed where you got all this learning? I wonder it has not spoiled your breeding.

Tin. To tell you the truth, I have not time to look into these dry matters myself; but I am convinced by four or five learned men, whom I sometimes overhear at a coffee-house, I frequent, that our forefathers were a pack of asses, that the world has been in an error for some thousands of years, and that all the people upon earth, excepting those two or three worthy gentlemen, are imposed upon, cheated, bubbled, abused, bamboozled——

Abi. Madam, how can you hear such a profligate? he talks like the London prodigal.

Lady. Why really, I'm a thinking, if there be no such things as spirits, a woman has no occasion for marrying—She need not be afraid to lie by herself.

Tin. Ah! my dear! are husbands good for nothing but to frighten away spirits? Dost thou think I could not instruct thee in several other comforts of matrimony?

Lady. Ah! but you are a man of so much knowledge, that you would always be laughing at my ignorance——You learned men are so apt to despise one!

Tin. No, child! I'd teach thee my principles; thou shouldst be as wise as I am—in a week's time.

Lady. Do you think your principles would make a woman the better wife?

Tin. Pr'ythee, widow, don't be queer.

Lady. I love a gay temper, but I would not have you rally things that are serious.

Tin. Well enough, faith! where's the jest of rallying any thing else?

Abi. Ah, Madam, did you ever hear Mr. Fantome talk at this rate? [*Aside.*

Tin. But where's this ghost? this son of a whore of a drummer? I'd fain hear him, methinks.

Abi. Pray, Madam, don't suffer him to give the ghost such ill language, especially when you have reason to believe it is my master.

Tin. That's well enough faith, Nab; dost think thy master is so unreasonable, as to continue his claim to his relict after his bones are laid? Pray, widow, remember the words of your contract, you have fulfilled them to a tittle——Did not you marry Sir George to the tune of *Till death us do part?*

Lady. I must not hear Sir George's memory treated in so slight a manner—This fellow must have been at some pains to make himself such a finished coxcomb. [*Aside.*

Tin. Give me but possession of your person, and I'll whirl you up to town for a winter, and cure you at once. Oh! I have known many a country lady come to London with frightful stories of the hall-house being haunted, of fairies, spirits, and witches; that by the time she had seen a comedy, played at an assembly, and ambled in a ball or two, has been so little afraid of bugbears, that she has ventured home in a chair at all hours of the night.

Abi. Hum——Sauce box. [*Aside.*

Tin. 'Tis the solitude of the country that creates these whimsies; there was never such a thing as a ghost heard of at London, except in the play-house——Oh we'd pass all our time in London. 'Tis the scene of pleasure and diversions, where there's something to amuse you every hour of the day. Life's not life in the country.

Lady. Well, then, you have an opportunity of showing the sincerity of that love to me which you profess. You may give a proof that you have an affection to my person, not my jointure.

Tin. Your jointure! How can you think me such a dog! But, child, wont your jointure be the same thing in London, as in the country?

Lady. No, you're deceived! You must know it is settled on me by marriage-articles, on condition that I live in this old mansion-house, and keep it up in repair.

Tin. How!

Abi. That's well put, Madam.

Tin. Why faith I have been looking upon this house, and think it is the prettiest habitation I ever saw in my life.

Lady. Ay, but then this cruel drum!

Tin. Something so venerable in it!

Lady. Ay, but the drum!

Tin. For my part, I like this Gothic way of building better than any of your new orders——it would be a thousand pities it should fall to ruin.

Lady. Ay, but the drum!

Tin. How pleasantly we two could pass our time in this delicious situation. Our lives would be a continued dream of happiness. Come, faith, widow, let's go down upon the leads, and take a view of the country.

Lady. Ay, but the drum! the drum!

Tin. My dear, take my word for't 'tis

all fancy: besides, should he drum in thy very bed-chamber, I should only hug thee the closer.

Clasp'd in the folds of love, I'd meet my doom,
And act my joys, though thunder shook the room. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—Opens, and discovers VELLUM *in his office, and a letter in his hand.*

Vel. This letter astonisheth; may I believe my own eyes—or rather my spectacles—"To Humphrey Vellum, Esq. Steward to the Lady Truman.

"VELLUM,

"I doubt not but you will be glad to hear your master is alive, and designs to be with you in half an hour. The report of my being slain in the Netherlands has, I find, produced some disorders in my family. I am now at the George Inn: If an old man with a gray beard, in a black coat, inquires after you, give him admittance. He passes for a conjuror, but is really

"Your faithful friend,
"G. TRUMAN.

"P. S. Let this be a secret, and you shall find your account in it."

This amazeth me! and yet the reasons why I should believe he is still living are manifold—First, because this has often been the case of other military adventurers.—Secondly, because this news of his death was first published in Dier's Letter.—Thirdly, because this letter can be written by none but himself—I know his hand and manner of spelling.—Fourthly—

Enter BUTLER.

But. Sir, here's a strange old gentleman that asks for you; he says he's a conjuror, but he's very suspicious; I wish he ben't a Jesuit.

Vel. Admit him immediately.

But. I wish he ben't a Jesuit; but he says he's nothing but a conjuror.

Vel. He says right—He is no more than a conjuror. Bring him in, and withdraw. [*Exit* BUTLER.

And fourthly, as I was saying, because——

Enter BUTLER *with* SIR GEORGE.

But. Sir, here is the conjuror—What a devilish long beard he has! I warrant it has been growing these hundred years. [*Aside. Exit.*

Sir G. Dear Vellum, you have received my letter; but before we proceed, lock the door.

Vel. It is his voice. [*Shuts the door.*

Sir G. In the next place, help me off with this cumbersome cloak.

Vel. It is his shape.

Sir G. So; now lay my beard upon the table.

Vel. [*After having looked on* SIR GEORGE *through his spectacles.*] It is his face, every lineament!

Sir G. Well, now I have put off the conjuror, and the old man, I can talk to thee more at my ease.

Vel. Believe me, my good master, I am as much rejoiced to see you alive, as I was upon the day you were born. Your name was in all the newspapers, in the list of those that were slain.

Sir G. We have not time to be particular.—I shall only tell thee in general, that I was taken prisoner in the battle, and was under close confinement several months. Upon my release, I was resolved to surprise my wife with the news of my being alive. I know, Vellum, you are a person of so much penetration, that I need not use any further arguments to convince you that I am so.

Vel. I am—and moreover, I question not but your good lady will likewise be convinced of it. Her honour is a discerning lady.

Sir G. I'm only afraid she should be convinced of it to her sorrow. Is not she pleased with her imaginary widowhood? Tell me truly, was she afflicted at the report of my death?

Vel. Sorely.

Sir G. How long did her grief last?

Vel. Longer than I have known any widow's—at least three days.

Sir G. Three days, say'st thou? Three whole days! I'm afraid thou flatterest me!—O woman! woman!

Vel. Grief is twofold.

Sir G. This blockhead is as methodical as ever—but I know he's honest. [*Aside.*

Vel. There is a real grief, and there is a methodical grief: she was drowned in tears till such time as the tailor had made her widow's weeds—Indeed they became her.

Sir G. Became her! and was that her comfort? Truly a most seasonable consolation!

Vel. But I must needs say she paid a due regard to your memory, and could not forbear weeping when she saw company.

Sir G. That was kind indeed! I find she grieved with a great deal of good breeding.—But how comes this gang of lovers about her?

Vel. Her jointure is considerable.

Sir G. How this fool torments me! [*Aside.*

Vel. Her person is amiable——

Sir G. Death! [*Aside.*

Vel. But her character is unblemished. She has been as virtuous in your absence as a Penelope——

Sir G. And has had as many suitors.

Vel. Several have made their overtures.

Sir G. Several!

Vel. But she has rejected all.

Sir G. There thou revivest me. But what means this Tinsel? Are his visits acceptable?

Vel. He is young.

Sir G. Does she listen to him?

Vel. He is gay.

Sir G. Sure she could never entertain a thought of marrying such a coxcomb?

Vel. He is not ill made.

Sir G. Are the vows and protestations that passed between us come to this! I can't bear the thought of it! Is Tinsel the man designed for my worthy successor?

Vel. You do not consider that you have been dead these fourteen months——

Sir G. Was there ever such a dog? [*Aside.*

Vel. And I have often heard her say, that she must never expect to find a second Sir George Truman—meaning your ho--nour.

Sir G. I think she loved me; but I must search into this story of the drummer before I

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discover myself to her. I have put on this habit of a conjuror, in order to introduce myself. It must be your business to recommend me as a most profound person, that by my great knowledge in the curious arts can silence the drummer, and dispossess the house.

Vel. I am going to lay my accounts before my lady, and I will endeavour to prevail upon her ho--nour to admit the trial of your art.

Sir G. I have scarce heard of any of these stories that did not arise from a love intrigue—Amours raise as many ghosts as murders.

Vel. Mrs. Abigail endeavours to persuade us, that 'tis your ho--nour who troubles the house.

Sir G. That convinces me 'tis a cheat; for I think, Vellum, I may be pretty well assured it is not me.

Vel. I am apt to think so, truly. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir G. Abigail had always an ascendant over her lady, and if there is a trick in this matter, depend upon it she is at the bottom of it. I'll be hanged if this ghost be not one of Abigail's familiars.

Vel. Mrs. Abigail has of late been very mysterious.

Sir G. I fancy, Vellum, thou couldst worm it out of her. I know formerly there was an amour between you.

Vel. Mrs. Abigail hath her allurements, and she knows I have picked up a competency in your ho--nour's service.

Sir G. If thou hast, all I ask of thee in return is, that thou wouldst immediately renew thy addresses to her. Coax her up. Thou hast such a silver tongue, Vellum, as 'twill be impossible for her to withstand. Besides, she is so very a woman, that she'll like thee the better for giving her the pleasure of telling a secret. In short, wheedle her out of it, and I shall act by the advice which thou givest me.

Vel. Mrs. Abigail was never deaf to me, when I talked upon that subject. I will take an opportunity of addressing myself to her in the most pathetic manner.

Sir G. In the mean time, lock me up in your office, and bring me word what success you have—Well, sure I am the first that ever was employed to lay himself.

Vel. You act, indeed, a threefold part in this house; you are a ghost, a conjuror, and my ho--noured master, Sir George Truman; he, he, he! You will pardon me for being jocular.

Sir G. Oh, Mr. Vellum, with all my heart. You know I love you men of wit and humour. Be as merry as thou pleasest, so thou dost thy business. [*Mimicking him.*] You will remember, Vellum, your commission is twofold: first, to gain admission for me to your lady; and, secondly, to get the secret out of Abigail.

Vel. It sufficeth. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—Another apartment.

Enter LADY.

Lady. Women who have been happy in a first marriage, are the most apt to venture upon a second. But for my part, I had a husband so every way suited to my inclinations, that I must entirely forget him, before I can like another man. I have now been a widow but fourteen months, and have had twice as many lovers, all of them professed admirers of my person, but passionately in love with my jointure. I think it is a revenge I owe my sex, to make an example of this worthless tribe of fellows, who grow impudent, dress themselves fine, and fancy we are obliged to provide for them. But of all my captives, Mr. Tinsel is the most extraordinary in his kind. I hope the diversion I give myself with him is unblameable; I'm sure 'tis necessary to turn my thoughts off from the memory of that dear man who has been the greatest happiness and affliction of my life. My heart would be a prey to melancholy, if I did not find these innocent methods of relieving it. But here comes Abigail; I must teaze the baggage, for I find she has taken it into her head that I'm entirely at her disposal.

Enter ABIGAIL.

Abi. Madam! Madam! yonder's Mr. Tinsel has as good as taken possession of your house. Marry, he says, he must have Sir George's apartment enlarged; for truly, says he, I hate to be straitened. Nay, he was so impudent as to show me the chamber where he intends to consummate, as he calls it.

Lady. Well! he's a wild fellow.

Abi. Indeed he's a very sad man, Madam.

Lady. He's young, Abigail; 'tis a thousand pities he should be lost; I should be mighty glad to reform him.

Abi. Reform him! marry, hang him!

Lady. Has not he a great deal of life?

Abi. Ay, enough to make your heart ach.

Lady. I dare say thou thinkest him a very agreeable fellow.

Abi. He thinks himself so, I'll answer for him.

Lady. He's very good-natured!

Abi. He ought to be so, for he's very silly.

Lady. Dost thou think he loves me?

Abi. Mr. Fantome did, I am sure.

Lady. With what raptures he talked!

Abi. Yes, but 'twas in praise of your jointure-house.

Lady. He has kept bad company.

Abi. They must be very bad indeed, if they were worse than himself.

Lady. I have a strong fancy a good woman might reform him.

Abi. It would be a fine experiment if it should not succeed.

Lady. Well, Abigail, we'll talk of that another time;—here comes the steward; I have no further occasion for you at present.

[*Exit* ABIGAIL.

Enter VELLUM.

Vel. Madam, is your ho--nour at leisure to look into the account of the last week? They rise very high—house-keeping is chargeable in a house that is haunted.

Lady. How comes that to pass? I hope the drum neither eats nor drinks! But read your accounts, Vellum.

Vel. [*Putting on and off his spectacles in this scene.*] A hogshead and an half of ale—It is not for the ghost's drinking—But your honour's servants say they must have something to keep up their courage against this strange noise. They tell me they expect a double quan-

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tity of malt in their small beer so long as the house continues in this condition.

Lady. At this rate they'll take care to be frightened all the year round, I'll answer for them. But go on.

Vel. Item, Two sheep, and a—where is the ox?—Oh, here I have him—and an ox—Your ho--nour must always have a piece of cold beef in the house, for the entertainment of so many strangers, who come from all parts to hear this drum. Item, Bread, ten peck loaves—They cannot eat beef without bread—Item, Three barrels of table-beer—They must have drink with their meat.

Lady. Sure no woman in England has a steward that makes such ingenious comments on his works. [*Aside*.

Vel. Item, To Mr. Tinsel's servants, five bottles of Port wine—It was by your ho-nour's order—Item, Three bottles of Sack for the use of Mrs. Abigail.

Lady. I suppose that was by your own order

Vel. We have been long friends; we are your ho-nour's ancient servants. Sack is an innocent cordial, and gives her spirit to chide the servants when they are tardy in their business; he, he, he! pardon me for being jocular.

Lady. Well, I see you'll come together at last.

Vel. Item, A dozen pound of wax-lights for the use of the servants.

Lady. For the use of the servants! What are the rogues afraid of sleeping in the dark! What an unfortunate woman am I! This is such a particular distress, it puts me to my wits end. Vellum, what would you advise me to do?

Vel. Madam, your ho-nour has two points to consider, Imprimis, To retrench these extravagant expenses, which so many strangers bring upon you—Secondly, To clear the house of this invisible drummer.

Lady. This learned division leaves me just as wise as I was. But how must we bring these two points to bear?

Vel. I beseech your ho-nour to give me the hearing.

Lady. I do. But pr'ythee take pity on me, and be not tedious.

Vel. I will be concise. There is a certain person arrived this morning, an aged man of a venerable aspect, and of a long hoary beard that reacheth down to his girdle. The common people call him a wizard, a white-witch, a conjuror, a cunning-man, a necromancer, a——

Lady. No matter for his titles. But what of all this?

Vel. Give me the hearing, good my lady! He pretends to great skill in the occult sciences, and is come hither upon the rumour of this drum. If one may believe him, he knows the secret of laying ghosts, or of quieting houses that are haunted.

Lady. Pho, these are idle stories to amuse the country people; this can do us no good.

Vel. It can do us no harm, my lady.

Lady. I dare say thou dost not believe there is any thing in it thyself?

Vel. I cannot say I do; there is no danger, however, in the experiment. Let him try his skill; if it should succeed, we are rid of the drum; if it should not, we may tell the world that it has, and by that means at least get out of this expensive way of living; so that it must turn to your advantage one way or another.

Lady. I think you argue very rightly. But where is the man? I would fain see him! He must be a curiosity.

Vel. I have already discoursed him, and he is to be with me, in my office, half an hour hence. He asks nothing for his pains till he has done his work;——no cure, no money.

Lady. That circumstance, I must confess, would make one believe there is more in his art than one would imagine. Pray, Vellum, go and fetch him hither immediately.

Vel. I am gone. He shall be forthcoming forthwith. [*Exeunt*.

Enter BUTLER, COACHMAN, *and* GARDENER.

But. Rare news, my lads, rare news!

Gard. What's the matter? hast thou got any more vales for us?

But. No, 'tis better than that.

Coach. Is there another stranger come to the house?

But. Ay, such a stranger as will make all our lives easy.

Gard. What! Is he a lord?

But. A lord! No, nothing like it—He's a conjuror.

Coach. A conjuror! what, is he come a wooing to my lady?

But. No, no, you fool, he's come a purpose to lay the spirit.

Coach. Ay! marry, that's good news indeed: but where is he?

But. He is locked up with the steward in his office; they are laying their heads together very close. I fancy they are casting a figure.

Gard. Pr'ythee, John, what sort of a creature is a conjuror?

But. Why, he's made much as other men are, if it was not for his long gray beard.

Coach. Look ye, Peter, it stands with reason, that a conjuror should have a long gray beard—for, did ye ever know a witch that was not an old woman?

Gard. Why, I remember a conjuror once at a fair, that to my thinking was a very smock-faced man, and yet he spewed out fifty yards of green ferret. I fancy, John, if thou'dst get him into the pantry and give him a cup of ale, he'd show us a few tricks. Dost think we could not persuade him to swallow one of thy case-knives for his diversion? He'll certainly bring it up again.

But. Peter! thou art such a wiseacre! thou dost not know the difference between a conjuror and a juggler. This man must be a very great master of his trade. His beard is at least half a yard long, he's dressed in a strange dark cloak, as black as a coal: your conjuror always goes in mourning.

Gard. Is he a gentleman? had he a sword by his side?

But. No, no, he's too grave a man for that; a conjuror's as grave as a judge—but he had a long white wand in his hand.

Coach. You may be sure there's a good deal of virtue in that wand—I fancy 'tis made out of witch elm.

Gard. I warrant you, if the ghost appears, he'll whisk you that wand before his eyes, and strike you the drumstick out of his hand.

But. No; the wand, look ye, is to make a

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circle; and if he once gets the ghost in a circle, then he has him—let him get out again if he can. A circle, you must know, is a conjuror's trap.

Coach. But what will he do with him when he has him there?

But. Why, then he'll overpower him with his learning.

Gard. If he can once compass him, and get him in Lob's pound, he'll make nothing of him, but speak a few hard words to him, and perhaps bind him over to his good behaviour for a thousand years.

Coach. Ay, ay, he'll send him packing to his grave again, with a flea in his ear, I warrant him.

But. No, no, I would advise Madam to spare no cost. If the conjurer be but well paid, he'll take pains upon the ghost, and lay him, look ye, in the Red Sea—and then he's laid for ever.

Coach. Ay, marry, that would spoil his drum for him.

Gard. Why, John, there must be a power of spirits in that same Red Sea.—I warrant ye they are as plenty as fish.

Coach. Well, I wish after all that he may not be too hard for the conjuror! I'm afraid he'll find a tough bit of work on't.

Gard. I wish the spirit may not carry a corner of the house off with him.

But. As for that, Peter, you may be sure that the steward has made his bargain with the cunning-man beforehand, that he shall stand to all costs and damages—But hark! yonder's Mrs. Abigail, we shall have her with us immediately, if we do not get off.

Gard. Ay, lads! if we could get Mrs. Abigail well laid, too——we should live merry lives.

For to a man like me, that's stout and bold,
A ghost is not so dreadful as a scold.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

SIR GEORGE *discovered in* VELLUM'S *Office.*

Sir G. I wonder I don't hear of Vellum yet. But I know his wisdom will do nothing rashly. The fellow has been so used to form in business, that it has infected his whole conversation. But I must not find fault with that punctual and exact behaviour which has been of so much use to me; my estate is the better for it.

Enter VELLUM.

Well, Vellum, I'm impatient to hear your success.

Vel. First, let me lock the door.

Sir G. Will your lady admit me?

Vel. If this lock is not mended soon, it will be quite spoiled.

Sir G. Pr'ythee let the lock alone at present, and answer me.

Vel. Delays in business are dangerous——I must send for the smith next week—and in the mean time will take a minute of it.

Sir G. But what says your lady?

Vel. This pen is naught, and wants mending—My lady, did you say?

Sir G. Does she admit me?

Vel. I have gained admission for you as a conjuror.

Sir G. That's enough! I'll gain admission for myself as a husband. Does she believe there's any thing in my art?

Vel. It is hard to know what a woman believes.

Sir G. Did she ask no questions about me?

Vel. Sundry——She desires to talk with you herself, before you enter upon your business.

Sir G. But when?

Vel. Immediately. This instant.

Sir G. Pugh. What hast thou been doing all this while? Why didst not tell me so? Give me my cloak——Have you yet met with Abigail?

Vel. I have not yet had an opportunity of speaking with her. But we have interchanged some languishing glances.

Sir G. Let thee alone for that, Vellum. I have formerly seen thee ogle her through thy spectacles. Well! this is a most venerable cloak. After the business of this day is over, I'll make thee a present of it. 'Twill become thee mightily.

Vel. He, he, he! would you make a conjuror of your steward?

Sir G. Pr'ythee don't be jocular; I'm in haste. Help me on with my beard.

Vel. And what will your ho-nour do with your cast beard?

Sir G. Why, faith, thy gravity wants only such a beard to it: if thou wouldst wear it with the cloak, thou wouldst make a most complete heathen philosopher. But where's my wand?

Vel. A fine taper stick! It is well chosen. I will keep this till you are sheriff of the county. It is not my custom to let any thing be lost.

Sir G. Come, Vellum, lead the way. You must introduce me to your lady. Thou'rt the fittest fellow in the world to be master of the ceremonies to a conjuror. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Enter ABIGAIL *crossing the stage,* TINSEL *following.*

Tin. Nabby, Nabby, whither so fast, child?

Abi. Keep your hands to yourself. I'm going to call the steward to my lady.

Tin. What, goodman Twofold? I met him walking with an old fellow yonder. I suppose he belongs to the family too. He looks very antique. He must be some of the furniture of this old mansion-house.

Abi. What does the man mean? Don't think to palm me, as you do my lady.

Tin. Pr'ythee, Nabby, tell me one thing: What's the reason thou art my enemy?

Abi. Marry, because I'm a friend to my lady.

Tin. Dost thou see any thing about me thou dost not like? Come hither, hussey, give me a kiss. Don't be ill-natured.

Abi. Sir, I know how to be civil. [*Kisses her.*] This rogue will carry off my lady, if I don't take care. [*Aside.*

Tin. Thy lips are as soft as velvet, Abigail. I must get thee a husband.

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Abi. Ay, now you don't speak idly, I can talk to you.

Tin. I have one in my eye for thee. Dost thou love a young lusty son of a whore?

Abi. Lud, how you talk!

Tin. This is a thundering dog.

Abi. What is he?

Tin. A private gentleman.

Abi. Ay! where does he live?

Tin. In the Horse-guards—But he has one fault I must tell thee of. If thou canst bear with that, he's a man for thy purpose.

Abi. Pray, Mr. Tinsel, what may that be?

Tin. He's but five-and-twenty years old.

Abi. 'Tis no matter for his age, if he has been well educated.

Tin. No man better, child; he'll tie a wig, toss a die, make a pass, and swear with such a grace, as would make thy heart leap to hear him.

Abi. Half these accomplishments will do, provided he has an estate——Pray what has he?

Tin. Not a farthing.

Abi. Pox on him, what do I give him the hearing for! [*Aside.*

Tin. But as for that I would make it up to him.

Abi. How?

Tin. Why, look ye, child, as soon as I have married thy lady, I design to discard this old prig of a steward, and to put this honest gentleman, I am speaking of, into his place.

Abi. [*Aside.*] This fellow's a fool—I'll have no more to say to him.—Hark! my lady's a coming.

Tin. Depend upon it, Nab, I'll remember my promise.

Abi. Ay, and so will I too—to your cost. [*Aside. Exit.*

Tin. My dear is purely fitted up with a maid—But I shall rid the house of her.

Enter LADY.

Lady. Oh, Mr. Tinsel, I am glad to meet you here, I am going to give you an entertainment, that wont be disagreeable to a man of wit and pleasure of the town——There may be something diverting in a conversation between a conjuror, and this conceited ass. [*Aside.*

Tin. She loves me to distraction, I see that. [*Aside.*]—Pr'ythee, widow, explain thyself.

Lady. You must know there is a strange sort of a man come to town, who undertakes to free the house from this disturbance. The steward believes him a conjuror.

Tin. Ay, thy steward is a deep one!

Lady. He's to be here immediately. It is indeed an odd figure of a man.

Tin. Oh! I warrant you he has studied the black art! Ha, ha, ha! Is he not an Oxford scholar? Widow, thy house is the most extraordinary inhabited of any widow's this day in Christendom.——I think thy four chief domestics are—a withered Abigail—a superannuated Steward—a Ghost—and a Conjuror.

Lady. [*Mimicking* TINSEL.] And you would have it inhabited by a fifth, who is a more extraordinary person than any of all these four.

Tin. 'Tis a sure sign a woman loves you, when she imitates your manner. [*Aside.*]——Thou'rt very smart, my dear. But, see! smoke the Doctor.

Enter VELLUM, *and* SIR GEORGE *in his Conjuror's Habit.*

Vel. I will introduce this profound person to your ladyship, and then leave him with you.—Sir, this is her ho-nour.

Sir G. I know it well. [*Exit* VELLUM.] That dear woman! The sight of her unmans me. I could weep for tenderness, did not I, at the same time, feel an indignation rise in me, to see that wretch with her: and yet I cannot but smile to see her in the company of her first and second husband at the same time.

[*Aside, walking in a musing posture.*

Lady. Mr. Tinsel, do you speak to him; you are used to the company of men of learning.

Tin. Old gentleman, thou dost not look like an inhabitant of this world; I suppose thou art lately come down from the stars. Pray, what news is stirring in the Zodiac?

Sir G. News that ought to make the heart of a coward tremble. Mars is now entering into the first house, and will shortly appear in all his domal dignities——

Tin. Mars? Pr'ythee, Father Gray-beard, explain thyself.

Sir G. The entrance of Mars into his house, portends the entrance of a master into this family—and that soon.

Tin. D'ye hear that, widow? The stars have cut me out for thy husband. This house is to have a master, and that soon—Hark thee, old Gadbury? Is not Mars very like a young fellow called Tom Tinsel?

Sir G. Not so much as Venus is like this lady.

Tin. A word in your ear, Doctor; these two planets will be in conjunction by and by: I can tell you that.

Sir G. [*Aside, walking disturbed.*] Curse on this impertinent fop! I shall scarce forbear discovering myself——Madam, I am told that your house is visited with strange noises.

Lady. And I am told that you can quiet them. I must confess I had a curiosity to see the person I had heard so much of; and, indeed, your aspect shows that you have had much experience in the world. You must be a very aged man.

Sir G. My aspect deceives you: What do you think is my real age?

Tin. I should guess thee within three years of Mathusalah. Pr'ythee, tell me, wast not thou born before the flood?

Lady. Truly, I should guess you to be in your second or third century. I warrant you, you have great grand-children with beards a foot long.

Sir G. Ha, ha, ha! If there be truth in man, I was but five-and-thirty last August. O! the study of the occult sciences makes a man's beard grow faster than you would imagine.

Lady. What an escape you have had, Mr. Tinsel, that you were not bred a scholar!

Tin. And so I fancy, Doctor, thou thinkest me an illiterate fellow, because I have a smooth chin?

Sir G. Hark ye, Sir, a word in your ear.—You are a coxcomb, by all the rules of phisiognomy: but let that be a secret between you and me. [*Aside, to* TINSEL.

Lady. Pray, Mr. Tinsel, what is it the Doctor whispers?

Tin. Only a compliment, child, upon two or three of my features. It does not become me to repeat it.

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Lady. Pray, Doctor, examine this gentleman's face, and tell me his fortune.

Sir G. If I may believe the lines of his face, he likes it better than I do, or——than you do, fair lady.

Tin. Widow, I hope now thou'rt convinced he's a cheat.

Lady. For my part, I believe he's a witch——go on, Doctor.

Sir G. He will be crossed in love; and that soon.

Tin. Pr'ythee, Doctor, tell us the truth. Dost not thou live in Moorfields?

Sir G. Take my word for it, thou shalt never live in my lady Truman's mansion-house.

Tin. Pray, old gentleman, hast thou never been plucked by the beard when thou wert saucy?

Lady. Nay, Mr. Tinsel, you are angry! do you think I would marry a man that dares not have his fortune told.

Sir G. Let him be angry—I matter not—He is but short-lived. He will soon die of——

Tin. Come, come, speak out, old Hocus; he, he, he! This fellow makes me burst with laughing. [*Forces a laugh*.

Sir G. He will soon die of a fright—or of the—let me see your nose—Ay—'tis so!

Tin. You son of a whore! I'll run you through the body. I never yet made the sun shine through a conjuror——

Lady. Oh, fy, Mr. Tinsel! you will not kill an old man?

Tin. An old man! The dog says he's but five-and-thirty.

Lady. Oh, fy, Mr. Tinsel! I did not think you could have been so passionate; I hate a passionate man. Put up your sword, or I must never see you again.

Tin. Ha, ha, ha! I was but in jest, my dear. I had a mind to have made an experiment upon the Doctor's body. I would have but drilled a little eyelet-hole in it, and have seen whether he had art enough to close it up again.

Sir G. Courage is but ill shown before a lady. But know, if ever I meet thee again, thou shalt find this arm can wield other weapons besides this wand.

Tin. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady. Well, learned Sir, you are to give a proof of your art, not of your courage. Or if you will show your courage, let it be at nine o'clock—for that is the time the noise is generally heard.

Tin. And look ye, old gentleman, if thou dost not do thy business well, I can tell thee, by the little skill I have, that thou wilt be tossed in a blanket before ten. We'll do our endeavour to send thee back to the stars again.

Sir G. I'll go and prepare myself for the ceremonies—And, lady, as you expect they should succeed to your wishes, treat that fellow with the contempt he deserves. [*Exit*.

Tin. The sauciest dog I ever talked with in my whole life!

Lady. Methinks he's a diverting fellow; one may see he's no fool.

Tin. No fool! Ay, but thou dost not take him for a conjuror.

Lady. Truly, I don't know what to take him for; I am resolved to employ him however.—When a sickness is desperate, we often try remedies that we have no great faith in.

Enter ABIGAIL.

Abi. Madam, the tea is ready in the parlour, as you ordered.

Lady. Come, Mr. Tinsel, we may there talk of the subject more at leisure.

[*Exit with* TINSEL.

Abi. Surely never any lady had such servants as mine has. Well, if I get this thousand pound, I hope to have some of my own. Let me see, I'll have a pretty, tight girl—just such as I was ten years ago, (I'm afraid I may say twenty;) she shall dress me, and flatter me—for I will be flattered, that's pos. My lady's cast suits will serve her after I have given them the wearing. Besides, when I am worth a thousand pound, I shall certainly carry off the steward.——Madam Vellum—how prettily that will sound! here, bring out Madam Vellum's chaise—nay, I do not know but it may be a chariot—It will break the attorney's wife's heart—for I shall take place of every body in the parish but my lady. If I have a son, he shall be called Fantome. But see, Mr. Vellum, as I could wish. I know his humour, and will do my utmost to gain his heart.

Enter VELLUM *with a pint of sack*.

Vel. Mrs. Abigail, don't I break in upon you unseasonably?

Abi. Oh, no, Mr. Vellum, your visits are always seasonable?

Vel. I have brought with me a taste of fresh Canary, which I think is delicious.

Abi. Pray set it down—I have a *dram glass* just by. [*Brings in a rummer*.] I'll pledge you; my lady's good health.

Vel. And your own with it—sweet Mrs. Abigail.

Abi. Pray, good Mr. Vellum, buy me a little parcel of this sack, and put it under the article of tea—I would not have my name appear to it.

Vel. Mrs. Abigail, your name seldom appears in my bills——and yet——if you will allow me a merry expression—you have been always in my books, Mrs. Abigail. Ha, ha, ha!

Abi. Ha, ha, ha! Mr. Vellum, you are such a dry jesting man!

Vel. Why, truly, Mrs. Abigail, I have been looking over my papers—and I find you have been a long time my debtor.

Abi. Your debtor! For what, Mr. Vellum!

Vel. For my heart, Mrs. Abigail—And our accounts will not be balanced between us till I have yours in exchange for it. Ha, ha, ha!

Abi. Ha, ha, ha! You are the most gallant dun, Mr. Vellum.

Vel. But I am not used to be paid by words only, Mrs. Abigail; when will you be out of my debt?

Abi. Oh, Mr. Vellum, you make one blush! My humble service to you.

Vel. I must answer you, Mrs. Abigail, in the country phrase.—Your love is sufficient. Ha, ha, ha!

Abi. Ha, ha, ha! Well, I must own I love a merry man!

Vel. Let me see, how long is it, Mrs. Abigail, since I first broke my mind to you——It was, I think, *undecimo Gulielmi*—We have conversed together these fifteen years—and yet, Mrs. Abigail, I must drink to our better acquaintance. He, he, he—Mrs. Abigail, you know I am naturally jocose.

Abi. Ah, you men love to make sport with us silly creatures!

Vel. Mrs. Abigail, I have a trifle about me which I would willingly make you a present of. It is indeed but a little toy.

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Abi. You are always exceedingly obliging.

Vel. It is but a little toy, scarce worth your acceptance.

Abi. Pray don't keep me in suspence; what is it, Mr. Vellum?

Vel. A silver thimble.

Abi. I always said Mr. Vellum was a generous lover.

Vel. But I must put it on myself, Mrs. Abigail—You have the pretiest tip of a finger—I must take the freedom to salute it.

Abi. Oh fy! you make me ashamed, Mr. Vellum: how can you do so? I protest I am in such a confusion— [*A feigned struggle.*

Vel. This finger is not the finger of idleness; it bears the honourable scars of the needle—But why are you so cruel as not to pare your nails?

Abi. Oh, I vow you press it so hard! pray give me my finger again.

Vel. This middle finger, Mrs. Abigail, has a pretty neighbour—a wedding-ring would become it mightily—He, he, he!

Abi. You're so full of your jokes. Ay, but where must I find one for't.

Vel. I design this thimble only as the forerunner of it: they will set off each other, and are, indeed, a twofold emblem. The first will put you in mind of being a good housewife, and the other of being a good wife. Ha, ha, ha!

Abi. Yes, yes, I see you laugh at me.

Vel. Indeed I am serious.

Abi. I thought you had quite forsaken me—I am sure you cannot forget the many repeated vows and promises you formerly made me.

Vel. I should as soon forget the multiplication table.

Abi. I have always taken your part before my lady.

Vel. You have so, and I have item'd it in my memory.

Abi. For I have always looked upon your interests as my own.

Vel. It is nothing but your cruelty can hinder them from being so.

Abi. I must strike while the iron's hot. [*Aside.*]—Well, Mr. Vellum, there's no refusing you, you have such a bewitching tongue?

Vel. How? Speak that again!

Abi. Why then, in plain English, I love you.

Vel. I am overjoyed!

Abi. I must own my passion for you.

Vel. I'm transported! [*Catching her in his arms.*

Abi. Dear charming man!

Vel. Thou sum total of all my happiness! I shall grow extravagant! I can't forbear to—drink thy virtuous inclinations in a bumper of sack. Your lady must make haste, my duck, or we shall provide a young steward to the estate, before she has an heir to it——Pr'ythee, my dear, does she intend to marry Mr. Tinsel?

Abi. Marry him! my love. No, no! we must take care of that! there would be no staying in the house for us if she did. That young rake-hell would send all the old servants a grazing. You and I should be discarded before the honey-moon was at an end.

Vel. Pry'thee, sweet one, does not this drum put the thoughts of marriage out of her head?

Abi. This drum, my dear, if it be well managed, will be no less than a thousand pound in our way.

Vel. Ay, say'st thou so, my turtle?

Abi. Since we are now as good as man and wife—I mean, almost as good as man and wife—I ought to conceal nothing from you.

Vel. Certainly, my dove, not from thy yoke-fellow, thy help-mate, thy own flesh and blood!

Abi. Hush! I hear Mr. Tinsel's laugh; my lady and he are a coming this way; if you will take a turn without, I'll tell you the whole contrivance.

Vel. Give me your hand, chicken.

Abi. Here, take it; you have my heart already.

Vel. We shall have much issue. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

Enter VELLUM *and* BUTLER.

Vel. John, I have certain orders to give you—and therefore be attentive.

But. Attentive! Ay, let me alone for that—I suppose he means being sober. [*Aside.*

Vel. You know I have always recommended to you a method in your business; I would have your knives and forks, your spoons and napkins, your plate and glasses laid in a method.

But. Ah, master Vellum, you are such a sweet-spoken man, it does one's heart good to receive your orders.

Vel. Method, John, makes business easy; it banishes all perplexity and confusion out of families.

But. How he talks! I could hear him all day.

Vel. And now, John, let me know whether your table-linen, your side-board, your cellar, and every thing else within your province, are properly and methodically disposed for an entertainment this evening.

But. Master Vellum, they shall be ready at a quarter of an hour's warning. But pray, Sir, is this entertainment to be made for the conjuror?

Vel. It is, John, for the conjuror, and yet it is not for the conjuror.

But. Why, look you, master Vellum, if it be for the conjuror, the cook-maid should have orders to get him some dishes to his palate. Perhaps he may like a little brimstone in his sauce.

Vel. This conjuror, John, is a complicated creature, an amphibious animal, a person of a twofold nature—But he eats and drinks like other men.

But. Marry, master Vellum, he should eat and drink as much as two other men, by the account you give of him.

Vel. Thy conceit is not amiss; he is indeed a double man; ha, ha, ha!

But. Ha! I understand you; he's one of your hermaphrodites, as they call them.

Vel. He is married, and he is not married—He hath a beard, and he hath no beard. He is old, and he is young.

But. How charmingly he talks! I fancy, master Vellum, you could make a riddle. The same man old and young! how do you make that out, master Vellum?

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Vel. Thou hast heard of a snake casting his skin, and recovering his youth. Such is this sage person.

But. Nay, 'tis no wonder a conjurer should be like a serpent.

Vel. When he has thrown aside the old conjuror's slough that hangs about him, he'll come out as fine a young gentleman as ever was seen in this house.

But. Does he intend to sup in his slough?

Vel. That time will show.

But. Well, I have not a head for these things. Indeed, Mr. Vellum, I have not understood one word you have said this half hour.

Vel. I did not intend thou shouldst—But to our business——Let there be a table spread in the great hall. Let your pots and glasses be washed, and in a readiness. Bid the cook provide a plentiful supper, and see that all the servants be in their best liveries.

But. Ay! now I understand every word you say. But I would rather hear you talk a little in that t'other way.

Vel. I shall explain to thee what I have said by and by—Bid Susan lay two pillows upon your lady's bed.

But. Two pillows! Madam wont sleep upon them both! She is not a double woman too?

Vel. She will sleep upon neither. But hark! Mrs. Abigail; I think I hear her chiding the cook-maid.

But. Then I'll away, or it will be my turn next: She, I am sure, speaks plain English; one may easily understand every word she says. [*Exit* BUTLER.

Vel. Servants are good for nothing, unless they have an opinion of the person's understanding who has the direction of them—But see! Mrs. Abigail; she has a bewitching countenance; I wish I may not be tempted to marry her in good earnest.

Enter ABIGAIL.

Abi. Ha! Mr. Vellum.

Vel. What brings my sweet one hither?

Abi. I am coming to speak to my friend behind the wainscoat. It is fit, child, he should have an account of this conjuror, that he may not be surprised.

Vel. That would be as much as thy thousand pound is worth.

Abi. I'll speak low—walls have ears. [*Pointing at the wainscoat.*

Vel. But hark you, duckling! be sure you don't tell him that I am let into the secret.

Abi. That's a good one indeed! as if I should ever tell what passes between you and me.

Vel. No, no, my child, that must not be! he, he, he! that must not be; he, he, he!

Abi. You will always be waggish.

Vel. Adieu, and let me hear the result of your conference.

Abi. How can you leave one so soon? I shall think it an age till I see you again.

Vel. Adieu, my pretty one.

Abi. Adieu, sweet Mr. Vellum.

Vel. My pretty one —— [*As he is going off.*

Abi. Dear Mr. Vellum.

Vel. My pretty one. [*Exit* VELLUM.

Abi. I have him—If I can but get this thousand pound.

[FANTOME *gives three raps upon his drum behind the wainscoat.*

Ha! three raps upon the drum! the signal Mr. Fantome and I agreed upon, when he had a mind to speak with me.

[FANTOME *raps again.*

Very well, I hear you; come, fox, come out of your hole.

Scene opens, and FANTOME *comes out.*

You may leave your drum in the wardrobe, till you have occasion for it.

Fan. Well, Mrs. Abigail, I want to hear what's doing in the world.

Abi. You are a very inquisitive spirit. But I must tell you, if you do not take care of yourself, you will be laid this evening.

Fan. I have overheard something of that matter. But let me alone for the doctor—I'll engage to give a good account of him. I am more in pain about Tinsel. When a lady's in the case, I'm more afraid of one fop than twenty conjurors.

Abi. To tell you truly, he presses his attacks with so much impudence, that he has made more progress with my lady in two days, than you did in two months.

Fan. I shall attack her in another manner, if thou canst but procure me another interview. There's nothing makes a lover so keen, as being kept up in the dark.

Abi. Pray no more of your distant bows, your respectful compliments——Really, Mr. Fantome, you're only fit to make love across a tea-table.

Fan. My dear girl, I can't forbear hugging thee for thy good advice.

Abi. Ay, now, I have some hopes of you; but why don't you do so to my lady?

Fan. Child, I always thought your lady loved to be treated with respect.

Abi. Believe, Mr. Fantome, there is not so great a difference between woman and woman as you imagine. You see Tinsel has nothing but his sauciness to recommend him.

Fan. Tinsel is too great a coxcomb to be capable of love—And let me tell thee, Abigail, a man who is sincere in his passion, makes but a very awkward profession of it—But I'll mend my manners.

Abi. Ay, or you'll never gain a widow——Come, I must tutor you a little; suppose me to be my lady, and let me see how you'll behave yourself.

Fan. I'm afraid, child, we ha'n't time for such a piece of mummery.

Abi. Oh, it will be quickly over, if you play your part well.

Fan. Why then, dear Mrs. Ab——I mean, my lady Truman.

Abi. Ay! but you ha'n't saluted me.

Fan. That's right; faith I forgot that circumstance. [*Kisses her.*] Nectar and ambrosia!

Abi. That's very well—

Fan. How long must I be condemned to languish! when shall my sufferings have an end! My life, my happiness, my all is wound up in you—

Abi. Well! why don't you squeeze my hand?

Fan. What, thus?

Abi. Thus! Ay—Now throw your arm about my middle: hug me closer——You are not afraid of hurting me! Now pour forth a volley of rapture and nonsense till you are out of breath.

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Fan. Transport and ecstasy! where am I! —my life, my bliss!—I rage, I burn, I bleed, I die.

Abi. Go on, go on.

Fan. Flames and darts—Bear me to the gloomy shade, rocks, and grottoes—flowers, zephyrs, and purling streams.

Abi. Oh! Mr. Fantome, you have a tongue would undo a vestal! You were born for the ruin of our sex.

Fan. This will do then, Abigail?

Abi. Ay, this is talking like a lover. Though I only represent my lady, I take a pleasure in hearing you. Well, o' my conscience, when a man of sense has a little dash of the coxcomb in him, no woman can resist him. Go on at this rate, and the thousand pound is as good as in my pocket.

Fan. I shall think it an age, till I have an opportunity of putting this lesson in practice.

Abi. You may do it soon, if you make good use of your time; Mr. Tinsel will be here with my lady at eight, and at nine the conjuror is to take you in hand.

Fan. Let me alone with both of them.

Abi. Well! forewarned, forearmed. Get into your box, and I'll endeavour to dispose every thing in your favour.

[FANTOME *goes in. Exit* ABIGAIL.

Enter VELLUM.

Vel. Mrs. Abigail is withdrawn——I was in hopes to have heard what passed between her and her invisible correspondent.

Enter TINSEL.

Tin. Vellum! Vellum!

Vel. [*Aside.*] Vellum! we are, methinks, very familiar; I am not used to be called so by any but their ho-nours——What would you, Mr. Tinsel?

Tin. Let me beg a favour of thee, old gentleman.

Vel. What is that, good Sir?

Tin. Pr'ythee run and fetch me the rent-roll of thy lady's estate.

Vel. The rent-roll?

Tin. The rent-roll! ay, the rent-roll! Dost not understand what that means?

Vel. Why, have you thoughts of purchasing it!

Tin. Thou hast hit it, old boy; this is my very intention.

Vel. The purchase will be considerable.

Tin. And for that reason I have bid thy lady very high——She is to have no less for it than this entire person of mine.

Vel. Is your whole estate personal, Mr. Tinsel?—he, he, he!

Tin. Why, you queer old dog, you don't pretend to jest, d'ye? Look ye, Vellum, if you think of being continued my steward, you must learn to walk with your toes out.

Vel. [*Aside.*] An insolent companion!

Tin. Thou'rt confounded rich, I see, by that dangling of thy arms.

Vel. [*Aside.*] An ungracious bird!

Tin. Thou shalt lend me a couple of thousand pounds.

Vel. [*Aside.*] A very profligate!

Tin. Look ye, Vellum, I intend to be kind to you——I'll borrow some money of you.

Vel. I cannot but smile to consider the disappointment this young fellow will meet with; I will make myself merry with him. [*Aside.*] And so, Mr. Tinsel, you promise you will be a very kind master to me.

[*Stifling a laugh.*

Tin. What will you give for a life in the house you live in?

Vel. What do you think of five hundred pounds?——Ha, ha, ha!

Tin. That's too little.

Vel. And yet it is more than I shall give you —And I will offer you two reasons for it.

Tin. Pr'ythee what are they?

Vel. First, because the tenement is not in your disposal; and, secondly, because it never will be in your disposal; and so fare you well, good Mr. Tinsel. Ha, ha, ha! You will pardon me for being jocular. [*Exit.*

Tin. This rogue is as saucy as the conjuror: I'll be hanged if they are not akin.

Enter LADY.

Lady. Mr. Tinsel! what, all alone? You free-thinkers are great admirers of solitude.

Tin. No, faith, I have been talking with thy steward; a very grotesque figure of a fellow, the very picture of one of our benchers. How can you bear his conversation?

Lady. I keep him for my steward, and not my companion. He's a sober man.

Tin. Yes, yes, he looks like a put; a queer old dog, as ever I saw in my life: we must turn him off, widow. He cheats thee confoundedly, I see that.

Lady. Indeed you're mistaken; he has always had the reputation of being a very honest man.

Tin. What! I suppose he goes to church.

Lady. Goes to church! so do you too, I hope.

Tin. I would for once, widow, to make sure of you.

Lady Ah, Mr. Tinsel, a husband who would not continue to go thither, would quickly forget the promises he made there.

Tin. Faith, very innocent, and very ridiculous! Well then, I warrant thee, widow, thou wouldst not for the world marry a sabbath-breaker!

Lady. Truly they generally come to a bad end. I remember the conjuror told you, you were short-lived.

Tin. The conjuror! Ha, ha, ha!

Lady. Indeed your're very witty!

Tin. Indeed you're very handsome.

[*Kisses her hand.*

Lady. I wish the fool does not love me.

[*Aside.*

Tin. Thou art the idol I adore: here must I pay my devotion—Pr'ythee, widow, hast thou any timber upon thy estate.

Lady. The most impudent fellow I ever met with. [*Aside.*

Tin. I take notice thou hast a great deal of old plate here in the house, widow.

Lady. Mr. Tinsel, you are a very observing man.

Tin. Thy large silver cistern would make a very good coach; and half a dozen salvers that I saw on the side-board might be turned into six as pretty horses as any that appear in the ring.

Lady. You have a very good fancy, Mr. Tinsel.——What pretty transformations you could make in my house—But I'll see where 'twill end. [*Aside.*

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Tin. Then I observe, child, you have two or three services of gilt plate; we'd eat always in china, my dear.

Lady. I perceive you are an excellent manager——How quickly you have taken an inventory of my goods!

Tin. Now, hark ye, widow, to show you the love that I have for you——

Lady. Very well; let me hear.

Tin. You have an old-fashioned gold caudle-cup, with a figure of a saint upon the lid on't.

Lady. I have; what then?

Tin. Why look ye, I'd sell the caudle-cup with the old saint for as much money as they'd fetch, which I would convert into a diamond buckle, and make you a present of it.

Lady. Oh! you are generous to an extravagance. But, pray, Mr. Tinsel, don't dispose of my goods before you are sure of my person. I find you have taken a great affection to my moveables.

Tin. My dear, I love every thing that belongs to you.

Lady. I see you do, Sir; you need not make any protestations upon that subject.

Tin. Pho, pho, my dear, we are growing serious, and, let me tell you, that's the very next step to being dull. Come, that pretty face was never made to look grave with.

Lady. Believe me, Sir, whatever you think, marriage is a serious subject.

Tin. For that very reason, my dear, let us run over it as fast as we can.

Lady. I should be very much in haste for a husband, if I married within fourteen months after Sir George's decease.

Tin. Pray, my dear, let me ask you a question: dost not thou think that Sir George is as dead at present, to all intents and purposes, as he will be a twelvemonth hence?

Lady. Yes; but decency! Mr. Tinsel——

Tin. Or dost thou think thou'lt be more a widow then, than thou art now?

Lady. The world would say I never loved my first husband.

Tin. Ah, my dear, they would say you loved your second; and they would own I deserved it, for I shall love thee most inordinately.

Lady. But what would people think?

Tin. Think! why they would think thee the mirror of widowhood——That a woman should live fourteen whole months after the decease of her spouse, without having engaged herself. Why, about town, we know many a woman of quality's second husband, several years before the death of the first.

Lady. Ay, I know you wits have your common-place jests upon us poor widows.

Tin. I'll tell you a story, widow: I know a certain lady, who, considering the craziness of her husband, had, in case of mortality, engaged herself to two young fellows of my acquaintance. They grew such desperate rivals for her, while her husband was alive, that one of them pinked the other in a duel. But the good lady was no sooner a widow, but what did my dowager do? why, faith, being a woman of honour, she married a third, to whom, it seems, she had given her first promise.

Lady. And this is a true story upon your own knowledge?

Tin. Every tittle, as I hope to be married, or never believe Tom Tinsel.

Lady. Pray, Mr. Tinsel, do you call this talking like a wit, or like a rake?

Tin. Innocent enough. He, he, he! Why, where's the difference, my dear?

Lady. Yes, Mr. Tinsel, the only man I ever loved in my life had a great deal of the one, and nothing of the other in him.

Tin. Nay, now you grow vapourish; thou'lt begin to fancy thou hear'st the drum by and by.

Lady. If you had been here last night about this time, you would not have been so merry.

Tin. About this time, say'st thou! Come, faith, for humour's sake, we'll sit down and listen.

Lady. I will, if you'll promise to be serious.

Tin. Serious! never fear me, child; ha, ha, ha! dost not hear him?

Lady. You break your word already. Pray, Mr. Tinsel, do you laugh to show your wit or your teeth?

Tin. Why both, my dear——I'm glad, however, that she has taken notice of my teeth. [*Aside.*] But you look serious, child; I fancy thou hear'st the drum, dost not?

Lady. Don't talk so rashly.

Tin. Why, my dear, you could not look more frighted if you had Lucifer's drum-major in your house.

Lady. Mr. Tinsel, I must desire to see you no more in it, if you do not leave this idle way of talking.

Tin. Child, I thought I had told you what is my opinion of spirits, as we were drinking a dish of tea but just now——There is no such thing, I give thee my word.

Lady. Oh, Mr. Tinsel, your authority must be of great weight to those that know you.

Tin. For my part, child, I have made myself easy in those points.

Lady. Sure nothing was ever like this fellow's vanity, but his ignorance. [*Aside.*

Tin. I'll tell thee now, widow——I would engage, by the help of a white sheet and a penny-worth of link, in a dark night, to frighten you a whole country village out of their senses, and the vicar into the bargain. [*Drum beats.*] Hark, hark! what noise is that? Heaven defend us! this is more than fancy.

Lady. It beats more terrible than ever.

Tin. 'Tis very dreadful! what a dog have I been! to speak against my conscience, only to show my parts!

Lady. It comes nearer and nearer. I wish you have not angered it by your foolish discourse.

Tin. Indeed, Madam, I did not speak from my heart: I hope it will do me no hurt for a little harmless raillery.

Lady. Harmless, d'ye call it? It beats hard by us, as if it would break through the wall.

Tin. What a devil had I to do with a white sheet!

Scene opens and discovers FANTOME.

Mercy on us! it appears.

Lady. Oh, 'tis he! 'tis he himself! 'tis Sir George! 'tis my husband! [*She faints.*

Tin. Now would I give ten thousand pounds that I were in town. [FANTOME *advances to him drumming.*] I beg ten thousand pardons: I'll never talk at this rate any more. [FANTOME *still advances drumming.*] By my soul, Sir George, I was not in earnest. [*Falls on his knees.*] Have compassion on my youth, and consider I am but a coxcomb—[FANTOME *points to the door.*] But see, he waves me off.—Ay,

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with all my heart—What a devil had I to do with a white sheet?

[*He steals off the stage, mending his pace as the drum beats.*

Fan. The scoundrel is gone, and has left his mistress behind him; I'm mistaken if he makes love in this house any more. I have now only the conjuror to deal with. I don't question but I shall make his reverence scamper as fast as the lover; and then the day's my own. But the servants are coming, I must get into my cupboard. [*He goes in.*

Enter ABIGAIL *and Servants.*

Abi. Oh, my poor lady! this wicked drum has frighted Mr. Tinsel out of his wits, and my lady into a swoon. Let me bend her a little forward. She revives. Here, carry her into the fresh air, and she'll recover. [*They carry her off.*] This is a little barbarous to my lady; but 'tis all for her good: and I know her so well, that she would not be angry with me, if she knew what I was to get by it. And, if any of her friends should blame me for it hereafter,

I'll clap my hand upon my purse, and tell 'em,
'Twas for a thousand pounds, and Mr. Vellum. [*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.

Enter SIR GEORGE *in his Conjuror's habit, the* BUTLER *marching before him with two large candles, and the two* SERVANTS *coming after him, one bringing a little table, and another a chair.*

But. An't please your worship, Mr. Conjuror, the steward has given us all orders to do whatsoever you shall bid us, and to pay you the same respect as if you were our master.

Sir G. Thou say'st well.

Gard. An't please your conjurorship's worship, shall I set the table down here?

Sir G. Here, Peter.

Gard. Peter!——He knows my name by his learning. [*Aside.*

Coach. I have brought you, reverend Sir, the largest elbow-chair in the house; 'tis that the steward sits in when he holds a court.

Sir G. Place it there.

But. Sir, will you please to want any thing else.

Sir G. Paper, and a pen and ink.

But. Sir, I believe we have paper that is fit for your purpose! my lady's mourning paper, that is blacked at the edges——Would you choose to write with a crow-quill?

Sir G. There is none better.

But. Coachman, go fetch the paper and standish out of the little parlour.

Coach. [*To* GARD.] Peter, pr'ythee do thou go along with me——I'm afraid——You know I went with you last night into the garden, when the cook-maid wanted a handful of parsley.

But. Why, you don't think I'll stay with the conjuror by myself!

Gard. Come, we'll all three go and fetch the pen and ink together. [*Exeunt* SERVANTS.

Sir G. There's nothing I see makes such strong alliances as fear. These fellows are all entered into a confederacy against the ghost. There must be abundance of business done in the family at this rate. But here comes the triple-alliance. Who could have thought these three rogues could have found each of them an employment in fetching a pen and ink?

Enter GARDENER *with a sheet of paper,* COACHMAN *with a standish, and* BUTLER *with a pen.*

Gard. Sir, there is your paper.

Coach. Sir, there is your standish.

But. Sir, there is your crow-quill pen——I'm glad I have got rid on't. [*Aside.*

Gard. [*Aside.*] He forgets that he's to make a circle——Doctor, shall I help you to a bit of chalk?

Sir G. It is no matter.

But. Look ye, Sir, I showed you the spot where he's heard oftenest, if your worship can but ferret him out of that old wall in the next room——

Sir G. We shall try.

Gard. That's right, John. His worship must let fly all his learning at that old wall.

But. Sir, if I was worthy to advise you, I would have a bottle of good October by me. Shall I set a cup of stingo at your elbow?

Sir G. I thank thee——we shall do without it.

Gard. John, he seems a very good-natured man for a conjuror.

But. I'll take this opportunity of inquiring after a bit of plate I have lost. I fancy, whilst he is in my lady's pay, one may hedge in a question or two into the bargain. Sir, Sir, may I beg a word in your ear?

Sir G. What wouldst thou?

But. Sir, I know I need not tell you, that I lost one of my silver spoons last week.

Sir G. Marked with a swan's neck——

But. My lady's crest! He knows every thing. [*Aside.*] How would your worship advise me to recover it again?

Sir G. Hum!

But. What must I do to come at it?

Sir G. Drink nothing but small-beer for a fortnight——

But. Small beer! rot-gut!

Sir G. If thou drinkest a single drop of ale before fifteen days are expired—It is as much—as thy spoon—is worth.

But. I shall never recover it that way; I'll e'en buy a new one. [*Aside.*

Coach. D'ye mind how they whisper?

Gard. I'll be hanged if he be not asking him something about Nell.——

Coach. I'll take this opportunity of putting a question to him about poor Dobbing; I fancy he could give me better counsel than the farrier.

But. [*To* GARD.] A prodigious man! he knows every thing: Now is the time to find out thy pick-axe.

Gard. I have nothing to give him; Does he not expect to have his hand crossed with silver?

Coach. [*To* SIR G.] Sir, may a man venture to ask you a question?

Sir G. Ask it.

Coach. I have a poor horse in the stable that's bewitched——

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Sir G. A bay gelding.

Coach. How could he know that? [*Aside.*

Sir G. Bought at Banbury.

Coach. Whew—so it was of my conscience. [*Whistles.*

Sir G. Six years old, last Lammas.

Coach. To a day. [*Aside.*] Now, Sir, I would know whether the poor beast is bewitched by Goody Crouch or Goody Fly.

Sir G. Neither.

Coach. Then it must be by Goody Gurton; for she is the next oldest woman in the parish.

Gard. Hast thou done, Robin?

Coach. [*To* GARD.] He can tell thee any thing.

Gard. [*To* SIR G.] Sir, I would beg to take you a little further out of hearing——

Sir G. Speak.

Gard. The Butler and I, Mr. Doctor, were both of us in love, at the same time, with a certain person.

Sir G. A woman.

Gard. How could he know that? [*Aside.*

Sir G. Go on.

Gard. This woman has lately had two children at a birth.

Sir G. Twins.

Gard. Prodigious! where could he hear that? [*Aside.*

Sir G. Proceed.

Gard. Now, because I used to meet her sometimes in the garden, she has laid them both——

Sir G. To thee.

Gard. What a power of learning he must have! he knows every thing.

Sir G. Hast thou done?

Gard. I would desire to know whether I am really father to them both.

Sir G. Stand before me, let me survey thee round.

[*Lays his wand upon his head, and makes him turn about.*

Coach. Look yonder, John, the silly dog is turning about under the conjuror's wand. If he has been saucy to him, we shall see him puffed off in a whirlwind immediately.

Sir G. Twins, dost thou say? [*Still turning him.*

Gard. Ay, are they both mine, d'ye think?

Sir G. Own but one of them.

Gard. Ay, but Mrs. Abigail will have me take care of them both—she's always for the butler——if my poor master, Sir George, had been alive, he would have made him go halves with me.

Sir G. What, was Sir George a kind master?

Gard. Was he? Ay, my fellow-servants will bear me witness.

Sir G. Did ye love Sir George?

But. Every body loved him——

Coach. There was not a dry eye in the parish at the news of his death——

Gard. He was the best neighbour——

But. The kindest husband——

Coach. The truest friend to the poor——

But. My good lady took on mightily; we all thought it would have been the death of her—

Sir G. I protest these fellows melt me! I think the time long till I am their master again, that I may be kind to them. [*Aside.*

Enter VELLUM.

Vel. Have you provided the doctor every thing he has occasion for? If so—you may depart. [*Exeunt* SERVANTS.

Sir G. I can as yet see no hurt in my wife's behaviour: but still have some certain pangs and doubts, that are natural to the heart of a fond man. I must take the advantage of my disguise to be thoroughly satisfied. It would neither be for her happiness nor mine, to make myself known to her till I am so. [*Aside.*—Dear Vellum, I am impatient to hear some news of my wife; how does she after her fright?

Vel. It is a saying somewhere in my Lord Coke, that a wido——

Sir G. I ask of my wife, and thou talkest to me of my Lord Coke——pr'ythee tell me how she does, for I am in pain for her.

Vel. She is pretty well recovered. Mrs. Abigail has put her in good heart; and I have given her great hopes from your skill.

Sir G. That I think cannot fail, since thou hast got this secret out of Abigail! But I could not have thought my friend Fantome would have served me thus——

Vel. You will fancy you are a living man—

Sir G. That he should endeavour to ensnare my wife——

Vel. You have no right in her after your demise—Death extinguishes all property—*Quoad hanc*—It is a maxim in the law.

Sir G. A pox on your learning! Well, but what is become of Tinsel?

Vel. He rushed out of the house, called for his horse, clapped spurs to his sides, and was out of sight in less time than I—can—tell—ten.

Sir G. This is whimsical enough! My wife will have a quick succession of lovers in one day—Fantome has driven out Tinsel, and I shall drive out Fantome.

Vel. Even as one wedge driveth out another——he, he, he! You must pardon me for being jocular.

Sir G. Was there ever such a provoking blockhead? but he means me well—Well, I must have satisfaction of this traitor Fantome: and cannot take a more proper one, than by turning him out of my house in a manner that shall throw shame upon him, and make him ridiculous as long as he lives——You must remember, Vellum, you have abundance of business upon your hands, and I have but just time to tell it you over; all I require of you is despatch, therefore hear me.

Vel. There is nothing more requisite in business than despatch—

Sir G. Then hear me.

Vel. It is indeed the life of business—

Sir G. Hear me then, I say.

Vel. And as one hath rightly observed, the benefit that attends it is fourfold. First—

Sir G. There is no bearing this! Thou art going to describe despatch, when thou shouldst be practising it.

Vel. But your ho-nour will not give me a hearing——

Sir G. Thou wilt not give me the hearing. [*Angrily.*

Vel. I am still.

Sir G. In the first place, you are to lay my wig, hat, and sword, ready for me in the closet, and one of my scarlet coats. You know how Abigail has described the ghost to you.

Vel. It shall be done.

Sir G. Then you must remember, whilst I am laying this ghost, you are to prepare my wife for the reception of her real husband;

tell her the whole story, and do it with all the art you are master of, that the surprise may not be too great for her.

Vel. It shall be done—But since her honour has seen this apparition, she desires to see you once more, before you encounter it.

Sir G. I shall expect her impatiently. For now I can talk to her without being interrupted by that impertinent rogue Tinsel. I hope thou hast not told Abigail any thing of the secret.

Vel. Mrs. Abigail is a woman; there are many reasons why she should not be acquainted with it: I shall only mention six——

Sir G. Hush, here she comes! O my heart!

Enter LADY *and* ABIGAIL.

Sir G. [*Aside, while* VELLUM *talks in dumb show to* LADY.] O that loved woman! How I long to take her in my arms! If I find I am still dear to her memory, it will be a return to life indeed! But I must take care of indulging this tenderness, and put on a behaviour more suitable to my present character.

[*Walks at a distance, in a pensive posture, waving his wand.*

Lady. [*To* VELLUM.] This is surprising indeed! So all the servants tell me; they say he knows every thing that has happened in the family.

Abi. [*Aside.*] A parcel of credulous fools; they first tell him their secrets, and then wonder how he comes to know them.

[*Exit* VELLUM, *exchanging fond looks with* ABIGAIL.

Lady. Learned Sir, may I have some conversation with you, before you begin your ceremonies?

Sir G. Speak! but hold—first let me feel your pulse.

Lady. What can you learn from that?

Sir G. I have already learned a secret from it, that will astonish you.

Lady. Pray what is it?

Sir G. You will have a husband within this half hour.

Abi. [*Aside.*] I am glad to hear that——He must mean Mr. Fantome; I begin to think there's a good deal of truth in his art.

Lady. Alas! I fear you mean I shall see Sir George's apparition a second time.

Sir G. Have courage, you shall see the apparition no more. The husban . I mention shall be as much alive as I am.

Abi. Mr Fantome to be sure. [*Aside.*

Lady. Impossible! I loved my first too well.

Sir G. You could not love the first better than you will love the second.

Abi. [*Aside.*] I'll be hanged if my dear steward has not instructed him; he means Mr. Fantome, to be sure: the thousand pound is our own.

Lady. Alas! you did not know Sir George.

Sir G. As well as I do myself——I saw him with you in the red damask room, when he first made love to you; your mother left you together, under pretence of receiving a visit from Mrs. Hawthorn, on her return from London.

Lady. This is astonishing.

Sir G. You were a great admirer of a single life for the first half hour; your refusals then grew still fainter and fainter. With what ecstacy did Sir George kiss your hand, when you told him you should always follow the advice of your mamma.

Lady. Every circumstance to a tittle!

Sir G. Then, lady, the wedding night! I saw you in your white satin night-gown: you would not come out of your dressing-room, till Sir George took you out by force. He drew you gently by the hand—You struggled—but he was too strong for you—You blushed; he—

Lady. Oh! stop there! go no farther—He knows every thing. [*Aside.*

Abi. Truly, Mr. Conjuror, I believe you have been a wag in your youth.

Sir G. Mrs. Abigail, you know what your good word cost Sir George; a purse of broad pieces, Mrs. Abigail—

Abi. The devil's in him. [*Aside.*] Pray, Sir, since you have told so far, you should tell my lady that I refused to take them.

Sir G. 'Tis true, child, he was forced to thrust them into your bosom.

Abi. This rogue will mention the thousand pound, if I don't take care. [*Aside.*] Pray, Sir, though you are a conjuror, methinks you need not be a blab——

Lady. Sir, since I have now no reason to doubt of your art, I must beseech you to treat this apparition gently—It has the resemblance of my deceased husband; if there be any undiscovered secret, any thing that troubles his rest, learn it of him.

Sir G. I must to that end be sincerely informed by you, whether your heart be engaged to another. Have not you received the addresses of many lovers since his death?

Lady. I have been obliged to receive more visits than have been agreeable.

Sir G. Was not Tinsel welcome?——I'm afraid to hear an answer to my own question. [*Aside.*

Lady. He was well recommended.

Sir G. Racks! [*Aside.*

La y. Of a good family.

Sir G. Tortures! [*Aside.*

Lady. Heir to a considerable estate.

Sir G. Death! [*Aside.*] And you still love him?——I'm distracted! [*Aside.*

Lady. No, I despise him. I found he had a design upon my fortune; was base, profligate, cowardly, and every thing that could be expected from a man of the vilest principles.

Sir G. I'm recovered. [*Aside.*

Abi. Oh. Madam, had you seen how like a scoundrel he looked when he left your ladyship in a swoon! Where have you left my lady? says I. In an elbow-chair, child, says he. And where are ye going? says I. To town, child, says he: for, to tell thee truly, child, says he, I don't care for living under the same roof with the devil.

Sir G. Well, lady, I see nothing in all this that may hinder Sir George's spirit from being at rest.

Lady. If he knows any thing of what passes in my heart, he cannot but be satisfied of that fondness which I bear to his memory. My sorrow for him is always fresh when I think of him. He was the kindest, truest, tenderest—Tears will not let me go on——

Sir G. This quite overpowers me—I shall discover myself before my time. [*Aside.*]—Madam, you may now retire, and leave me to myself.

Lady. Success attend you!

Abi. I wish Mr. Fantome gets well off from this old Don—I know he'll be with him immediately. [*Exeunt* LADY *and* ABIGAIL.

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Sir G. My heart is now at ease; she is the same dear woman I left her——Now for my revenge upon Fantome.——I shall cut the ceremonies short. A few words will do his business——Now let me seat myself in form——A good easy chair for a conjuror, this!——Now for a few mathematical scratches——a good lucky scrawl that——Faith I think it looks very astrological——These two or three magical pot-hooks about it, make it a complete conjuror's scheme. [*Drum beats.*] Ha, ha, ha! Sir! are you there? Now must I pore upon my paper.

Enter FANTOME, *beating his drum.*

Pr'ythee don't make a noise, I'm busy.—[FANTOME *beats.*] A pretty march! pr'ythee beat that over again. [*He beats and advances.* SIR G. *Rising.*] Ha! you're very perfect in the step of a ghost. You stalk it majestically. [FANTOME *advances.*] How the rogue stares, he acts it to admiration; I'll be hanged if he has not been practising this half hour in Mrs. Abigail's wardrobe. [FANTOME *starts, gives a rap upon his drum.*] Pr'ythee, don't play the fool. [FANTOME *beats.*] Nay, nay, enough of this, good Mr. Fantome.

Fan. [*Aside.*] Death! I'm discovered. This jade Abigail has betrayed me.

Sir G. Mr. Fantome, upon the word of an astrologer, your thousand pound bribe will never gain my lady Truman.

Fan. 'Tis plain she has told him all. [*Aside.*

Sir G. Let me advise you to make off as fast as you can, or I plainly perceive by my art, Mr. Ghost will have his bones broke.

Fan. [*To* SIR G.] Look ye, old gentleman, I perceive you have learned this secret from Mrs. Abigail.

Sir G. I have learned it from my art.

Fan. Thy art! pr'ythee no more of that.—Look ye, I know you are a cheat as much as I am. And if thou'lt keep my counsel, I'll give thee ten broad pieces.

Sir G. I am not mercenary! Young man, I scorn thy gold.

Fan. I'll make them up twenty.

Sir G. Avaunt! and that quickly, or I'll raise such an apparition as shall——

Fan. An apparition, old gentleman! you mistake your man, I'm not to be frightened with bugbears!

Sir G. Let me retire but for a few moments, and I will give thee such a proof of my art——

Fan. Why, if thou hast any hocus pocus tricks to play, why can'st thou not do them here?

Sir G. The raising of a spirit, requires certain secret mysteries to be performed, and words to be muttered in private——

Fan. Well, if I see through your trick, will you promise to be my friend?

Sir G. I will—attend and tremble. [*Exit.*

Fan. A very solemn old ass! But I smoke him—he has a mind to raise his price upon me. I could not think this slut would have used me thus.——I begin to grow horribly tired of my drum. I wish I was well rid of it. However, I have got this by it, that it has driven off Tinsel for good and all; I sha'n't have the mortification to see my mistress carried off by such a rival. Well, whatever happens, I must stop this old fellow's mouth. I must not be sparing in hush-money. But here he comes.

Enter SIR GEORGE *in his own habit.*

Fan. Ha! what's that! Sir George Truman. This can be no counterfeit. His dress! his shape! his face! the very wound of which he died! Nay then, 'tis time to decamp!

[*Runs off.*

Sir G. Ha, ha, ha! Fare you well, good Sir George——The enemy has left me master of the field: here are the marks of my victory. This drum will I hang up in my great hall as the trophy of the day.

Enter ABIGAIL; SIR GEORGE *stands with his hand before his face, in a musing posture.*

Abi. Yonder he is. O' my conscience, he has driven off the conjuror. Mr. Fantome, Mr. Fantome! I give you joy, I give you joy. What do you think of your thousand pounds now? Why does not the man speak?

[*Pulls him by the sleeve.*

Sir G. Ha! [*Taking his hand from his face.*

Abi. Oh! 'tis my master!

[*Shrieks. Running away, he catches her.*

Sir G. Good Mrs. Abigail, not so fast.

Abi. Are you alive, Sir? He has given my shoulder such a cursed tweak! they must be real fingers; I feel 'em, I'm sure.

Sir G. What dost thou think?

Abi. Think, Sir? think? Troth I don't know what to think. Pray, Sir, how——

Sir G. No questions, good Abigail; thy curiosity shall be satisfied in due time. Where's your lady?

Abi. Oh, I'm so frighted!—and so glad——

Sir G. Where's your lady? I ask you——

Abi. Marry, I don't know where I am myself—I can't forbear weeping for joy——

Sir G. Your lady? I say, your lady? I must bring you to yourself with one pinch more——

Abi. Oh! She has been talking a good while with the steward.

Sir G. Then he has opened the whole story to her. I'm glad he has prepared her. Oh! here she comes.

Enter LADY *followed by* VELLUM.

Lady. Where is he? let me fly into his arms! my life! my soul! my husband!

Sir G. Oh! let me catch thee to my heart, dearest of women.

Lady. Are you then still alive, and are you here! I can scarce believe my senses! Now am I happy indeed.

Sir G. My heart is too full to answer thee.

Lady. How could you be so cruel to defer giving me that joy which you knew I must receive from your presence? You have robbed my life of some hours of happiness that ought to have been in it.

Sir G. It was to make our happiness the more sincere and unmixed: There will be now no doubts to dish it. What has been the affliction of our lives, has given a variety to them, and will hereafter supply us with a thousand materials to talk of.

Lady. I am now satisfied that it is not in the power of absence to lessen your love towards me.

Sir G. And I am satisfied that it is not in the power of death to destroy that love which makes me the happiest of men.

Lady. Was ever woman so blessed! to find again the darling of her soul, when she thought

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him lost for ever! to enter into a kind of second marriage with the only man whom she was ever capable of loving!

Sir G. May it be as happy as our first, I desire no more! Believe me, my dear, I want words to express those transports of joy and tenderness which are every moment rising in my heart whilst I speak to thee.

Enter SERVANTS.

But. Just as the steward told us, lads!—Look you there, if he ben't with my lady already!

Gard. He, he, he! what a joyful night will this be for Madam.

Coach. As I was coming in at the gate, a strange gentleman whisked by me; but he took to his heels, and made away to the George. If I did not see master before me, I should have sworn it had been his honour!

Gard. Hast thou given orders for the bells to be set a ringing?

Coach. Never trouble thy head about that, 'tis done.

Sir G. [*To* LADY.] My dear, I long as much to tell you my whole story, as you do to hear it. In the mean while I am to look upon this as my wedding-day. I'll have nothing but the voice of mirth and feasting in my house. My poor neighbours and my servants will rejoice with me. My hall shall be free to every one, and let my cellars be thrown open.

But. Ah! bless your honour; may you never die again!

Coach. The same good man that ever he was!

Gard. Whurra!

Sir G. Vellum, thou hast done me much service to-day. I know thou lovest Abigail, but she's disappointed in a fortune. I'll make it up to both of you. I'll give thee a thousand pound with her. It is not fit there should be one sad heart in my house to-night.

Lady. What you do for Abigail, I know is meant as a compliment to me. This is a new instance of your love.

Abi. Mr. Vellum, you are a well-spoken man: pray do you thank my master and my lady.

Sir G. Vellum, I hope you are not displeased with the gift I make you.

Vel. The gift is twofold. I receive from you
A virtuous partner, and a portion too;
For which, in humble wise, I thank the donors;
And so we bid good-night to both your honours.

EPILOGUE.

To-NIGHT, the poet's advocate I stand;
And he deserves the favour at my hand,
Who in my equipage their cause debating,
Has placed two lovers, and a third in waiting:
If both the first should from their duty swerve,
There's one behind the wainscot in reserve.
In his next play, if I would take this trouble,
He promised me to make the number double:
In troth 'twas spoke like an obliging creature,
For though 'tis simple, yet it shows good-nature.
My help thus ask'd, I could not choose but grant it,
And really I thought the play would want it,
Void as it is of all the usual arts
To warm your fancies, and to steal your hearts;
No court-intrigue, nor city cuckoldom,
No song, no dance, no music——but a drum—
No smutty thought, in doubtful phrase expressed,
And, gentlemen, if so, pray where's the jest?
When we would raise your mirth, you hardly know
Whether, in strictness, you should laugh or no;
But turn upon the ladies in the pit,
And if they redden, you are sure 'tis wit.
Protect him then, ye fair ones; for the fair
Of all conditions are his equal care.
He draws a widow, who, of blameless carriage,
True to her jointure, hates a second marriage;
And, to improve a virtuous wife's delights,
Out of one man contrives two wedding-nights;
Nay, to oblige the sex in every state,
A nymph of five and forty finds a mate.
Too long has marriage, in this tasteless age,
With ill-bred raillery supplied the stage:
No little scribbler is of wit so bare,
But has his fling at the poor wedded pair.
Our author deals not in conceits so stale:
For, should the examples of his play prevail,
No man need blush, though true to marriage-vows,
Nor be a jest, though he should love his spouse.
Thus has he done you British consorts right;
Whose husbands, should they pry like mine to-night,
Would never find you in your conduct slipping,
Though they turn'd conjurors to take you tripping.

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THE RECRUITING OFFICER:

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY GEORGE FARQUHAR.

REMARKS.

FARQUHAR, in his good-humoured dedication of this play 'To all friends round the Wrekin,' informs us that 'it took its rise from some little turns of humour which he met with almost within the shade of that famous hill;' and it bears internal marks of this local and personal origin. It is natural, easy, lively, flowing; written without any effort, and producing no very great effect—at least in the mere perusal. The characters, incidents, dialogue, and grouping are, such as he might very well be supposed to have taken from real life; and to have transferred to the comic stage, with more felicity and fidelity than expense of thought.

The Recruiting Officer is not equal, in the exhibition of wit, invention, or character, to the *Beaux' Stratagem*; nor in the romantic interest of the story, to the *Inconstant*; nor in the power of single scenes to the two parts of the *Trip to the Jubilee*; but there are sufficient indications of all these excellencies interspersed throughout; the streaks and glittering veins of the precious ore every where striking the eye, if not the solid ingots and massy wedges of pure gold.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	DRURY LANE, 1818.	COVENT GARDEN, 1814.
BALANCE,	*Mr. Powel.*	*Mr. Chapman.*
SCALE,	*Mr. Carr.*	*Mr. Brook.*
SCRUPLE,	*Mr. R. Phillips,*	*Mr. Atkins.*
WORTHY,	*Mr. Barnard.*	*Mr. Hamerton.*
CAPTAIN PLUME,	*Mr. Stanley.*	*Mr. C. Kemble.*
CAPTAIN BRAZEN,	*Mr. Harley.*	*Mr. Jones.*
KITE,	*Mr. Penley.*	*Mr. Mathews.*
BULLOCK,	*Mr. Oxberry.*	*Mr. Emery.*
COSTAR PEARMAIN,	*Mr. Munden.*	*Mr. Liston.*
THOMAS APPLETREE,	*Mr. Knight.*	*Mr. Simmons.*
WELSH COLLIER,	*Mr. Hughes.*	*Mr. King.*
MELINDA,	*Mrs. Orger,*	*Mrs. Egerton.*
SYLVIA,	*Mrs. Murdyn.*	*Mrs. H. Johnston.*
LUCY,	*Miss Cooke.*	*Mrs. Gibbs.*
ROSE,	*Mrs. Alsop.*	*Miss Booth.*
WOMAN,	*Mrs. Coveney.*	*Mrs. Coates.*
WIFE,	*Miss Tidswell.*	*Mrs. Emery.*

Constable, Recruits, Mob, Servants, and Attendants.

SCENE.—Shrewsbury.

PROLOGUE.

In ancient times, when Helen's fatal charms
Roused the contending universe to arms,
The Grecian council happily deputes
The sly Ulysses forth—to raise recruits.
The artful captain found without delay
Where great Achilles, a deserter, lay:

Him fate had warn'd to shun the Trojan blows,
Him Greece required—against the Trojan foes.
All their recruiting arts were needful here,
To raise this great, this timorous volunteer.
Ulysses well could talk—he stirs, he warms
The warlike youth—he listens to the charms
Of plunders, fine laced coats, and glittering arms.
Ulysses caught the young aspiring boy,
And listed him who wrought the fate of Troy.
Thus by recruiting was bold Hector slain;
Recruiting thus fair Helen did regain.
If for one Helen such prodigious things
Were acted, that they even listed kings;
If for one Helen's artful, vicious charms,
Half the transported world was found in arms;
What for so many Helens may we dare,
Whose minds as well as faces are so fair?
If by one Helen's eyes old Greece could find
Its Homer fired to write, even Homer blind;
Then Britons sure beyond compare may write,
That view so many Helens every night.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—The Market-Place—Drum beats the Grenadier's march.

Enter SERGEANT KITE, *followed by* THOMAS APPLETREE, COSTAR PEARMAIN, *and the Mob.*

Serg. K. If any gentlemen, soldiers or others have a mind to serve his majesty, and pull down the French king; if any 'prentices have severe masters, any children have undutiful parents, if any servants have too little wages, or any husband too much wife, let them repair to the noble Sergeant Kite, at the sign of the Raven, in this good town of Shrewsbury, and they shall receive present relief and entertainment. [*Drums beat.*] Gentlemen, I don't beat my drums here to insnare or inveigle any man; for you must know, Gentlemen, that I am a man of honour: besides, I don't beat up for common soldiers; no, I list only grenadiers, grenadiers, gentlemen. Pray, gentlemen, observe this cap, this is the cap of honour! it dubs a man a gentleman in the drawing of a trigger, and he that has the good fortune to be born six feet high was born to be a great man—Sir, will you give me leave to try this cap upon your head? [*To* COST.

Cost. Is there no harm in't? Wont the cap list me?

Serg. K. No, no, no more than I can. Come, let me see how it becomes you.

Cost. Are you sure there be no conjuration in it? No gunpowder plot upon me?

Serg. K. No, no, friend; don't fear, man.

Cost. My mind misgives me plaguily.—Let me see it—[*Going to put it on.*] It smells woundily of sweat and brimstone. Smell, Tummas.

Tho. Ay, wauns does it.

Cost. Pray, sergeant, what writing is this upon the face of it?

Serg. K. The crown, or the bed of honour.

Cost. Pray now, what may be that same bed of honour?

Serg. K. Oh! a mighty large bed! bigger by half than the great bed at Ware—ten thousand people may lie in it together and never feel one another.

Cost. My wife and I would do well to lie in't.—But do folk sleep sound in this same bed of honour?

Serg. K. Sound! ay, so sound that they never wake.

Cost. Wauns! I wish again that my wife lay there.

Serg. K. Say you so! then I find, brother—

Cost. Brother! hold there, friend; I am no kindred to you that I know of yet.—Look ye, sergeant, no coaxing, no wheedling, d'ye see—if I have a mind to list, why so—if not, why 'tis not so—therefore take your cap and your brothership back again, for I am not disposed at this present writing.—No coaxing, no brothering me, faith!

Serg. K. I coax! I wheedle! I'm above it, Sir: I have served twenty campaigns—but, Sir, you talk well, and I must own that you are a man every inch of you; a pretty, young, sprightly fellow! I love a fellow with a spirit; but I scorn to coax; 'tis base! though I must say that never in my life have I seen a man better built. How firm and strong he treads! he steps like a castle! but I scorn to wheedle any man——Come, honest lad! will you take share of a pot?

Cost. Nay, for that matter I'll spend my penny with the best he that wears a head, that is begging your pardon, Sir, and in a fair way.

Serg. K. Give me your hand then; and now, gentlemen, I have no more to say than this—here's a purse of gold, and there is a tub of humming ale at my quarters—'tis the king's money and the king's drink—he's a generous king and loves his subjects—I hope, gentlemen, you wont refuse the king's health.

All Mob. No, no, no.

Serg. K. Huzza then! huzza for the king and the honour of Shropshire.

All Mob. Huzza!

Serg. K. Beat Drum.

[*Exeunt shouting, drum beating a Grenadier's march.*

Enter CAPTAIN PLUME.

Capt. P. By the grenadier's march that should be my drum, and by that shout it should beat with success—Let me see——four o'clock—[*Looking on his watch.*] At ten yesterday morning I left London—pretty smart riding, but nothing to the fatigue of recruiting.

Enter KITE.

Serg. K. Welcome to Shrewsbury, noble captain! from the banks of the Danube to the Severn side, noble captain! you're welcome.

Capt. P. A very elegant reception indeed, Mr. Kite. I find you are fairly entered into your recruiting strain—Pray what success?

Serg. K. I've been here a week, and I've recruited five.

Capt. P. Five! pray what are they?

Serg. K. I have listed the strong man of Kent, the king of the gipsies, a Scotch pedlar, a scoundrel attorney and a Welch parson.

Capt. P. An attorney! wert thou mad? list a lawyer! discharge him, discharge him, this minute.

Serg. K. Why, Sir?

Capt. P. Because I will have nobody in

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my company that can write;—I say this minute discharge him.

Serg. K. And what shall I do with the parson?

Capt. P. Can he write?

Serg. K. Hum! he plays rarely upon the fiddle.

Capt. P. Keep him by all means—But how stands the country affected? Were the people pleased with the news of my coming to town?

Serg. K. Sir, the mob are so pleased with your honour, and the justices and better sort of people are so delighted with me, that we shall soon do your business—But, Sir, you have got a recruit here that you little think of.

Capt. P. Who?

Serg. K. One that you beat up for the last time you were in the country. You remember your old friend Molly at the Castle?

Capt. P. She's not breeding I hope.

Serg. K. She was brought to bed yesterday.

Capt. P. Kite, you must father the child.

Serg. K. And so her friends will oblige me to marry the mother.

Capt. P. If they should, we'll take her with us; she can wash, you know, and make a bed upon occasion.

Serg. K. But your honour knows that I am married already.

Capt. P. To how many?

Serg. K. I can't tell readily—I have set them down here upon the back of the muster-roll. [*Draws it out.*] Let me see—Imprimis, Mrs. Shely Snikereyes; she sells potatoes upon Ormond key in Dublin;—Peggy Guzzle, the brandy woman at the Horse-Guards, at Whitehall;—Dolly Waggon, the carrier's daughter at Hull; Madamoiselle Van Bottomflat, at the Buss;—then Jenny Oakum, the ship-carpenter's widow at Portsmouth; but I don't reckon upon her, for she was married at the same time to two lieutenants of marines, and a man-of-war's boatswain.

Capt. P. A full company—you have named five—Come, make them half a dozen. Kite, is the child a boy or a girl?

Serg. K. A chopping boy.

Capt. P. Then set the mother down in your list, and the boy in mine; and now go comfort the wench in the straw.

Serg. K. I shall, Sir.

Capt. P. But hold, have you made any use of your German doctor's habit since you arrived?

Serg. K. Yes, yes, Sir, and my fame's all about the country for the most faithful fortune-teller that ever told a lie. I was obliged to let my landlord into the secret for the convenience of keeping it so; but he is an honest fellow, and will be faithful to any roguery that is trusted to him. This device, Sir, will get you men, and me money, which I think is all we want at present.—But yonder comes your friend, Mr. Worthy. Has your honour any further commands?

Capt. P. None at present. [*Exit* SERG. KITE.] 'Tis indeed the picture of Worthy, but the life's departed.

Enter WORTHY.

What, arms across, Worthy! methinks you should hold them open when a friend's so near. The man has got the vapours in his ears I believe. I must expel this melancholy spirit.

Spleen, thou worst of fiends below,
Fly, I conjure thee, by this magic blow.

[*Slaps* WORTHY *on the shoulder.*

Wor. Plume! my dear captain! returned! safe and sound, I hope.

Capt. P. You see I have lost neither leg nor arm; then for my inside, 'tis neither troubled with sympathies nor antipathies; and I have an excellent stomach for roast beef.

Wor. Thou art a happy fellow: once I was so.

Capt. P. What ails thee, man? no inundations nor earthquakes in Wales I hope! Has your father rose from the dead, and resumed his estate?

Wor. No.

Capt. P. Then you are married, surely?

Wor. No.

Capt. P. Then you are mad, or turning methodist?

Wor. Come, I must out with it. Your once gay roving friend is dwindled into an obsequious, thoughtful, romantic, constant coxcomb.

Capt. P. And pray what is all this for?

Wor. For a woman.

Capt. P. Shake hands, brother. If thou go to that, behold me as obsequious, as thoughtful, as constant a coxcomb as your worship.

Wor. For whom?

Capt. P. For a regiment—but for a woman! 'Sdeath! I have been constant to fifteen at a time, but never melancholy for one. Pray who is this wonderful Helen?

Wor. A Helen indeed! not to be won under ten years siege; as great a beauty, and as great a jilt.

Capt. P. But who is she? do I know her?

Wor. Very well.

Capt. P. That's impossible. I know no woman that will hold out a ten year's siege.

Wor. What think you of Melinda?

Capt. P. Melinda! you must not think to surmount her pride by humility. Would you bring her to better thoughts of you, she must be reduced to a meaner opinion of herself. Let me see, the very first thing that I would do, should be to make love to her chambermaid. Suppose we lampooned all the pretty women in town, and left her out; or, what if we made a ball, and forgot to invite her, with one or two of the ugliest?

Wor. These would be mortifications, I must confess; but we live in such a precise dull place, that we can have no balls, no lampoons, no—

Capt. P. What! no young ones? and so many recruiting officers in town! I thought 'twas a maxim among them to leave as many recruits in the country as they carried out.

Wor. Nobody doubts your good will, noble captain! witness our friend Molly at the Castle; there have been tears in town about that business, captain.

Capt. P. I hope Sylvia has not heard of it.

Wor. Oh, Sir! have you thought of her? I began to fancy you had forgot poor Sylvia.

Capt. P. Your affairs had quite put mine out of my head. 'Tis true, Sylvia and I had once agreed, could we have adjusted preliminaries; but I am resolved never to bind myself to a woman for my whole life, till I know whether I shall like her company for half an hour. If people would but try one another before they engaged, it would prevent all these elopements, divorces, and the devil knows what.

Wor. Nay, for that matter, the town did not stick to say that.

Capt. P. I hate country towns for that reason. If your town has a dishonourable thought of Sylvia it deserves to be burned to the ground. I love Sylvia, I admire her frank generous disposition; in short, were I once a general, I would marry her.

Wor. Faith, you have reason; for were you but a corporal, she would marry you. But my Melinda coquets it with every fellow she sees; I'll lay fifty pounds she makes love to you.

Capt. P. I'll lay you a hundred that I return it if she does.

Re-enter SERGEANT KITE.

Serg. K. Captain, captain! a word in your ear.

Capt. P. You may speak out; here are none but friends.

Serg. K. You know, Sir, that you sent me to comfort the good woman in the straw, Mrs. Molly; my wife, Mr. Worthy.

Wor. O ho! very well. I wish you joy, Mr. Kite.

Serg. K. Your worship very well may; for I have got both a wife and child in half an hour. But as I was saying, you sent me to comfort Mrs. Molly,—my wife, I mean;—But what do you think, Sir? she was better comforted before I came.

Capt. P. As how?

Serg. K. Why, Sir, a footman in livery had brought her ten guineas to buy her baby-clothes.

Capt. P. Who, in the name of wonder, could send them?

Serg. K. Nay, Sir, I must whisper that;—Mrs. Sylvia.

Capt. P. Sylvia! generous creature!

Wor. Sylvia! Impossible!

Serg. K. Here are the guineas, Sir. I took the gold as part of my wife's portion. Nay, further, Sir, she sent word the child should be taken all imaginable care of, and that she intended to stand godmother. The same footman, as I was coming to you with the news, called after me, and told me that his lady would speak with me: I went; and upon hearing that you were come to town she gave me half-a-guinea for the news, and ordered me to tell you that justice Balance, her father, who is just come out of the country, would be glad to see you.

Capt. P. There's a girl for you, Worthy. Is there any thing of woman in this? No, 'tis noble, generous, manly friendship. The common jealousy of her sex, which is nothing but their avarice of pleasure, she despises; and can part with the lover, though she dies for the man. Come, Worthy, where's the best wine, for there I'll quarter?

Wor. Horton has a fresh pipe of choice Barcelona, which I would not let him pierce before, because I reserved it for your welcome to town.

Capt. P. Let's away, then. Mr. Kite, go to the lady, with my humble service, and tell her I shall only refresh a little and wait upon her.

Wor. Hold, Kite! have you seen the other recruiting captain?

Serg. K. No, Sir; I'd have you to know I don't keep such company. [*Exit.*

Capt. P. Another! who is he?

Wor. My rival, in the first place, and the most unaccountable fellow: but I'll tell you more as we go. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*An Apartment.*

Enter MELINDA, *and* SYLVIA.

Mel. Welcome to town, cousin Sylvia. [*They salute.*] I envied you your retreat in the country; for Shrewsbury, methinks, and all your heads of shires, are the most irregular places for living: here we have smoke, noise, scandal, affectation and pretension; in short, every thing to give the spleen, and nothing to divert it: then the air is intolerable.

Syl. Oh, Madam! I have heard the town commended for its air.

Mel. But you don't consider, Sylvia, how long I have lived in't! for I can assure you, that to a lady the least nice in her constitution, no air can be good above half a year. Change of air I take to be the most agreeable of any variety in life.

Syl. As you say, cousin Melinda, there are several sorts of airs.

Mel. Pshaw! I talk only of the air we breathe, or more properly of that we taste. Have not you, Sylvia, found a vast difference in the taste of airs?

Syl. Pray, cousin, are not vapours a sort of air? Taste air! you might as well tell me I may feed upon air! But, pr'ythee, my dear Melinda! don't put on such an air to me. Your education and mine were just the same; and I remember the time when we never troubled our heads about air, but when the sharp air from the Welch mountains made our fingers ache in a cold morning at the boarding-school.

Mel. Our education, cousin, was the same, but our temperaments had nothing alike: you have the constitution of a horse.

Syl. So far as to be troubled neither with spleen, cholic, nor vapours. I need no salts for my stomach, no hartshorn for my head, nor wash for my complexion; I can gallop all the morning after the hunting horn, and all the evening after a fiddle.

Mel. I am told your captain is come to town.

Syl. Ay, Melinda, he is come, and I'll take care he sha'n't go without a companion.

Mel. You are certainly mad, cousin.

Syl. ——And there's a pleasure in being mad
Which none but madmen know.

Mel. Thou poor romantic Quixote! hast thou the vanity to imagine that a young sprightly officer, that rambles over half the globe in half a year, can confine his thoughts to the little daughter of a country justice in an obscure part of the world?

Syl. Pshaw! what care I for his thoughts! I should not like a man with confined thoughts; it shows a narrowness of soul.

Mel. O'my conscience, Sylvia st thou been a man thou hadst been the greatest rake in Christendom.

Syl. I should have endeavoured to know the world. But now I think on't, how stands your affair with Mr. Worthy?

Mel. He's my aversion.

Syl. Vapours!

Mel. What do you say, Madam?

Syl. I say that you should not use that honest fellow so inhumanly; he's a gentleman of parts and fortune, and besides that he's my Plume's friend! and by all that's sacred if you don't use him better I shall expect satisfaction.

Mel. Satisfaction! you begin to fancy yourself a man in good earnest. But to be plain

with you, I like Worthy the worse for being so intimate with your captain, for I take him to be a loose, idle, ill-mannerly coxcomb.

Syl. Oh, Madam! you never saw him perhaps since you were mistress of twenty thousand pounds: you only knew him when you were capitulating with Worthy for a settlement, which perhaps might encourage him to be a little loose and unmannerly with you.

Mel. What do you mean, Madam?

Syl. My meaning needs no interpretation, Madam.

Mel. Better it had, Madam, for methinks you are too plain.

Syl. If you mean the plainness of my person, I think your ladyship's as plain as me to the full.

Mel. Were I sure of that, I would be glad to take up with a rakish officer as you do.

Syl. Again! lookye, Madam, you are in your own house.

Mel. And if you had kept in yours I should have excused you.

Syl. Don't be troubled, Madam, I sha'n't desire to have my visit returned.

Mel. The sooner therefore you make an end of this the better.

Syl. I am easily persuaded to follow my inclinations; and so, Madam, your humble servant. [*Exit.*

Mel. Saucy thing!

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. What's the matter, Madam.

Mel. Did not you see the proud nothing, how she swelled upon the arrival of her fellow?

Lucy. I don't believe she has seen him yet.

Mel. Nor sha'n't, if I can help it. Let me see—I have it—bring me pen and ink—Hold, I'll go write in my closet.

Lucy. An answer to this letter I hope, Madam. [*Presents a letter.*

Mel. Who sent it?

Lucy. Your captain, Madam.

Mel. He's a fool, and I'm tired of him: send it back unopened.

Lucy. The messenger's gone, Madam.

Mel. Then how should I send an answer? Call him back immediately, while I go write. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—An Apartment.

Enter JUSTICE BALANCE *and* CAPTAIN PLUME.

Just. B. Lookye, captain, give us but blood for our money, and you sha'n't want men. Adds my life, captain, get us but another marshal of France, and I'll go myself for a soldier.

Capt. P. Pray, Mr. Balance, how does your fair daughter?

Just. B. Ah, captain! what is my daughter to a marshal of France? We're upon a nobler subject; I want to have a particular description of the last battle.

Capt. P. The battle, Sir, was a very pretty battle as any one should desire to see; but we were all so intent upon victory that we never minded the battle: all that I know of the matter is, our general commanded us to beat the enemy, and we did so; and if he pleases but to say the word, we'll do it again. But pray, Sir, how does Mrs. Sylvia?

Just. B. Still upon Sylvia! for shame, captain! you are engaged already, wedded to the war; victory is your mistress, and 'tis below a soldier to think of any other.

Capt. P. As a mistress I confess, but as a friend, Mr. Balance.

Just. B. Come, come, captain, never mince the matter; would not you deceive my daughter if you could?

Capt. P. How, Sir? I hope she is not to be deceived.

Just. B. Faith, but she is, Sir, and any woman in England of her age and complexion, by a man of your youth and person. Lookye, captain, once I was young, and once an officer, as you are, and I can guess at your thoughts now by what mine were then; and I remember very well that I would have given one of my legs, to have deluded the daughter of an old country gentleman as like me as I was then like you.

Capt. P. But, Sir, was that country gentleman your friend and benefactor?

Just. B. Not much of that.

Capt. P. There the comparison breaks: the favours, Sir, that—

Just. B. Pho, pho! I hate set speeches: if I have done you any service, captain, it was to please myself. I love thee, and if I could part with my girl you should have her as soon as any young fellow I know; but I hope you have more honour than to quit the service, and she more prudence than to follow the camp; but she's at her own disposal; she has ten thousand pounds in her pocket, and so—Sylvia, Sylvia! [*Calls.*

Enter SYLVIA.

Syl. There are some letters, Sir, come by the post from London; I left them upon the table in your closet.

Just. B. And here is a gentleman from abroad. [*Presents* CAPT. P. *to her.*] Captain, you'll excuse me; I'll go and read my letters and wait on you. [*Exit.*

Syl. Sir, you are welcome to England.

Capt. P. You are indebted to me a welcome, Madam, since the hopes of receiving it from this fair hand was the principal cause of my seeing England.

Syl. I have often heard that soldiers were sincere; shall I venture to believe public report?

Capt. P. You may, when 'tis backed by private insurance; for I swear, Madam, by the honour of my profession, that whatever dangers I went upon, it was with the hope of making myself more worthy of your esteem; and if ever I had thoughts of preserving my life, 'twas for the pleasure of dying at your feet.

Syl. Well, well, you shall die at my feet, or where you will; but you know, Sir, there is a certain will and testament to be made beforehand.

Capt. P. My will, Madam, is made already, and there it is; and if you please to open this paper, which was drawn the evening before our last battle, you will find whom I left my heir.

Syl. "Mrs. Sylvia Balance." [*Opens the Will and reads.*] Well, captain, this is a handsome

and a substantial compliment; but I can assure you I am much better pleased with the bare knowledge of your intention, than I should have been in the possession of your legacy: but, methinks, Sir, you should have left something to your little boy at the Castle.

Capt. P. That's home. [*Aside.*] My little boy! lack-a-day, Madam! that alone may convince you 'twas none of mine: why, the girl, Madam, is my sergeant's wife, and so the poor creature gave out that I was the father, in hopes that my friends might support her in case of necessity—That was all, Madam—My boy! no, no, no!

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Madam, my master has received some ill news from London, and desires to speak with you immediately; and he begs the captain's pardon that he can't wait on him as he promised. [*Exit.*

Capt. P. Ill news! Heaven avert it! nothing could touch me nearer than to see that generous worthy gentleman afflicted. I'll leave you to comfort him, and be assured that if my life and fortune can be any way serviceable to the father of my Sylvia, he shall freely command both. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*An Apartment.*

Enter JUSTICE BALANCE *and* SYLVIA.

Syl. Whilst there is life there is hope, Sir; perhaps my brother may recover.

Just. B. We have but little reason to expect it; the doctor acquaints me here, that before this comes to my hands he fears I shall have no son—Poor Owen!—but the decree is just; I was pleased with the death of my father, because he left me an estate, and now I am punished with the loss of an heir to inherit mine. I must now look upon you as the only hopes of my family, and I expect that the augmentation of your fortune will give you fresh thoughts and new prospects.

Syl. My desire in being punctual in my obedience, requires that you would be plain in your commands, Sir.

Just. B. The death of your brother makes you sole heiress to my estate, which you know is about two thousand pounds a-year: this fortune gives you a fair claim to quality and a title: you must set a just value upon yourself, and in plain terms, think no more of Captain Plume.

Syl. You have often commended the gentleman, Sir.

Just. B. And I do so still; he's a very pretty fellow; but though I liked him well enough for a bare son-in-law, I don't approve of him for an heir to my estate and family: ten thousand pounds indeed I might trust in his hands, and it might do the young fellow a kindness; but, odds my life! two thousand pounds a-year would ruin him, quite turn his brain. A captain of foot worth two thousand pounds a-year! 'tis a prodigy in nature!

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Sir, here's one with a letter for your worship, but he will deliver it into no hands but your own.

Just. B. Come, show me the messenger. [*Exit with* SERVANT.

Syl. Make the dispute between love and duty, and I am Prince Prettyman exactly. If my brother dies, ah, poor brother! if he lives, ah, poor sister! It is bad both ways. I'll try it again—Follow my own inclinations and break my father's heart, or obey his commands and break my own! Worse and worse. Suppose I take it thus: a moderate fortune, a pretty fellow, and a pad; or a fine estate, a coach and six, and an ass, that will never do neither.

Re-enter JUSTICE BALANCE.

Just. B. Put four horses to the coach. [*To a Servant without.*] Ho, Sylvia!

Syl. Sir.

Just. B. How old were you when your mother died?

Syl. So young that I don't remember I ever had one; and you have been so careful, so indulgent to me since, that indeed I never wanted one.

Just. B. Have I ever denied you any thing you asked of me?

Syl. Never, that I remember.

Just. B. Then, Sylvia, I must beg that, once in your life, you will grant me a favour.

Syl. Why should you question it, Sir?

Just. B. I don't; but I would rather counsel than command. I don't propose this with the authority of a parent, but as the advice of your friend, that you would take the coach this moment and go into the country.

Syl. Does this advice, Sir, proceed from the contents of the letter you received just now?

Just. B. No matter; I will be with you in three or four days, and then give you my reasons. But before you go, I expect you will make me one solemn promise.

Syl. Propose the thing, Sir.

Just. B. That you will never dispose of yourself to any man without my consent.

Syl. I promise.

Just. B. Very well; and to be even with you, I promise I never will dispose of you without your own consent: and so, Sylvia, the coach is ready. Farewell. [*Exit* SYLVIA.] Now she's gone, I'll examine the contents of this letter a little nearer. [*Reads.*] "Sir,—My intimacy with Mr. Worthy has drawn a secret from him, that he had from his friend, Captain Plume: and my friendship and relation to your family oblige me to give you timely notice of it. The captain has dishonourable designs upon my cousin Sylvia. Evils of this nature are more easily prevented than amended; and that you would immediately send my cousin into the country is the advice of, Sir, your humble servant, Melinda."—Why, the devil's in the young fellows of this age; they are ten times worse than they were in my time.—Hang it! I can fetch down a woodcock or a snipe, and why not a hat and cockade? I have a case of good pistols, and have a good mind to try.

Enter WORTHY.

Worthy! your servant.

Wor. I'm sorry, Sir, to be the messenger of ill news.

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Just. B. I apprehend it, Sir; you have heard that my son Owen is past recovery.

Wor. My letters say he's dead, Sir.

Just. B. He's happy, and I am satisfied: the stroke of Heaven I can bear; but injuries from men, Mr. Worthy, are not so easily supported.

Wor. I hope, Sir, you're under no apprehensions of wrong from any body.

Just. B. You know I ought to be.

Wor. You wrong my honour in believing I could know any thing to your prejudice, without resenting it as much as you should.

Just. B. This letter, Sir, which I tear in pieces to conceal the person that sent it, informs me that Plume has a design upon Sylvia, and that you are privy to't.

Wor. Nay then, Sir, I must do myself justice, and endeavour to find out the author. [*Takes up a piece.*] Sir, I know the hand, and if you refuse to discover the contents, Melinda shall tell me. [*Going.*

Just. B. Hold, Sir; the contents I have told you already, only with this circumstance, that her intimacy with Mr. Worthy had drawn the secret from him.

Wor. Her intimacy with me!—Dear Sir, let me pick up the pieces of this letter; 'twill give me such a power over her pride to have her own an intimacy under her hand. This was the luckiest accident. [*Gathers up the Letter.*] The aspersion, Sir, was nothing but malice, the effect of a little quarrel between her and Sylvia.

Just. B. Are you sure of that, Sir?

Wor. Her maid gave me the history of part of the battle just now, as she overheard it. But I hope, Sir, your daughter has suffered nothing upon the account?

Just. B. No, no, poor girl! she's so afflicted with the news of her brother's death, that to avoid company she begged leave to go into the country.

Wor. And is she gone?

Just. B. I could not refuse her, she was so pressing; the coach went from the door the minute before you came.

Wor. So pressing to be gone, Sir?—I find her fortune will give her the same airs with Melinda; and then Plume and I may laugh at one another.

Just. B. Like enough; women are as subject to pride as men are; and why mayn't great women, as well as great men, forget their old acquaintance?—But come, where's this young fellow? I love him so well, it would break the heart of me to think him a rascal.—I am glad my daughter's fairly off though. [*Aside.*] Where does the captain quarter?

Wor. At Horton's: I am to meet him there two hours hence, and we should be glad of your company.

Just. B. Your pardon, dear Worthy. I must allow a day or two to the death of my son. Afterwards, I'm yours over a bottle, or how you will.

Wor. Sir, I'm your humble servant. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*The Street.*

Enter SERGEANT KITE, *with* COSTAR PEARMAIN *in one hand, and* THOMAS APPLETREE *in the other, drunk.*

Serg. K. [*Sings.*] Our 'prentice Tom may now refuse
To wipe his scoundrel master's shoes,
For now he's free to sing and play,
Over the hills and far away.—Over, &c.

(*The Mob sing the Chorus.*)

We shall lead more happy lives,
By getting rid of brats and wives,
That scold and brawl both night and day,
Over the hills and far away.—Over, &c.

Hey, boys! thus we soldiers live! drink, sing, dance, play;—we live, as one should say,—we live,—'tis impossible to tell how we live;—we are all princes,—why—why, you are a king,—you are an emperor, and I'm a prince;—now,—an't we?

Tho. No, sergeant, I'll be no emperor.

Serg. K. No?

Tho. I'll be a justice of peace.

Serg. K. A justice of peace, man?

Tho. Ay, wauns, will I.

Serg. K. Done; you are a justice of peace, and you are a king. [*To* Cos.] And I am a duke, and a rum duke, an't I?

Cos. Ay, but I'll be no king.

Serg. K. What then?

Cos. I'll be a queen.

Serg. K. A queen?

Cos. Ay, of England; that's greater than any king of 'em all.

Serg. K. Bravely said, faith! huzza for the queen. [*Huzza.*] But harkye, you Mr. Justice and you Mr. Queen, did you ever see the king's picture?

Cos. Tho. No, no, no.

Serg. K. I wonder at that; I have two of 'em set in gold, and as like his majesty,—bless the mark! see here, they are set in gold.

[*Takes two broad Pieces out of his pocket, gives one to each.*

Tho. The wonderful works of nature! [*Looks at it.*

Cos. What's this written about? here's a posy, I believe. Ca-ro-lus!—what's that, sergeant?

Serg. K. O! Carolus! why, Carolus is Latin for king George; that's all.

Cos. 'Tis a fine thing to be a scollard. Sergeant, will you part with this? I'll buy it on you, if it come within the compass of a crown.

Serg. K. A crown! never talk of buying; 'tis the same thing among friends, you know; I'll present them to ye both: you shall give me as good a thing. Put 'em up, and remember your old friend when I am over the hills and far away.

[*They sing, and put up the Money.*

Enter CAPTAIN PLUME, *singing.*

Over the hills, and over the main,
To Flanders, Portugal, or Spain;
The king commands, and we'll obey,
Over the hills and far away.

Come on my men of mirth, away with it; I'll make one among ye. Who are these hearty lads?

Serg. K. Off with your hats! 'ounds! off with your hats! This is the captain, the captain.

Tho. We have seen captains afore now, mun.

Cos. Ay, and lieutenant-captains too. 'Sflesh! I'll keep on my nab.

Tho. And I'se scarcely d'off mine for any captain in England. My vether's a freeholder.

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Capt. P. Who are those jolly lads, sergeant?

Serg. K. A couple of honest, brave fellows, that are willing to serve the king. I have entertained 'em just now as volunteers under your honour's command.

Capt. P. And good entertainment they shall have: volunteers are the men I want; those are the men fit to make soldiers, captains, generals.

Cos. Wounds, Tummas! what's this? Are you listed?

Tho. Flesh! not I. Are you, Costar?

Cos. Wounds! not I.

Serg. K. What! not listed? ha, ha, ha! a very good jest, i'faith.

Cos. Come, Tummas, we'll go home.

Tho. Ay, ay, come.

Serg. K. Home! for shame, gentlemen! behave yourselves better before your captain. Dear Tummas! honest Costar!

Tho. No, no, we'll be gone.

Serg. K. Nay, then, I command you to stay. I place you both sentinels in this place for two hours, to watch the motions of St. Mary's clock you, and you the motion of St. Chad's; and he that dares stir from his post till he be relieved, shall have my sword in his guts the next minute.

Capt. P. What's the matter, sergeant? I am afraid you are too rough with these gentlemen.

Serg. K. I'm too mild, Sir; they disobey command, Sir; and one of 'em should be shot for an example to the other.

Cos. Shot, Tummas!

Capt. P. Come, gentlemen, what's the matter?

Tho. We don't know; the noble sergeant is pleased to be in a passion, Sir; but—

Serg. K. They disobey command; they deny their being listed.

Tho. Nay, sergeant, we don't downright deny it neither; that we dare not do for fear of being shot; but we humbly conceive, in a civil way, and begging your worship's pardon, that we may go home.

Capt. P. That's easily known. Have either of you received any of the king's money?

Cos. Not a brass farthing, Sir.

Serg. K. They have each of them received one-and-twenty shillings, and 'tis now in their pockets.

Cos. Wounds! if I have a penny in my pocket but a bent sixpence, I'll be content to be listed, and shot into the bargain.

Tho. And I. Look ye here, Sir.

Cos. Nothing but the king's picture, that the sergeant gave me just now.

Serg. K. See there, a guinea, one-and-twenty shillings: t'other has the fellow on't.

Capt. P. The case is plain, gentlemen; the goods are found upon you; those pieces of gold are worth one-and-twenty shillings each.

Cos. So it seems that Carolus is one-and-twenty shillings in Latin.

Tho. 'Tis the same thing in Greek, for we are listed.

Cos. 'Flesh, but we an't, Tummas. I desire to be carried before the mayor, captain.

[CAPT. P. *and* SERG. K. *whispers.*

Capt. P. 'Twill never do, Kite; your damned tricks will ruin me at last. I wont lose the fellows though, if I can help it. [*Apart.*] Well, gentlemen, there must be some trick in this; my sergeant offers to take his oath that you are fairly listed.

Tho. Why, captain, we know that you soldiers have more liberty of conscience than other folks; but for me, or neighbour Costar here, to take such an oath, 'twould be downright perjuration.

Capt. P. Look ye, rascal, you villain! if I find that you have imposed upon these two honest fellows, I'll trample you to death, you dog.—Come, how was't?

Tho. Nay, then we'll speak. Your sergeant, as you say, is a rogue, an't like your worship, begging your worship's pardon,—and,—

Cos. Nay, Tummas, let me speak: you know I can read.—And so, Sir, he gave us those two pieces of money, for pictures of the king, by way of a present.

Capt. P. How! by way of a present? the son of a whore! I'il teach him to abuse honest fellows like you! scoundrel! rogue! villain!

[*Beats off the* SERGEANT, *and follows.*

Tho. Cos. O brave, noble captain: huzza! A brave captain, faith.

Cos. Now, Tummas, Carolus is Latin for a beating. This is the bravest captain I ever saw.—Wounds! I've a month's mind to go with him.

Re-enter CAPTAIN PLUME.

Capt. P. A dog, to abuse two such honest fellows as you.—Look ye, gentlemen, I love a pretty fellow; I come among you as an officer to list soldiers, not as a kidnapper to steal slaves.

Cos. Mind that, Tummas.

Capt. P. I desire no man to go with me but as I went myself: I went a volunteer, as you or you may do; for a little time carried a musket, and now I command a company.

Tho. Mind that, Costar;—a sweet gentleman!

Capt. P. 'Tis true, gentleman, I might take advantage of you; the king's money was in your pockets; my sergeant was ready to take his oath you were listed; but I scorn to do a base thing; you are both of you at your liberty.

Cos. Thank you, noble captain.—Ecod! I can't find in my heart to leave him, he talks so finely.

Tho. Ay, Costar, would he always hold in this mind?

Capt. P. Come, my lads, one thing more I'll tell you: you're both young tight fellows, and the army is the place to make you men for ever: every man has his lot, and you have yours; what think you now of a purse of French gold out of a monsieur's pocket, after you have dash'd out his brains with the butt end of your fire-lock, eh?

Cos. Wauns! I'll have it, Captain, give me a shilling; I'll follow you to the end of the world.

Tho. Nay, dear Costar! do'na: be advised.

Capt. P. Here my hero, there are two guineas for thee, as earnest of what I'll do further for thee.

Tho. Do'na take it; do'na dear Costar!

[*Cries, and pulls back his arm.*

Cos. I wull,—I wull.—Waunds! my mind misgives me that I shall be a captain myself.—I take your money, Sir, and now I am a gentleman.

Capt. P. Give me thy hand; and now you and I will travel the world o'er, and command

it wherever we tread.—Bring your friend with you if you can. [*Apart.*

Cos. Well, Tummas, must we part?

Tho. No, Costar, I cannot leave thee.—Come, captain, I'll e'en go along too; and if you have two honester simpler lads in your company than we two have been I'll say no more.

Capt. P. Here, my lad. [*Gives him money.*] Now your name.

Tho. Tummas Appletree.

Capt. P. And yours?

Cos. Costar Pearmain.

Capt. P. Well said, Costar! Born where?

Tho. Both in Herefordshire.

Capt. P. Very well. Courage, my lads.—Now we'll [*Sings.*

Over the hills and far away,
Courage, boys, it is one to ten,
But we return all gentlemen;
While conquering colours we display,
Over the hills and far away.

Re-enter SERGEANT KITE.

Kite, take care of 'em. [*Exit.*

Serg. K. A'n't you a couple of pretty fellows now? Here you have complained to the captain I am to be turned out, and one of you will be sergeant. Which of you is to have my halberd?

Cos. Tho. I.

Serg. K. So you shall in your guts.—March, you sons of— [*Exit, beating them off.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—The Market Place.

Enter CAPTAIN PLUME *and* WORTHY.

Wor. I cannot forbear admiring the equality of our two fortunes: we love two ladies; they meet us half way; and just as we were upon the point of leaping into their arms, fortune drops into their laps, pride possesses their hearts, and away they run.

Capt. P. And leave us here to mourn upon the shore, a couple of poor melancholy monsters.—What shall we do?

Wor. I have a trick for mine: the letter, you know, and the fortune-teller.

Capt. P. And I have a trick for mine.

Wor. What is't?

Capt. P. I'll never think of her again.

Wor. No!

Capt. P. No; I think myself above administering to the pride of any woman, were she worth twelve thousand a year; and I ha'n't the vanity to believe I shall ever gain a lady worth twelve hundred. The generous, good-natured Sylvia, when poor, I admire; but the haughty and scornful Sylvia, with her fortune, I despise.—What! sneak out of town, and not so much as a word, a line, a compliment! 'Sdeath! how far off does she live? I'll go and break her windows.

Wor. Ha, ha, ha! ay, and the window-bars too to come at her. Come, come, friend, no more of your rough military airs.

Enter SERGEANT KITE.

Serg. K. Captain, captain! Sir, look yonder, she's a-coming this way. 'Tis the prettiest, cleanest, little tit!

Capt. P. Now, Worthy, to show you how much I'm in love—here she comes. But, Kite, what is that great country fellow with her?

Serg. K. I can't tell, Sir.

Enter ROSE, *followed by her brother* BULLOCK, *with chickens in a basket on her arm.*

Rose. Buy chickens, young and tender chickens, young and tender chickens.

Capt. P. Here you chickens.

Rose. Who calls?

Capt. P. Come hither, pretty maid!

Rose. Will you please to buy, Sir?

Wor. Yes, child, we'll both buy.

Capt. P. Nay, Worthy, that's not fair; market for yourself.—Come, child, I'll buy all your stock.

Rose. Then it's all at your service. [*Courtesies.*

Wor. Then must I shift for myself I find. [*Exit.*

Capt. P. Let me see; young and tender you say? [*Chucks her under the chin.*

Rose. As ever you tasted in your life, Sir.

Capt. P. Come, I must examine your basket, my dear!

Rose. Nay, for that matter, I warrant my ware is as good as any in the market.

Capt. P. And I'll buy it all, child, were it ten times more.

Rose. Sir, I can furnish you.

Capt. P. Come, then, we wont quarrel about the price; they're fine birds.—Pray what's your name, pretty creature?

Rose. Rose, Sir. My father is a farmer within three short miles o'the town: we keep this market; I sell chickens, eggs, and butter; and my brother Bullock there sells corn.

Bul. Come, sister, haste, we shall be late home. [*Whistles about the stage.*

Capt. P. Kite! [*Tips him the wink, he returns it.*] Pretty Mrs. Rose, you have—let me see—how many?

Rose. A dozen, Sir; and they are richly worth a crown.

Bul. Come, Rouse; I sold fifty strake of barley to-day in half this time; but you will higgle and higgle for a penny more than the commodity is worth.

Rose. What's that to you, oaff? [KITE *and* BULLOCK *talk apart.*] I can make as much out of a groat as you can out of fourpence, I'm sure. The gentleman bids fair; and when I meet with a chapman, I know how to make the best of him.—And so, Sir, I say for a crown-piece the bargain's yours.

Capt. P Here's a guinea, my dear.

Rose. I can't change your money, Sir.

Capt. P. Indeed, indeed, but you can. My lodging is hard by, chicken; and we'll make change there. [*Exit:* ROSE *follows him.*

Serg. K. So, Sir, as I was telling you, I have seen one of these hussars eat up a ravelin for his breakfast, and afterwards picked his teeth with a palisado.

Bul. Ay, you soldiers see very strange things: but pray, Sir, what is a rabelin?

Serg. K. Why, 'tis like a modern minced pie; but the crust is confounded hard, and the plums are somewhat hard of digestion.

Bul. Then your palisado, pray what may he be?—Come, Rouse, pray ha' done.

Serg. K. Your palisado is a pretty sort of bodkin, about the thickness of my leg.

Bul. That's a fib, I believe. [*Aside.*] Eh! where's Rouse?—Rouse, Rouse! 'Sflesh! where's Rouse gone?

Serg. K. She's gone with the captain.

Bul. The captain! wauns! there's no pressing of women sure?

Serg. K. But there is sure.

Bul. If the captain should press Rouse, I should be ruined. Which way went she?—Oh! the devil take your rabelins and palisadoes. [*Exit.*

Serg. K. You shall be better acquainted with them, honest Bullock, or I shall miss of my aim.

Re-enter WORTHY.

Wor. Why, thou art the most useful fellow in nature to your captain; admirable in your way, I find.

Serg. K. Yes, Sir, I understand my business, I will say it.

Wor. How came you so qualified?

Serg. K. You must know, Sir, I was born a gipsy, and bred among that crew till I was ten years old; there I learned canting and lying: I was bought from my mother Cleopatra, by a certain nobleman, for three pistoles; who, liking my beauty, made me his page; there I learned impudence and pimping: I was turned off for wearing my lord's linen, and drinking my lady's ratafia, and turned bailiff's follower; there I learned bullying and swearing: I at last got into the army; and there I learned wenching and drinking;—so that if your worship pleases to cast up the whole sum, viz. canting, lying, impudence, pimping, bullying, swearing, drinking, and a halberd, you will find the sum total amount to a recruiting sergeant.

Wor. And pray what induced you to turn soldier?

Serg. K. Hunger and ambition. The fears of starving, and hopes of a truncheon, led me to a gentleman with a fair tongue, who loaded me with promises; but, 'gad, it was the lightest load that ever I felt in my life.—He promised to advance me; and indeed he did so,—to a garret in the Savoy. I asked him, 'Why he put me in prison?' He called me, 'Lying dog,' and said, 'I was in a garrison,' and indeed 'tis a garrison that may hold out till doomsday before I should desire to take it again. But here comes Justice Balance.

Re-enter BULLOCK, *with* JUSTICE BALANCE.

Just. B. Here you, sergeant, where's your captain? here's a poor foolish fellow comes clamouring to me with a complaint that your captain has pressed his sister. Do you know any thing of this matter, Worthy?

Wor. I know his sister is gone with Plume to his lodgings, to sell him some chickens.

Just. B. Is that all? the fellow's a fool.

Bul. I know that, an't like your worship; but if your worship pleases to grant me a warrant to bring her before your worship, for fear of the worst.

Just. B. Thou'rt mad, fellow; thy sister's safe enough.

Serg. K. I hope so too. [*Aside.*

Wor. Hast thou no more sense, fellow, than to believe that the captain can list women?

Bul. I know not whether they list them, or what they do with them; but I'm sure they carry as many women as men with them out of the country.

Just. B. But how came you not to go along with your sister?

Bul. Lord, Sir, I thought no more of her going than I do of the day I shall die; but this gentleman here, not suspecting any hurt neither, I believe.—You thought no harm, friend, did you? [*To* SERGEANT KITE.

Serg. K. Lack-a-day, Sir, not I—only that I believe I shall marry her to-morrow.

Just. B. I begin to smell powder. [*Aside.*] Well, friend, but what did that gentleman do with you?

Bul. Why, Sir, he entertained me with a fine story of a great sea fight between the Hungarians, I think it was, and the wild Irish.

Serg. K. And so, Sir, while we were in the heat of battle, the captain carried off the baggage.

Just. B. Sergeant, go along with this fellow to your captain; give him my humble service, and desire him to discharge the wench, though he has listed her.

Bul. Ay, and if she ben't free for that, he shall have another man in her place.

Serg. K. Come, honest friend, you shall go to my quarters instead of the captain's.

[*Aside; and exit with* BULLOCK.

Just. B. We must get this mad captain his complement of men, and send him packing, else he'll overrun the country.

Wor. You see, Sir, how little he values your daughter's disdain.

Just. B. I like him the better; I was just such another fellow at his age.—But how goes your affair with Melinda?

Wor. Very slowly. Cupid had formerly wings; but I think in this age he goes upon crutches; or, I fancy Venus had been dallying with her cripple, Vulcan, when my amour commenced, which has made it go on so lamely. My mistress has got a captain too; but such a captain!—As I live, yonder he comes!

Just. B. Who, that bluff fellow? I don't know him.

Wor. But I engage he knows you and every body at first sight; his impudence were a prodigy, were not his ignorance proportionable; he has the most universal acquaintance of any man living; for he wont be alone, and nobody will keep him company twice: then he's a Cæsar among the women, *veni, vidi, vici*, that's all. If he has but talked with the maid, he swears he has lain with the mistress: but the most surprising part of his character is his memory, which is the most prodigious, and the most trifling in the world.

Just. B. I have known another acquire so much by travel, as to tell you the names of most places in Europe, with their distances of miles, leagues, or hours, as punctually as a postboy; but for any thing else as ignorant as the horse that carries the mail.

Wor. This is your man, Sir: add but the traveller's privilege of lying, and even that he abuses. This is the picture: behold the life.

Enter CAPTAIN BRAZEN.

Capt. B. Mr. Worthy, I'm your servant, and so forth.—Harkye, my dear!

Wor. Whispering, Sir, before company is not manners; and when nobody's by 'tis foolish.

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Capt. B. Company! *mort de ma vie!* I beg the gentleman's pardon,—who is he?

Wor. Ask him.

Capt. B. So I will. My dear; I am your servant, and so forth.—Your name, my dear. [*To* JUSTICE BALANCE.

Just. B. Very laconic, Sir.

Capt. B. Laconic! a very good name, truly. I have known several of the Laconics abroad. Poor Jack Laconic! he was killed at the battle;—I remember that he had a blue riband in his hat that very day; and after he fell, we found a piece of neat's tongue in his pocket.

Just. B. Pray, Sir, did the French attack us, or we them?

Capt. B. The French attack us! No, Sir, we attacked them on the,—I have reason to remember the time, for I had two-and-twenty horses killed under me that day.

Wor. Then, Sir, you must have rid mighty hard.

Just. B. Or perhaps, Sir, you rid upon half-a-dozen horses at once.

Capt. B. What do you mean, gentlemen? I tell you they were killed; all torn to pieces by cannon shot, except six I staked to death upon the enemy's *chev-aux-de-frise*.

Just. B. Noble captain! May I crave your name?

Capt. B. Brazen, at your service.

Just. B. Oh, Brazen! a very good name. I have known several of the Brazens abroad.

Wor. Do you know one Captain Plume, Sir? [*To* CAPTAIN BRAZEN.

Capt. B. Is he any thing related to Frank Plume in Northamptonshire?—Honest Frank! many, many a dry bottle have we cracked hand to fist. You must have known his brother Charles, that was concerned in the India Company; he married the daughter of old Tongue-pad, the master in Chancery; a very pretty woman, only she squinted a little; she died in child-bed of her first child; but the child survived; 'twas a daughter; but whether it was called Margaret or Margery, upon my soul I cannot remember. [*Looks at his Watch.*] But, gentlemen, I must meet a lady, a twenty thousand pounder, presently, upon the walk by the water. Worthy, your servant; Laconic, yours. [*Exit.*

Just. B. If you can have so mean an opinion of Melinda as to be jealous of this fellow, I think she ought to give you cause to be so.

Wor. I don't think she encourages him so much for gaining herself a lover, as to set up a rival. Were there any credit to be given to his words, I should believe Melinda had made him this assignation; I must go see. Sir, you'll pardon me. [*Exit.*

Just. B. Ay, ay, Sir, you're a man of business.—But what have we got here.

Re-enter ROSE, *singing.*

Rose. And I shall be a lady, a captain's lady, and ride single upon a white horse with a star, upon a velvet side-saddle: and I shall go to London and see the tombs, and the lions, and the king and queen. Sir, an't please your worship, I have often seen your worship ride through our grounds a hunting, begging your worship's pardon. Pray what may this lace be worth a yard? [*Shows some lace.*

Just. B. Right Mechlin, by this light! Where did you get this lace, child?

Rose. No matter for that, Sir! I came honestly by it.

Just. B. I question it much. [*Aside.*

Rose. And see here, Sir, a fine Turkey-shell snuff-box, and fine mangere: see here. [*Takes snuff affectedly.*] The captain learned me how to take it with an air.

Just. B. Oh, ho! the captain! now the murder's out. [*Aside.*] And so the captain taught you to take it with an air?

Rose. Yes, and give it with an air too. Will your worship please to taste my snuff? [*Offers it affectedly.*

Just. B. You are a very apt scholar, pretty maid! And pray what did you give the captain for these fine things?

Rose. He's to have my brother for a soldier, and two or three sweethearts I have in the country; they shall all go with the captain. Oh! he's the finest man, and the humblest withal. Would you believe it, Sir? he talked to me with as much fam—mam—mil—ya—ra—ral—ity as if I had been the best lady in the land.

Just. B. Oh! he's a mighty familiar gentleman as can be.

Re-enter CAPTAIN PLUME, *singing.*

But it is not so
With those that go
Through frost and snow,—
Most apropos,
My maid with the milking-pail.
[*Takes hold of* ROSE.

How, the justice! then I'm arraigned, condemned, and executed.

Just. B. Oh, my noble captain!

Rose. And my noble captain too, Sir.

Capt. P. 'Sdeath, child, are you mad? [*To* ROSE.]—Mr. Balance, I am so full of business about my recruits that I ha'n't a moment's time to,—I have just now three or four people to,—

Just. B. Nay, captain, I must speak to you.

Rose. And so must I too, captain.

Capt. P. Any other time, Sir—I cannot for my life, Sir—

Just. B. Pray, Sir—

Capt. P. Twenty thousand things—I would—but—now, Sir, pray—devil take me—I cannot—I must— [*Breaks away.*

Just. B. Nay, I'll follow you. [*Exit.*

Rose. And I too. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*The Walk by the Severn Side.*

Enter MELINDA *and* LUCY.

Mel. And pray, was it a ring, or buckle, or a new bonnet, or in what shape was that almighty gold transformed, that has bribed you so much in his favour?

Lucy. Indeed, Madam, the last bribe I had from the captain was only a small piece of Flanders lace for a cap.

Mel. Ay, Flanders lace is a constant present from officers to their women. They every year bring over a cargo of lace, to cheat the king of his duty, and his subjects of their honesty.

Lucy. They only barter one sort of prohibited goods for another, Madam.

Mel. Has any of 'em been bartering with you, Mrs. Pert, that you talk so like a trader?

Lucy. One would imagine, Madam, by your concern for Worthy's absence, that you should use him better when he's with you.

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Mel. Who told you, pray, that I was concerned for his absence? I'm only vexed that I have had nothing said to me these two days; one may like the love, and despise the lover I hope, as one may love the treason, and hate the traitor.—Oh! here comes another captain, and a rogue that has the confidence to make love to me; but indeed I don't wonder at that, when he has the assurance to fancy himself a fine gentleman.

Lucy. If he should speak o'the assignation I should be ruined. [*Aside, and Exit.*

Enter CAPTAIN BRAZEN.

Capt. B. True to the touch, faith! [*Aside.*] Madam, I am your humble servant, and all that, Madam. A fine river this same Severn. Do you love fishing, Madam?

Mel. 'Tis a pretty, melancholy amusement for lovers.

Capt. B. I'll go buy hooks and lines presently; for you must know, Madam, that I have served in Flanders against the French, in Hungary against the Turks, and in Tangier against the Moors, and I never was so much in love before; and split me, Madam, in all the campaigns I ever made, I have not seen so fine a woman as your ladyship.

Mel. And from all the men I ever saw, I never had so fine a compliment: but you soldiers are the best bred men, that we must allow.

Capt. B. Some of us, Madam; but there are brutes among us too, very sad brutes; for my own part, I have always had the good luck to prove agreeable. I have had very considerable offers, Madam. I might have married a German princess, worth fifty thousand crowns a year; but her stove disgusted me. The daughter of a Turkish bashaw fell in love with me too when I was a prisoner among the infidels; she offered to rob her father of his treasure, and make her escape with me; but I don't know how, my time was not come. Hanging and marriage, you know, go by destiny. Fate has reserved me for a Shropshire lady, worth twenty thousand pounds. Do you know any such person, Madam?

Mel. Extravagant coxcomb! [*Aside.*] To be sure, a great many ladies of that fortune would be proud of the name of Mrs. Brazen.

Capt. B. Nay, for that matter, Madam, there are women of very good quality of the name of Brazen.

Enter WORTHY.

Mel. Oh, are you there, gentleman? [*Aside.*] Come, captain, we'll walk this way. Give me your hand.

Capt. B. My hand and heart are at your service.—Mr. Worthy, your servant, my dear. [*Exit, leading* MEL.

Wor. Death and fire! this is not to be borne.

Enter CAPTAIN PLUME.

Capt. P. No more it is, faith.

Wor. What?

Capt. P. The March beer at the Raven. I have been doubly serving the king, raising men and raising the excise. Recruiting and elections are rare friends to the excise.

Wor. You an't drunk?

Capt. P. No, no, whimsical only; I could be mighty foolish, and fancy myself mighty witty. Reason still keeps its throne, but it nods a little, that's all.

Wor. Then you're just fit for a frolic. There's your play then; recover me that vessel from that Tangerine.

Capt. P. She's well rigged, but how is she manned?

Wor. By Captain Brazen, that I told you of to-day. She is called the Melinda; a first rate, I can assure you. She sheered off with him just now on purpose to affront me; but, according to your advice, I would take no notice, because I would seem to be above a concern for her behaviour. But have a care of a quarrel.

Capt. P. No, no; I never quarrel with any thing in my cups but an oyster-wench or a cookmaid; and if they ben't civil, I knock 'em down.

Wor. Here they come; I must leave you. [*Exit.*

Capt. P. So! now must I look as sober and demure as a whore at a christening.

Re-enter CAPTAIN BRAZEN *and* MELINDA.

Capt. B. Who's that, Madam?

Mel. A brother officer of yours, I suppose, Sir.

Capt. B. Ay.—My dear! [*To* CAPT. P.

Capt. P. My dear! [*Runs and embraces him.*

Capt. B. My dear boy! how'st? Your name, my dear. If I be not mistaken, I have seen your face.

Capt. P. I never saw yours in my life, my dear; but there's a face well known as the sun's, that shines on all, and is by all adored.

Capt. B. Have you any pretensions, Sir?

Capt. P. Pretensions?

Capt. B. That is, have you ever served abroad?

Capt. P. I have served at home, Sir, for ages served this cruel fair; and that will serve the turn, Sir.

Mel. So between the fool and the rake, I shall bring a fine spot of work upon my hands! [*Aside.*

Capt. B. Will you fight for the lady, Sir?

Capt. P. No, Sir; but I'll have her notwithstanding.

Thou peerless princess of Salopian plains,
Envy'd by nymphs, and worshipp'd by the swains.—

Capt. B. Oons! Sir, not fight for her?

Capt. P. Pr'ythee be quiet;—I shall be out—

Behold how humbly does the Severn glide,
To greet the princess of the Severn side.

Capt. B. Don't mind him, Madam. If he were not so well dressed I should take him for a poet; but I'll show you the difference presently. Come, Madam, we'll place you between us, and now the longest sword carries her. [*Draws,* MELINDA *shrieks.*

Re-enter WORTHY.

Mel. Oh, Mr. Worthy! save me from these madmen. [*Exit with* WORTHY.

Capt. P. Ha, ha, ha! why don't you follow, Sir, and fight the bold ravisher?

Capt. B. No, Sir, you are my man.

Capt. P. I don't like the wages; I wont be your man.

Capt. B. Then you're not worth my sword.

Capt. P. No! pray what did it cost?

Capt. B. It cost me twenty pistoles in France, and my enemies thousands of lives in Flanders

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Capt. P. Then they had a dear bargain.

Enter SYLVIA, *in Man's apparel.*

Syl. Save ye, save ye! gentlemen.

Capt. B. My dear! I'm yours.

Capt. P. Do you know the gentleman?

Capt. B. No, but I will presently. Your name, my dear?

Syl. Wilful, Jack Wilful, at your service.

Capt. B. What, the Kentish Wilfuls, or those of Staffordshire?

Syl. Both, Sir, both: I'm related to all the Wilfuls in Europe; and I'm head of the family at present.

Capt. P. Do you live in the country, Sir?

Syl. Yes, Sir, I live where I stand; I have neither home, house, nor habitation, beyond this spot of ground.

Capt. B. What are you, Sir?

Syl. A rake.

Capt. P. In the army, I presume?

Syl. No, but I intended to list immediately. Lookye, gentlemen, he that bids the fairest has me.

Capt. B. Sir, I'll prefer you; I'll make you a corporal this minute.

Capt. P. Corporal! I'll make you my companion; you shall eat with me.

Capt. B. You shall drink with me; you shall receive your pay, and no duty.

Syl. Then you must make me a field-officer.

Capt. P. Pho, pho, pho! I'll do more than all this, I'll make you a corporal, and give you a brevet for sergeant.

Capt. B. Can you read and write, Sir?

Syl. Yes.

Capt. B. Then your business is done; I'll make you chaplain to the regiment.

Syl. Your promises are so equal, that I'm at a loss to choose. There is one Plume, that I hear much commended in town; pray, which of you is captain Plume?

Capt. P. I am captain Plume.

Capt. B. No, no, I am captain Plume.

Syl. Hey-day!

Capt. P. Captain Plume! I'm your servant, my dear!

Capt. B. Captain Brazen! I'm yours.—The fellow dares not fight. [*Aside.*

Enter SERGEANT KITE.

Serg. K. Sir, if you please—

[*Whispers* CAPTAIN PLUME.

Capt. P. No, no, there's your captain. Captain Plume, your sergeant has got so drunk, he mistakes me for you.

Capt. B. He's an incorrigible sot. Here, my Hector of Holborn, here's forty shillings for you. [*To* SYLVIA.

Capt. P. I forbid the banns. Lookye, friend, you shall list with captain Brazen.

Syl. I will see captain Brazen hanged first; I will list with captain Plume. I am a freeborn Englishman, and will be a slave my own way. Lookye, Sir, will you stand by me?

[*To* CAPTAIN BRAZEN.

Capt. B. I warrant you, my lad.

Syl. Then I will tell you, captain Brazen, that you are an ignorant, pretending, impudent coxcomb. [*To* CAPTAIN PLUME.

Capt. P. Ay, ay, a sad dog.

Syl. A very sad dog. Give me the money, noble captain Plume.

Capt. P. Then you wont list with captain Brazen?

Syl. I wont!

Capt. B. Never mind him, child; I'll end the dispute presently.—Harkye, my dear!

[*Takes* CAPTAIN PLUME *to one side of the stage, and entertains him in dumb show.*

Serg. K. Sir, he in the plain coat is captain Plume; I am his sergeant, and will take my oath on't.

Syl. What! you are Sergeant Kite?

Serg. K. At your service.

Syl. Then I would not take your oath for a farthing.

Serg. K. A very understanding youth of his age. [*Aside.*] Pray, Sir, let me look you full in your face.

Syl. Well, Sir, what have you to say to my face?

Serg. K. The very image of my brother; two bullets of the same caliber were never so like; sure it must be Charles,—Charles,—

Syl. What do you mean by Charles?

Serg. K. The voice too, only a little variation in E flat. My dear brother! for I must call you so, if you should have the fortune to enter into the most noble society of the sword, I bespeak you for a comrade.

Syl. No, Sir, I'll be the captain's comrade, if any body's.

Serg. K. Ambition there again! 'tis a noble passion for a soldier; by that I gained this glorious halberd. Ambition! I see a commission in his face already. But I see a storm coming.

Syl. Now, sergeant, I shall see who is your captain, by your knocking down the other.

Serg. K. My captain scorns assistance, Sir.

Capt. B. How dare you contend for any thing, and not dare to draw your sword? But you are a young fellow, and have not been much abroad; I excuse that, but, pr'ythee, resign the man, pr'ythee do; you are a very honest fellow.

Capt. P. You lie.

[*Draws, and makes up to* CAPTAIN BRAZEN.

Capt. B. Hold, hold, did not you refuse to fight for the lady? [*Retiring.*

Capt. P. I always do, but for a man I'll fight knee-deep; so you lie again.

[CAPTAIN P. *and* CAPTAIN B. *fight a traverse or two about the stage;* SYLVIA *draws, and is held by* KITE, *who sounds to arms with his mouth, takes* SYLVIA *in his arms, and carries her off the stage.*

Capt. B. Hold! where's the man?

Capt. P. Gone.

Capt. B. Then what do we fight for? [*Puts up.*] Now, let's embrace, my dear.

Capt. P. With all my heart, my dear!—[*Puts up.*] I suppose Kite has listed him by this time. [*Embraces.*

Capt. B. You are a brave fellow; I always fight with a man before I make him my friend; and if once I find he will fight, I never quarrel with him afterwards. And now I'll tell you a secret, my dear friend! That lady we frightened out of the walk just now, I found at home this morning, so beautiful, so inviting; I presently locked the door;—but I'm a man of honour;—but I believe I shall marry her nevertheless;—her twenty thousand pounds, you know, will be a pretty conveniency. I had an assignation with her here, but your coming spoiled my sport. Curse you, my dear! but don't do so again.

Capt. P. No, no, my dear! men are my business at present. [*Exeunt.*

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ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The same.*

Enter ROSE *and* BULLOCK, *meeting.*

Rose. Where have you been, you great booby? You are always out of the way in the time of preferment.

Bul. Preferment! who should prefer me?

Rose. I would prefer you! who should prefer a man but a woman? Come, throw away that great club, and hold up your head.

Bul. Ah, Rouse, Rouse! Here has been Cartwheel, your sweetheart; what will become of him?

Rose. Lookye, I'm a great woman, and will provide for my relations. I told the captain how finely he played on the tabor and pipe, so he set him down for drum-major.

Bul. Nay, sister, why did not you keep that place for me! you know I have always loved to be a drumming, if it were but on a table or on a quart pot.

Enter SYLVIA.

Syl. Had I but a commission in my pocket, I fancy this dress would become me as well as any ranting fellow of 'em all; for I take a bold step, and an impudent air, to be the principal ingredients in the composition of a captain.—What's here? Rose, my nurse's daughter! I'll go and practise. Come, child, kiss me at once. [*Kisses* ROSE.] Honest Dungfork, do you know the difference between a horse and a cart, and a cart-horse, eh?

Bul. I presume that your worship is a captain, by your clothes and your courage.

Syl. Suppose I were, would you be contented to list, friend?

Rose. No, no; though your worship be a handsome man, there be others as fine as you. My brother is engaged to Captain Plume.

Syl. Plume! do you know Captain Plume?

Rose. Yes, I do, and he knows me. I can assure you that I can do any thing with the captain.

Bul. That is in a modest way, Sir. Have a care what you say, Rouse; don't shame your parentage.

Rose. Nay, for that matter, I am not so simple as to say that I can do any thing with the captain, but what I may do with any body else.

Syl. So! And pray what do you expect from this captain, child?

Rose. I expect, Sir!—I expect—but he ordered me to tell nobody;—but suppose that he should promise to marry me?

Syl. You should have a care, my dear! men will promise any thing beforehand.

Rose. I know that; but he promised to marry me afterwards.

Bul. Wauns! Rouse, what have you said?

Syl. Afterwards! after what?

Rose. After I had sold my chickens: I hope there's no harm in that.

Enter CAPTAIN PLUME.

Capt. P. What, Mr. Wilful, so close with my market woman?

Syl. I'll try if he loves her. [*Aside.*] Close, Sir, ay, and closer yet, Sir. Come, my pretty maid! you and I will withdraw a little.

Capt. P. No, no, friend, I ha'n't done with her yet.

Syl. Nor have I begun with her; so I have as good a right as you have.

Capt. P. Thou'rt a very impudent fellow!

Syl. Sir, I would qualify myself for the service.

Capt. P. Hast thou really a mind to the service?

Syl. Yes, Sir; so let her go.

Rose. Pray, gentlemen, don't be so violent.

Capt. P. Come, leave it to the girl's own choice. Will you belong to me, or to that gentleman?

Rose. Let me consider; you're both very handsome.

Capt. P. Now the natural inconstancy of her sex begins to work.

Rose. Pray, Sir, what will you give me?

Bul. Dunna be angry, Sir, that my sister should be marcenery, for she's but young.

Syl. Give thee, child? I'll set thee above scandal; you shall have a coach with six before, and six behind; an equipage to make vice fashionable, and put virtue out of countenance.

Capt. P. Pho! that's easily done; I'll do more for thee, child, I'll buy you a new gown, and give you a ticket to see a play.

Bul. A play! wauns! Rouse, take the ticket, and let's see the show.

Syl. Lookye, captain, if you wont resign, I'll go list with Captain Brazen this minute.

Capt. P. Will you list with me if I give up my title?

Syl. I will.

Capt. P. Take her; I'll change a woman for a man at any time.

Rose. I have heard before indeed that you captains used to sell your men.

Bul. Pray, captain, do not send Rouse to the Western Indies.

Capt. P. Ha, ha, ha! West Indies! No, no, my honest lad, give me thy hand; nor you nor she shall move a step further than I do. This gentleman is one of us, and will be kind to you, Mrs. Rose.

Rose. But will you be so kind to me, Sir, as the captain would?

Syl. I can't be altogether so kind to you; my circumstances are not so good as the captain's; but I'll take care of you, upon my word.

Capt. P. Ay, ay, we'll all take care of her; she shall live like a princess, and her brother here shall be,—What would you be?

Bul. Oh, Sir, if you had not promised the place of drum-major,—

Capt. P. Ay, that is promised; but what think you of barrack-master? You are a person of understanding, and barrack-master you shall be. But what's become of this same Cartwheel, you told me of, my dear?

Rose. We'll go fetch him. Come, brother barrack-master. We shall find you at home, noble captain? [*Exit with* BULLOCK.

Capt. P. Yes, yes; and now, Sir, here are your forty shillings.

Syl. Captain Plume, I despise your listing money; if I do serve, 'tis purely for love,—of that wench, I mean.—But now let me beg you to lay aside your recruiting airs, put on the man of honour, and tell me plainly what usage

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I must expect when I am under your command.

Capt. P. Your usage will chiefly depend upon your behaviour; only this you must expect, that if you commit a small fault, I will excuse it; if a great one, I'll discharge you; for something tells me I shall not be able to punish you.

Syl. And something tells me that if you do discharge me, 'twill be the greatest punishment you can inflict! for were we this moment to go upon the greatest dangers in your profession, they would be less terrible to me than to stay behind you. And now your hand; this lists me,—and now you are my captain.

Capt. P. Your friend. 'Sdeath! there's something in this fellow that's very strange. [*Aside.*

Syl. One favour I must beg;—this affair will make some noise, and I have some friends that would censure my conduct if I threw myself into the circumstance of a private sentinel of my own head.—I must therefore take care to be impressed by the act of parliament; you shall leave that to me.

Capt. P. What you please as to that. Will you lodge at my quarters in the mean time?

Syl. No, no, captain; you forget Rose; she's to be my bedfellow, you know.

Capt. P. I had forgot; pray be kind to her. [*Exeunt.*

Enter MELINDA *and* LUCY.

Mel. 'Tis the greatest misfortune in nature for a woman to want a confidant: we are so weak that we can do nothing without assistance, and then a secret racks us worse than the cholic.—I am at this minute sick of a secret that I'm ready to faint away.—Help me, Lucy!

Lucy. Bless me! Madam, what's the matter?

Mel. Vapours only; I begin to recover. If Sylvia were in town I could heartily forgive her faults for the ease of discovering my own.

Lucy. You are thoughtful, Madam; am not I worthy to know the cause?

Mel. Oh, Lucy! I can hold my secret no longer. You must know, that hearing of a famous fortune-teller in town, I went disguised to satisfy a curiosity which has cost me dear. The fellow is certainly the devil, or one of his bosom favourites: he has told me the most surprising things of my past life.

Lucy. Things past, Madam, can hardly be reckoned surprising, because we know them already. Did he tell you any thing surprising that was to come?

Mel. One thing very surprising; he said I should die a maid!

Lucy. Die a maid! come into the world for nothing!—Dear Madam! if you should believe him, it might come to pass; for the bare thought on't might kill one in four-and-twenty hours.—And did you ask him any questions about me?

Mel. You! why, I passed for you.

Lucy. So, 'tis I that am to die a maid. But the devil was a liar from the beginning; he can't make me die a maid: I've put it out of his power already. [*Aside.*

Mel. I do but jest. I would have passed for you, and called myself Lucy, but he presently told me my name, my quality, my fortune, and gave me the whole history of my life. He told me of a lover I had in this country, and described Worthy exactly, but in nothing so well as in his present indifference. fled to him for refuge here to-day; he never so much as encouraged me in my fright, but coldly told me he was sorry for the accident, because it might give the town cause to censure my conduct, excused his not waiting on me home, made me a careless bow, and walked off. 'Sdeath! I could have stabbed him or myself, 'twas the same thing. Yonder he comes,—I will so use him!

Lucy. Don't exasperate him; consider what the fortune-teller told you. Men are scarce, and as times go, it is not impossible for a woman not to die a maid.

Enter WORTHY.

Mel. No matter.

Wor. I find she's warmed; I must strike while the iron is hot. [*Aside.*] You're a great deal of courage, Madam, to venture where you were so lately frightened.

Mel. And you have a quantity of impudence, to appear before me that you lately have so affronted.

Wor. I had no design to affront you, nor appear before you either, Madam; and came hither thinking to meet another person.

Mel. Since you find yourself disappointed, I hope you'll withdraw to another place.

Wor. The place is broad enough for us both. [*They walk by one another, she fretting and tearing her fan.*] Will you please to take snuff, Madam?

[*He offers her his box, she strikes it out of his hand; he gathers up the snuff.*

Enter CAPTAIN BRAZEN, *who takes* MELINDA *round the waist; she cuffs him.*

Capt. B. What, here before me, my dear?

Mel. What means this insolence?

Lucy. Are you mad? don't you see Mr. Worthy? [*To* BRAZEN.

Capt. B. No, no; I'm struck blind. Worthy! odso! well turned.—My mistress has wit at her fingers' ends.—Madam, I ask your pardon; 'tis our way abroad.—Mr. Worthy, you're the happy man.

Wor. I don't envy your happiness very much, if the lady can afford no other sort of favours but what she has bestowed upon you.

Mel. I'm sorry the favour miscarried, for it was designed for you, Mr. Worthy; and be assured 'tis the last and only favour you must expect at my hands. Captain, I ask your pardon. [*Exit with* LUCY.

Capt. B. I grant it. You see, Mr. Worthy, 'twas only a random shot; it might have taken off your head as well as mine. Courage, my dear! 'tis the fortune of war; but the enemy has thought fit to withdraw, I think.

Wor. Withdraw! Oons! Sir, what do you mean by withdraw?

Capt. B. I'll show you. [*Exit.*

Wor. She's lost, irrecoverably lost, and Plume's advice has ruined me. 'Sdeath! why should I, that knew her haughty spirit, be ruled by a man that's a stranger to her pride? [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—A Chamber.

KITE, *disguised in a strange habit, discovered sitting at a table, with books and globes.*

Serg K. [*Rises.*] By the position of the

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heavens, gained from my observation upon these celestial globes, I find that Luna was a tidewaiter; Sol, a surveyor, Mercury, a thief; Venus, a whore; Saturn, an alderman; Jupiter, a rake; and Mars, a sergeant of grenadiers;—and this is the system of Kite, the conjuror.

Enter CAPTAIN PLUME *and* WORTHY.

Capt. P. Well, what success?

Serg. K. I have sent away a shoemaker and a tailor already; one's to be a captain of marines, and the other a major of dragoons. I am to manage them at night. Have you seen the lady, Mr. Worthy?

Wor. Ay, but it wont do. Have you showed her her name that I tore off from the bottom of the letter?

Serg. K. No, Sir, I reserve that for the last stroke.

Capt. P. What letter?

Wor. One that I would not let you see, for fear that you should break windows in good earnest. Here captain, put it into your pocket-book, and have it ready upon occasion. [*Knocking at the door.*

Serg. K. Officers, to your posts. Tycho, mind the door.

[*Exeunt* CAPTAIN PLUME *and* WORTHY.

Enter MELINDA *and* LUCY.

Serg. K. Tycho, chairs for the ladies.

Mel. Don't trouble yourself; we sha'n't stay, doctor.

Serg. K. Your ladyship is to stay much longer than you imagine.

Mel. For what?

Serg. K. For a husband. For your part, Madam, you wont stay for a husband. [*To* LUCY.

Lucy. Pray, doctor, do you converse with the stars, or the devil?

Serg. K. With both; when I have the destinies of men in search, I consult the stars; when the affairs of women come under my hands, I advise with my t'other friend.

Mel. And have you raised the devil upon my account?

Serg. K. Yes, Madam, and he's now under the table.

Lucy. Oh, Heavens protect us! Dear Madam, let's be gone.

Serg. K. If you be afraid of him, why do you come to consult him?

Mel. Don't fear, fool. Do you think, Sir, that because I'm a woman, I'm to be fooled out of my reasons, or frightened out of my senses? Come, show me this devil.

Serg. K. He's a little busy at present, but when he has done, he shall wait on you.

Mel. What is he doing?

Serg. K. Writing your name in his pocket-book.

Mel. Ha, ha! my name! pray what have you or he to do with my name?

Serg. K. Lookye, fair lady! the devil is a very modest person, he seeks nobody unless they seek him first; he's chained up like a mastiff, and can't stir unless he be let loose.—You come to me to have your fortune told;—do you think, Madam, that I can answer you of my own head? No, Madam, the affairs of women are so irregular, that nothing less than the devil can give any account of them. Now, to convince you of your incredulity, I'll show you a trial of my skill. Here, you Cacodemo del Plumo, exert your power, draw me this lady's name, the word Melinda, in proper letters and characters of her own hand-writing;—do it at three motions;—one,—two,—three,—'tis done. Now, Madam, will you please to send your maid to fetch it?

Lucy. I fetch it! the devil fetch me if I do?

Mel. My name in my own hand-writing!—that would be convincing indeed.

Serg. K. Seeing is believing. [*Goes to the table and lifts up the carpet.*] Here, Tre, Tre, poor Tre, give me the bone, sirrah. There's your name upon that square piece of paper, behold.

Mel. 'Tis wonderful! my very letters to a tittle!

Lucy. 'Tis like your hand, Madam; but not so like your hand neither; and now I look nearer, 'tis not like your hand at all.

Serg. K. Here's a chambermaid that will outlie the devil!

Lucy. Lookye, Madam, they sha'n't impose upon us; people can't remember their hands, no more than they can their faces. Come, Madam, let us be certain; write your name upon this paper, then we'll compare the two hands. [*Takes out a paper and folds it.*

Serg. K. Any thing for your satisfaction, Madam.—Here's pen and ink.

[MEL. *writes*, LUCY *holds the paper.*

Lucy. Let me see it, Madam, 'tis the same,—the very same. I'll secure one copy for my own affairs. [*Aside.*

Mel. This is demonstration.

Serg. K. 'Tis so, Madam; the word demonstration comes from demon, the father of lies.

Mel. Well, doctor, I'm convinced: and now, pray, what account can you give of my future fortune?

Serg. K. Before the sun has made one course round this earthly globe, your fortune will be fixed for happiness or misery.

Mel. What! so near the crisis of my fate?

Serg. K. Let me see.—About the hour of ten to-morrow morning, you will be saluted by a gentleman who will come to take his leave of you, being designed for travel; his intention of going abroad is sudden, and the occasion a woman. Your fortune and his are like the bullet and the barrel, one runs plump into the other.—In short, if the gentleman travels, he will die abroad, and if he does, you will die before he comes home.

Mel. What sort of a man is he?

Serg. K. Madam, he's a fine gentleman, and a lover; that is, a man of very good sense, and a very great fool.

Mel. How is that possible, doctor?

Serg. K. Because, Madam,—because it is so.—A woman's reason is the best for a man's being a fool.

Mel. Ten o'clock, you say?

Serg. K. Ten.—About the hour of tea-drinking throughout the kingdom.

Mel. Here doctor. [*Gives money.*] Lucy, have you any questions to ask?

Lucy. Oh, Madam, a thousand.

Serg. K. I must beg your patience till another time, for I expect more company this minute: besides, I must discharge the gentleman under the table.

Lucy. O, pray, Sir, discharge us first!

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Serg K. Tycho, wait on the ladies down stairs. [*Exeunt* MELINDA *and* LUCY.

Enter CAPTAIN BRAZEN.

Capt. B. Your servant, my dear?

Serg. K. Stand off, I have my familiar already.

Capt. B. Are you bewitched, my dear?

Serg. K. Yes, my dear! but mine is a peaceable spirit, and hates gunpowder. Thus I fortify myself—[*Draws a circle round himself.*]—and now, captain, have a care how you force my lines.

Capt. B. Lines! what dost talk of lines!—You have something like a fishing-rod there indeed; but I come to be acquainted with you, man.—What's your name, my dear?

Serg. K. Conundrum.

Capt. B. Conundrum? rat me! I knew a famous doctor in London of your name.—Where were you born?

Serg K. I was born in Algebra.

Capt. B. Algebra! 'tis no country in Christendom, I'm sure, unless it be some place in the Highlands in Scotland.

Serg. K. Right; I told you I was bewitched.

Capt. B. So am I, my dear; I am going to be married. I have had two letters from a lady of fortune that loves me to madness, fits, cholic, spleen, and vapours. Shall I marry her in four-and-twenty hours, ay or no?

Serg. K. Certainly.

Capt. B. Gadso, ay—

Serg. K. Or no. But I must have the year and the day of the month when these letters were dated.

Capt. B. Why, you old boar! did you ever hear of love-letters dated with the year and day of the month? Do you think billet-doux are like bank-bills?

Serg. K. They are not so good, my dear; but if they bear no date, I must examine the contents.

Capt. B. Contents! that you shall, old boy! here they be both.

Serg. K. Only the last you received, if you please. [*Takes the Letter.*] Now, Sir, if you please to let me consult my books for a minute, I'll send this letter enclosed to you, with the determination of the stars upon it to your lodgings.

Capt. B. With all my heart. I must give him,— [*Puts his hands in his pockets.*] Algebra! I fancy, doctor, 'tis hard to calculate the place of your nativity?—Here. [*Gives him money.*] And if I succeed, I'll build a watch tower on the top of the highest mountain in Wales, for the study of astrology and the benefit of the Conundrums. [*Exit.*

Re-enter CAPTAIN PLUME *and* WORTHY.

Wor. O doctor! that letter's worth a million. Let me see it;—and now I have it, I'm afraid to open it.

Capt. P. Pho! let me see it. [*Opens the letter.*] If she be a jilt,—damn her, she is one! there's her name at the bottom on't.

Wor. By all my hopes, 'tis Lucy's hand.

Capt. P. Lucy's?

Wor. Certainly. 'Tis no more like Melinda's character than black is to white.

Capt. P. Then 'tis certainly Lucy's contrivance to draw in Brazen for a husband. But are you sure 'tis not Melinda's hand?

Wor. You shall see. Where's the bit of paper I gave you just now that the devil wrote Melinda upon?

Serg. K. Here, Sir.

Capt. P. 'Tis plain they are not the same. And is this the malicious name that was subscribed to the letter which made Mr. Balance send his daughter into the country?

Wor. The very same. The other fragments I showed you just now I once intended for another use; but I think I have turned it now to a better advantage.

Capt. P. But 'twas barbarous to conceal this so long, and to continue me so many hours in the pernicious heresy of believing that angelic creature could change. Poor Sylvia!

Wor. Rich Sylvia, you mean, and poor captain; ha, ha, ha!—Come, come, friend, Melinda is true, and shall be mine; Sylvia is constant, and may be yours.

Capt. P. No, she's above my hopes; but for her sake I'll recant my opinion of her sex.

By some the sex is blamed without design:
Light, harmless censure, such as yours and [mine,
Sallies of wit, and vapours of our wine:
Others the justice of the sex condemn,
And wanting merit to create esteem,
Would hide their own defects by cens'ring them:
But they, secure in their all conquering charms,
Laugh at the vain efforts of false alarms,
He magnifies their conquests who complains,
For none would struggle, were they not in chains. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—JUSTICE BALANCE'S *House.*

Enter JUSTICE BALANCE *and* JUSTICE SCALE.

Just. Sca. I say 'tis not to be borne, Mr. Balance.

Just. B. Lookye, Mr. Scale, for my own part, I shall be very tender in what regards the officers of the army.

Enter SYLVIA, BULLOCK, ROSE, *Prisoners*, CONSTABLE, *and Mob.*

Const. May it please your worships, we took them in the very act, *re infecta*, Sir. The gentleman indeed behaved himself like a gentleman; for he drew his sword and swore, and afterwards laid it down and said nothing.

Just. B. Give the gentleman his sword again. Wait you without. [*Exeunt* CONST. *and* WATCH.] I'm sorry, Sir, [*To* SYLVIA.] to know a gentleman upon such terms, that the occasion of our meeting should prevent the satisfaction of an acquaintance.

Syl. Sir, you need make no apology for your warrant, no more than I shall do for my behaviour: my innocence is upon an equal foot with your authority.

Just. Sca. Innocence! Have you not seduced that young maid?

Syl. No, Mr. Goosecap, she seduced me.

Bul. So she did, I'll swear; for she proposed marriage first.

Just. B. What! then you are married, child, [*To* ROSE.

Rose. Yes, Sir, to my sorrow.

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Just. B. Who was witness?

Bul. That was I. I danced, threw the stocking, and spoke jokes by their bedside, I'm sure.

Just. B. Who was the minister?

Bul. Minister! we are soldiers, and want no minister. They were married by the articles of war.

Just. B. Hold thy prating, fool.—Your appearance, Sir, [*To* SYLVIA.] promises some understanding; pray what does this fellow mean?

Syl. He means marriage, I think; but that, you know, is so odd a thing, that hardly any two people under the sun agree in the ceremony; some make it a convenience, and others make it a jest; but among soldiers 'tis most sacred. Our sword, you know, is our honour; that we lay down; the hero jumps over it first, and the Amazon after: the drum beats a ruff, and so to bed: that's all. The ceremony is concise.

Bul. And the prettiest ceremony; so full of pastime and prodigality,—

Just. B. What! are you a soldier?

Bul. Ay, that I am. Will your worship lend me your cane, and I'll show you how I can exercise?

Just. B. Take it. [*Strikes him over the head.*] Pray, Sir, what commission may you bear? [*To* SYLVIA.

Syl. I'm called captain, Sir, by all the coffee-men, drawers, and groom-porters in London; for I wear a red coat, a sword, a piquet in my head, and dice in my pocket.

Just. Sca. Your name, pray, Sir?

Syl. Pinch.

Just. B. And pray, Sir, what brought you into Shropshire?

Syl. A pinch, Sir. I know you country gentlemen want wit, and you know that we town gentlemen want money; and so—

Just. B. I understand you, Sir.——Here, constable!

Re-enter CONSTABLE.

Take this gentleman into custody till further orders.

Rose. Pray, your worship, don't be uncivil to him, for he did me no hurt; he's the most harmless man in the world, for all he talks so.

Just. Sca. Come, come, child, I'll take care of you.

Syl. What, gentlemen, rob me of my freedom and my wife at once? 'Tis the first time they ever went together.

Just. B. Harkye, constable. [*Whispers him.*

Const. It shall be done, Sir.—Come along, Sir. [*Exeunt* CONST. BUL. ROSE, *and* SYL.

Just. B. Come, Mr. Scale, we'll manage the spark presently. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—MELINDA'S *Apartment.*

Enter MELINDA *and* WORTHY.

Mel. So far the prediction is right, 'tis ten exactly. [*Aside.*] And pray, Sir, how long have you been in this travelling humour?

Wor. 'Tis natural, Madam, for us to avoid what disturbs our quiet.

Mel. Rather the love of change, which is more natural, may be the occasion of it.

Wor. To be sure, Madam, there must be charms in variety, else neither you nor I should be so fond of it.

Mel. You mistake, Mr. Worthy: I am not so fond of variety as to travel for't; nor do I think it prudence in you to run yourself into a certain expense and danger, in hopes of precarious pleasures, which at best never answer expectation, as it is evident from the example of most travellers, that long more to return to their own country than they did to go abroad.

Wor. What pleasures I may receive abroad are indeed uncertain; but this I am sure of, I shall meet with less cruelty among the most barbarous of nations than I have found at home.

Mel. Come, Sir, you and I have been jangling a great while; I fancy if we made our accounts we should the sooner come to an agreement.

Wor. Sure, Madam, you wont dispute your being in my debt.—My fears, sighs, vows, promises, assiduities, anxieties, jealousies, have run on for a whole year without any payment.

Mel. A year! oh, Mr. Worthy, what you owe to me is not to be paid under a seven years' servitude. How did you use me the year before! when, taking the advantage of my innocence and necessity, you would have made me your mistress, that is, your slave?—Remember the wicked insinuations, artful baits, deceitful arguments, cunning pretences; then your impudent behaviour, loose expressions, familiar letters, rude visits; remember those, those, Mr. Worthy.

Wor. I do remember, and am sorry I made no better use of 'em. [*Aside.*] But you may remember, Madam, that—

Mel. Sir, I'll remember nothing;—'tis your interest that I should forget. You have been barbarous to me, I have been cruel to you; put that and that together, and let one balance the other. Now, if you will begin upon a new score, lay aside your adventuring airs, and behave yourself handsomely till Lent be over; here's my hand, I'll use you as a gentleman should be.

Wor. And if I don't use you as a gentlewoman should be, may this be my poison.

[*Kisses her hand.*

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Madam, the coach is at the door.

[*Exit.*

Mel. I am going to Mr. Balance's country house to see my cousin Sylvia; I've done her an injury, and can't be easy till I've asked her pardon.

Wor. I dare not hope for the honour of waiting on you.

Mel. My coach is full; but if you will be so gallant as to mount your own horse, and follow us, we shall be glad to be overtaken; and if you bring captain Plume with you we sha'n't have the worse reception.

Wor. I'll endeavour it.

[*Exit, leading* MELINDA.

SCENE III.—*A Court of Justice.*

JUSTICE BALANCE, JUSTICE SCALE, *and* JUSTICE SCRUPLE *discovered upon the Bench, with* CONSTABLE, SERGEANT KITE, *and Mob standing by.*—SERGEANT KITE *and* CONSTABLE *advance.*

Serg. K. Pray who are those honourable gentlemen upon the bench?

Const. He in the middle is justice Balance, he on the right is justice Scale, and he on the left is justice Scruple; and I am Mr. Constable: four very honest gentlemen.

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Kite. O dear Sir! I am your most obedient servant.

Enter CAPTAIN PLUME.

Just. B. Captain, you're welcome.

Capt. P. Gentlemen, I thank you.

Just. Scr. Come, honest captain, sit by me. [CAPTAIN PLUME *ascends, and sits upon the bench.*] Now produce your prisoners.—Here, that fellow there, set him up, Mr. Constable, what have you to say against this man?

Const. I have nothing to say against him, an't please you.

Just. B. No? what made you bring him hither?

Const. I don't know, an't please your worship.

Just. Sca. Did not the contents of your warrant direct you what sort of men to take up?

Const. I can't tell, an't please ye; I can't read.

Just. Scr. A very pretty constable, truly. I find we have no business here.

Serg. K. May it please the worshipful bench, I desire to be heard in this case, as being the counsel for the king.

Just. B. Come, sergeant, you shall be heard, since nobody else will speak; we wont come here for nothing.

Serg. K. This man is but one man, the country may spare him, and the army wants him; besides he's cut out by nature for a grenadier: he's five feet ten inches high: he shall box, wrestle, or dance the Cheshire round with any man in the country; he gets drunk every Sabbath day, and he beats his wife.

Wife. You lie, sirrah, you lie; an't please your worship, he's the best-natured pains-taking'st man in the parish; witness my five poor children.

Just. Scr. A wife and five children! you constable, you rogue, how dost you impress a man that has a wife and five children?

Just. Sca. Discharge him, discharge him!

Just. B. Hold, gentlemen. Harkye, friend, how do you maintain your wife and five children?

Capt. P. They live upon wildfowl and venison, Sir; the husband keeps a gun, and kills all the hares and partridges within five miles round.

Just. B. A gun! nay, if he be so good at gunning, he shall have enough on't.

Serg. K. Ay, ay, I'll take care of him; if you please. [*Takes him down.*

Just. Sca. Here, you constable, the next. Set up that black-faced fellow, he has a gunpowder look; what can you say against this man, constable?

Const. Nothing, but that he is a very honest man.

Capt. P. Pray, gentlemen, let me have one honest man in my company for the novelty's sake.

Just. B. What are you, friend?

Welch C. A collier; I work in the coalpits.

Just. Scr. Lookye, gentlemen, this fellow has a trade, and the act of parliament here expresses that we are to impress no man that has any visible means of a livelihood.

Serg. K. May it please your worship, this man has no visible means of livelihood, for he works under ground.

Capt. P. Well said, Kite; besides, the army wants miners.

Just. B. Right; and had we an order of government for't, we could raise you in this, and the neighbouring county of Stafford, five hundred colliers, that would run you under ground like moles, and do more service in a siege than all the miners in the army.

Just. Scr. Well, friend, what have you to say for yourself?

Welch C. I'm married.

Serg. K. Lack-a-day! so am I.

Welch C. Here's my wife, poor woman.

Just. B. Are you married, good woman?

Wom. I'm married, in conscience.

Just. Sca. Who married you, mistress?

Wom. My husband. We agreed that I should call him husband, and that he should call me wife, to shun going for a soldier.

Just. Scr. A very pretty couple! Pray, captain, will you take them both?

Capt. P. What say you, Mr. Kite? will you take care of the woman?

Serg. K. Yes, Sir; she shall go with us to the sea-side, and there if she has a mind to drown herself, we'll take care nobody shall hinder her.

Just. B. Here, constable, bring in my man. [*Exit* CONSTABLE.] Now, captain, I'll fit you with a man such as you never listed in your life.

Re-enter CONSTABLE, *with* SYLVIA.

Oh, my friend Pinch! I'm very glad to see you.

Syl. Well, Sir, and what then?

Just. Sca. What then! is that your respect to the bench?

Syl. Sir, I don't care a farthing for you nor your bench either.

Just. Scr. Lookye, gentlemen, that's enough; he's a very impudent fellow, and fit for a soldier.

Just. Sca. A notorious rogue, I say, and very fit for a soldier.

Just. B. What think you, captain?

Capt. P. I think he is a very pretty fellow, and therefore fit to serve.

Syl. Me for a soldier! send your own lazy lubberly sons at home; fellows that hazard their necks every day in the pursuit of a fox, yet dare not peep abroad to look an enemy in the face.

Just. B. Pray, captain, read the articles of war; we'll see him listed immediately.

Capt. P. [*Reads.*] "Articles of war against mutiny and desertion," &c.

Syl. Hold, Sir—Once more, gentlemen, have a care what you do, for you shall severely smart for any violence you offer to me; and you, Mr. Balance, I speak to you particularly, you shall heartily repent it.

Capt. P. Lookye, young spark, say but one word more, and I'll build a horse for you as high as the ceiling, and make you ride the most tiresome journey that ever you made in your life.

Syl. You have made a fine speech, good Captain Huffcap! but you had better be quiet; I shall find a way to cool your courage.

Capt. P. Pray, gentlemen, don't mind him, he's distracted.

Syl. 'Tis false; I am descended of as good

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a family as any in your county; my father is as good a man as any upon your bench; and I am heir to two thousand pounds a-year.

Just. B. He's certainly mad. Pray, captain, read the articles of war.

Syl. Hold, once more. Pray, Mr. Balance, to you I speak; suppose I were your child, would you use me at this rate?

Just. B. No, faith; were you mine I would send you to Bedlam first, and into the army afterwards.

Syl. But consider my father, Sir; he's as good, as generous, as brave, as just a man as ever served his country; I'm his only child: perhaps the loss of me may break his heart.

Just. B. He's a very great fool if it does. Captain, if you don't list him this minute I'll leave the court.

Capt. P. Kite, do you distribute the levy money to the men while I read.

Serg. K. Ay, Sir. Silence, gentlemen.

[CAPTAIN P. *reads the Articles of War.*

"Articles of war against mutiny and desertion.

"Any soldier who shall presume to quit his post without orders from his commanding officer, shall suffer death."

Welsh C. One death!

"Any soldier who shall presume to indulge in Claret, Burgundy, and Champaigne, out of his private pay, shall suffer death."

Welsh C. Two deaths!

"Any soldier who shall presume to erect Churches, Hospitals, or other public Buildings out of his private pay, shall suffer death."

Welsh C. Three deaths!

Just. B. Very well; now, captain, let me beg the favour of you not to discharge this fellow upon any account whatsoever. Bring in the rest.

Const. There are no more, an't please your worship.

Just. B. No more! there were five two hours ago.

Syl. 'Tis true, Sir; but this rogue of a constable let the rest escape for a bribe of eleven shillings a man, because he said the act allowed him but ten, so the odd shilling was clear gains.

All Just. How?

Syl. Gentlemen, he offered to let me go away for two guineas, but I had not so much about me: this is truth, and I'm ready to swear it.

Serg. K. And I'll swear it: give me the book; 'tis for the good of the service.

Welsh C. May it please your worship I gave him half-a-crown to say that I was an honest man: but now, since that your worships have made me a rogue, I hope I shall have my money again.

Just. B. 'Tis my opinion that this constable be put into the captain's hands, and if his friends don't bring four good men for his ransom by to-morrow night, captain, you shall carry him to Flanders.

Just. Sca. Just. Scr. Agreed, agreed.

Capt. P. Mr. Kite, take the constable into custody.

Serg. K. Ay, ay, Sir. Will you please to have your office taken from you, or will you handsomely lay down your staff, as your betters have done before you?

[*To the* CONSTABLE, *who drops his staff.*

Just. B. Come, gentlemen, there needs no great ceremony in adjourning this court. Captain, you shall dine with me.

[*Exeunt* JUSTICES, CAPT. P. *and* SYL.

Serg. K. Come, Mr. Militia Sergeant, I shall silence you now, I believe, without your taking the law of me. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*A Room in* JUSTICE BALANCE'S *House.*

Enter JUSTICE BALANCE *and* STEWARD.

Stew. We did not miss her till the evening, Sir; and then, searching for her in the chamber that was my young master's, we found her clothes there; but the suit that your son left in the press when he went to London was gone.

Just. B. You ha'n't told that circumstance to any body?

Stew. To none but your worship.

Just. B. And be sure you don't. Go, and tell captain Plume that I beg to speak with him.

Stew. I shall. [*Exit.*

Just. B. Was ever man so imposed upon? I had her promise indeed that she would never dispose of herself without my consent. I have consented with a witness, given her away as my act and deed; and this, I warrant, the captain thinks will pass. No, I shall never pardon him the villany, first of robbing me of my daughter, and then the mean opinion he must have of me to think that I could be so wretchedly imposed upon. Her extravagant passion might encourage her in the attempt, but the contrivance must be his. I'll know the truth presently.

Enter CAPTAIN PLUME.

Pray, captain, what have you done with our young gentleman soldier?

Capt. P. He's at my quarters, I suppose, with the rest of my men.

Just. B. Does he keep company with the common soldiers?

Capt. P. No, he's generally with me; but the young rogue fell in love with Rose, and has lain with her, I think, since she came to town.

Just. B. So that between you both, Rose has been finely managed.

Capt. P. Upon my honour, Sir, she had no harm from me.

Just. B. All's safe, I find. [*Aside.*] Now, captain, you must know that the young fellow's impudence in court was well grounded; he said I should heartily repent his being listed; and so I do from my soul.

Capt. P. Ay, for what reason?

Just. B. Because he is no less than what he said he was; born of as good a family as any in the county, and he is heir to two thousand pounds a year.

Capt. P. I'm very glad to hear it; for I wanted but a man of that quality to make my company a perfect representative of the whole commons of England.

Just. B. Wont you discharge him?

Capt. P. Not under a hundred pounds sterling.

Just. B. You shall have it; for his father is my intimate friend.

Capt. P. Then you shall have him for nothing.

Just. B. Nay, Sir, you shall have your price.

Capt. P. Not a penny, Sir; I value an obligation to you much above a hundred pounds.

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Just. B. Perhaps, Sir, you sha'n't repent your generosity. Will you please to write his discharge in my pocket-book? [*Gives his book.*] In the mean time we'll send for the gentleman.—Who waits there?

Enter a SERVANT.

Go to the captain's lodging, and inquire for Mr. Wilful; tell him his captain wants him here immediately.

Serv. Sir, the gentleman's below at the door, inquiring for the captain.

Capt. P. Bid him come up. [*Exit* SERVANT.] Here's the discharge, Sir.

Just. B. Sir, I thank you.——'Tis plain he had no hand in't. [*Aside.*

Enter SYLVIA.

Syl. I think, captain, you might have used me better than to leave me yonder among your swearing, drunken crew;—and you, Mr. Justice, might have been so civil as to have invited me to dinner, for I have eaten with as good a man as your worship.

Capt. P. Sir, you must charge our want of respect upon our ignorance of your quality. But now you are at liberty; I have discharged you.

Syl. Discharged me?

Just. B. Yes, Sir; and you must once more go home to your father.

Syl. My father! then I am discovered.—Oh, Sir! [*Kneels.*] I expect no pardon.

Just. B. Pardon! no, no, child; your crime shall be your punishment. Here, captain, I deliver her over to the conjugal power for her chastisement. Since she will be a wife, be you a husband, a very husband. When she tells you of her love, upbraid her with her folly; be modishly ungrateful, because she has been unfashionably kind; and use her worse than you would any body else, because you can't use her so well as she deserves.

Capt. P. And are you Sylvia in good earnest?

Syl. Earnest! I have gone too far to make it a jest, Sir.

Capt. P. And do you give her to me in good earnest? [*To* JUST. B.

Just. B. If you please to take her, Sir.

Capt. P. Why then I have saved my legs and arms, and lost my liberty. Secure from wounds, I am prepared for the gout. Farewell subsistence, and welcome taxes. Sir, my liberty and the hopes of being a general are much dearer to me than your two thousand pounds a year; but to your love, Madam, I resign my freedom, and to your beauty my ambition; greater in obeying at your feet, than commanding at the head of an army.

Enter WORTHY.

Wor. I am sorry to hear, Mr. Balance, that your daughter is lost.

Just. B. So am not I, Sir, since an honest gentleman has found her!

Enter MELINDA.

Mel. Pray, Mr. Balance, what's become of my cousin Sylvia?

Just. B. Your cousin Sylvia is talking yonder with your cousin Plume.

Mel. And Worthy.—How?

Syl. Do you think it strange, cousin, that a woman should change? But I hope you'll excuse a change that has proceeded from constancy. I altered my outside because I was the same within, and only laid by the woman to make sure of my man: that's my history.

Mel. Your history is a little romantic, cousin; but since success has crowned your adventures, you will have the world on your side; and I shall be willing to go with the tide, provided you'll pardon an injury I offered you in the letter to your father.

Capt. P. That injury, Madam, was done to me, and the reparation I expect shall be made to my friend: make Mr. Worthy happy, and I shall be satisfied.

Mel. A good example, Sir, will go a great way.—When my cousin is pleased to surrender, 'tis probable I sha'n't hold out much longer.

Re-enter CAPTAIN BRAZEN.

Capt. B. Gentlemen, I am yours.—Madam, I am not yours. [*To* MELINDA.

Mel. I'm glad on't, Sir.

Capt. B. So am I.—You have got a pretty house here, Mr. Laconic.

Just. B. 'Tis time to right all mistakes;—my name, Sir, is Balance.

Capt. B. Balance! Sir, I am your most obedient.—I know your whole generation;—had not you an uncle that was governor of the Leeward Islands some years ago?

Just. B. Did you know him?

Capt. B. Intimately, Sir.—He played at billiards to a miracle. You had a brother too that was a captain of a fire-ship,—poor Dick,—he had the most engaging way with him of making punch—and then his cabin was so neat;—but his poor boy Jack was the most comical bastard.—Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! a pickled dog; I shall never forget him.

Capt. P. Have you got your recruits, my dear?

Capt. B. Not a stick, my dear!

Capt. P. Probably I shall furnish you, my dear! instead of the twenty thousand pounds you talked of, you shall have the twenty brave recruits that I have raised at the rate they cost me. My commission I lay down, to be taken up by some braver fellow, that has more merit and less good fortune—whilst I endeavour, by the example of this worthy gentleman, to serve my king and country at home.

With some regret I quit the active field,
Where glory full reward for life does yield;
But the recruiting trade, with all its train
Of endless plague, fatigue, and endless pain,
I gladly quit, with my fair spouse to stay,
And raise recruits the matrimonial way.

EPILOGUE.

ALL ladies and gentlemen that are willing to see the comedy called The Recruiting Officer, let them repair to-morrow night, by six o'clock, to the sign of The Theatre-Royal, in Drury-Lane, and they shall be kindly entertained.—

We scorn the vulgar ways to bid you come;
Whole Europe now obeys the call of drum:

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The soldier, not the poet, here appears;
And beats up for a corps of volunteers:
He finds that music chiefly does delight ye,
And therefore chooses music to invite ye.

Beat the grenadier's march—row, row, row. —Gentlemen, this piece of music, called an Overture to a Battle, was composed by a famous Italian master, and was performed with wonderful success at the great operas of Vigo, Schellenbergh, and Blenheim: it came off with the applause of all Europe, excepting Franco: the French found it a little too rough for their *delicatesse*.

Some that have acted on those glorious stages,
Are here to witness to succeeding ages,
No music like the grenadier's engages.

Ladies, we must own that this music of ours is not altogether so soft as Bononcini's; yet, we dare affirm, that it has laid more people asleep than all the Camillas in the world; and you'll condescend to own, that it keeps one awake better than any opera that ever was acted.

The grenadier's march seems to be a composure excellently adapted to the genius of the English, for no music was ever followed so far by us, nor with so much alacrity; and with all deference to the present subscription, we must say, that the grenadier's march has been subscribed for by the whole grand alliance; and we presume to inform the ladies, that it always has the pre-eminence abroad, and is constantly heard by the tallest, handsomest men in the whole army. In short, to gratify the present taste, our author is now adapting some words to the grenadier's march, which he intends to have performed to-morrow, if the lady who is to sing it should not happen to be sick.

This he concludes to be the surest way
To draw you hither; for you'll all obey [play.
Soft music's call, though you shall damn this

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THE FIRST FLOOR:

A FARCE,

IN TWO ACTS.

BY JAMES COBB, ESQ.

REMARKS.

THE respectable author of this farce successfully united business with some literary endeavour. The "First Floor" contains many whimsical situations, fairly made out by appropriate dialogue; and the equivoque throughout produces a considerable effect; much more, indeed, than the reader would, probably, imagine.

The cynical caution of Old Whimsey, who describes London as "a mere ocean of knavery," is well contrasted with the careless dissipation of his son; whose follies Tim Tartlett, ungratefully slighting Mrs. Pattypan, seems too well disposed to imitate.

This piece has lately been revived, with effect, at the Haymarket Theatre; where, assisted by Terry and Liston, as Old Whimsey and Tim, fresh laurels were gained for the author and themselves.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	DRURY-LANE.		DRURY-LANE.
WHIMSEY	*Mr. Baddeley.*	SNAP	*Mr. Jones.*
MONFORD	*Mr. Whitfield.*	LANDLORD	*Mr. Chaplin.*
YOUNG WHIMSEY	*Mr. R. Palmer.*	POSTBOY	*Mr. Alfred.*
TIM TARTLETT	*Mr. Bannister, jun.*		
FURNISH	*Mr. Suett.*	MRS. PATTYPAN	*Mrs. Hopkins.*
SIMON	*Mr. Burton.*	CHARLOTTE	*Miss Collins.*
FRANK	*Mr. Spencer.*	NANCY	*Mrs. Wilson.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.—An Inn in London.

Enter LANDLORD *and* MONFORD.

Land. Welcome to town, your honour!—a long while since I saw your honour—was saying but this very morning that it was many months since I saw my worthy master, Squire Monford.

Mon. Say so still, landlord—for I am come to town incog, and wish to conceal my arrival here.

Land. Ah! a pair of fine eyes in the case! you have sprung all the game about the country, and now you are coming to poach on some poor fellow's manor in London.

Mon. No, faith, there is no poaching in the case; I mean to take out a license for sporting on a certain manor, called Matrimony.

Land. Matrimony! Lord, Sir, 'tis well enough for your dog-trots—we must, to be sure, have cattle for the high road business of life; but who the devil would think of running a race-horse in a post-chaise?—'tis time enough to put him in harness when he is no longer able to win a sweepstakes.

Mon. Why, look ye, landlord, I don't think that twenty years of dissipation will qualify me the better for a husband: I look on marriage as a sort of partnership, in which I mean to engage whilst I can bring youth, good spirits, and a good constitution, as my share of the stock in trade: but when a pretty girl finds herself entrapped into a connexion with a bankrupt trader, can he be angry with her

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for taking measures to dissolve the partnership?

Land. Well, your honour—and this intended fair partner of yours—

Mon. She is coming to town with her father, and will be in this house in the course of an hour or two.

Land. The old story, I suppose—the father averse to the match.

Mon. Yes, unfortunately for me—but my charmer has consented to a private marriage; I am now going in search of lodgings for us, and shall be with you again presently. [*Exit.*

Land. Ah! there he goes—as pretty a fellow, ay, and as good a customer, as an innkeeper would wish to live by—never knew him look at the items of a bill in my life—always paid it the moment he saw the sum total, and submitted to be cheated like a gentleman.

Enter SIMON.

Sim. Landlord! how are you, my boy? Come, let's have a glass, [*Sitting down at the table.*] you are a jolly fellow.

Land. And i'faith you seem to be the same—I think it is now three days since you came to town on the Bury-fly, during which time you have scarcely been sober three hours.

Sim. Psha! psha! 'tis only my not being used to ride on the roof of the coach that made me giddy—a sudden exaltation may turn better heads than mine.

Land. And pray have you no business in town?

Sim. None of my own.

Land. But you have some of your master's?

Sim. Yes, I have a letter from my master to his son, which I was ordered to deliver directly, but faith I forgot it; and it don't much signify: I hate to be a messenger of ill news.

Land. You know the contents, then?

Sim. Yes, yes; my old master is coming to town to visit his son: ay, here is the letter.—"To Mr. John Whimsey, junior, at Mrs. Pattypan's, pastry-cook, in Piccadilly."

Land. Hey-day! why you are not going to open your master's letter?

Sim. Certainly I will; my master would make no ceremony in opening a letter of mine.—[*Reading the letter.*] "Dear John, I send you this by my man Simon, who will deliver it to you immediately on his arrival in London"—

Land. And you have been here three days already.

Sim. Come, landlord, you don't drink—here's t'ye—[*Drinks.*] "I am coming to town to complete the purchase of my neighbour Squander's estate, and shall take up my quarters at your lodgings for two or three days; I shall bring your sister with me, as I hear there is a rakish young dog, of the name of Monford, has taken it in his head to fall in love with her, and I don't choose to trust her out of my sight."

Land. Zounds! why did not you tell me at first who was your master?—[*Aside.*] If I had but known it before Monford left the house!

Sim. Why, between you and me, I am half-ashamed to own my master—he is as suspicious of every body about him, as if he had been bred a rogue himself—A servant has not much credit in the place, I assure you.

Land. Hey-dey! here's a post-chaise come to the door.

Sim. With my master and his daughter in it, as I live.

Whim. [*Without.*] Mind the portmanteau, sirrah, d'ye hear, and take care none of the bundles are stolen.

Sim. Ay, there, his suspicions are beginning already—if he has lost but a button from his coat, he'll put the postillion to his oath, and have the very horses taken before a magistrate.

Land. Well, I must run, and prepare to receive him. [*Exit.*

Sim. Yes, so must I; and with the same kind of reception—a good lie, and a smiling countenance.

Enter WHIMSEY, CHARLOTTE, *and* LANDLORD.

Land. This way, Madam—this way, Sir—I hope your honour has had a good journey;

Whim. No, I have not had a good journey; I have had lame horses, and drunken drivers—dust from the road—extortion from the innkeepers, and bad half-pence from the turnpikes.—A blight upon honesty and good manners blows from this city of London, to every point of the compass.—It is a mere ocean of knavery, with a continual spring-tide, which infects all the streams of fresh water round the country, and makes them brackish up to their very source.

Land. 'Tis very true, your honour, travelling is very dear now.

Whim. Dear, with a vengeance!—I remember the time when a man could be choaked upon a dusty road for sevenpence a mile; but now one must pay a shilling a-mile for the pleasure of being smothered, because it is one of the luxuries of life.—[*To* CHARLOTTE.] You have not lost your watch, have you?

Char. Oh, no, Sir, all is safe about me—[*Aside.*] except my heart.

Whim. My pockets were all safe when I got out of the chaise; I suppose I have hardly lost any thing since I came into the house.

Land. Lord, Sir, what do you mean?—In my house!

Whim. Egad, I don't know, friend; but there are much finer houses than yours in this town, where a man may go in with full pockets, and come out with empty ones.—But where is my rascal?

Sim. [*Coming forward.*] Here am I, Sir.

Whim. Well, sirrah, I suppose my son and you have been laying your heads together to cheat the old fellow, when he came to town—what did he say when he read my letter?

Sim. He presents his dutiful respects, and anxiously expects the pleasure of seeing you—

Whim. Go to be buried, I dare say he does—but I'm resolved to live temperately, out of spite to him. Landlord, see if the coach is come. [*Exit* LANDLORD.] And you [*To* SIMON.] go and see all the luggage put safely into it—[*Exit* SIMON.] Come, Charlotte, uncloud your countenance—don't tell me of having lost your heart—a young girl's heart is like a tame pigeon; let her throw it away ten times in a month, it will be sure to come back again.

Enter SIMON.

Sim. The coach is ready, Sir.

Whim. Very well, be sure then and take the number; and, d'ye hear, if there is any cordage from the trunks left, save it, Simon—though it be ever so little, it may serve to tie up something or other.

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Sim. Certainly, Sir, if it is but a yard of rope—I think I should know how to apply it properly. [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.—MRS. PATTYPAN'S *Shop.*

MRS. PATTYPAN *and* YOUNG WHIMSEY.

Mrs. Pat. Upon my word, Mr. Whimsey, your behaviour is beyond all bearing—It is a disgrace to any sober family to have such a rake for a lodger.

Y. Whim. Come, come, my dear Mrs. Pattypan—thou peerless princess of all pastry-cooks—let us talk over the matter coolly.

Mrs. Pat. Talk, indeed! I'm tired of talking, Mr. Whimsey.

Y. Whim. I'm glad of it—I never expected you would have been tired of that.

Mrs. Pat. What signifies reasoning with you? you are so thoughtless, so dissipated—keep such company, and such hours—you'll shorten your days.

Y. Whim. But then, as the old saying is, I lengthen my nights, Mrs. Pattypan, and so it comes pretty nearly to the same end.

Mrs. Pat. How often must I beg of you to quit the premises? I've given you warning every day for this month past, and you wont take it.

Y. Whim. 'Tis a common complaint against young people, that they wont take warning.

Mrs. Pat. I have put up a bill in the shop window already—A First Floor to be let furnished—it will not long remain empty, I dare say—nay, a gentleman was here just now to view the apartments.

Y. Whim. You take equal care of your lodgings as of your heart, I perceive, Mrs. Pattypan—you let nothing of yours remain long unoccupied—I think your late husband has been dead about two months, and you are now preparing for the reception of a second.—

Mrs. Pat. Who do you mean, Sir?

Whim. I mean your apprentice, Tim Tartlett; and a very good choice too, let me tell you, Mrs. Pattypan, he has served his time to his master's business—and, I dare say, you will find him a very useful partner—But I see him coming, and I wont interrupt a love conversation.

Mrs. Pat. I understand your sneers, Sir. But I hope, before you quit the house, you mean to discharge your debts—you are pretty much in my books.

Y. Whim. That is owing to my great respect for you—I hope I shall never be out of your books—Adieu, my dear old girl! If I can't get a bed elsewhere—perhaps I may pop in here—so you'll let your maid Nancy sit up for me. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Pat. Impudent fellow!

Enter TIM TARTLETT.

Oh, your servant, Sir; ready dressed, I see, for going abroad; you are always gadding, Tim Tartlett.

Tim. Lord, mistress! why, you are always scolding one for taking a little harmless recreation—you know I loves to see life—because vy, 'tis so agreeable.

Mrs. Pat. Well, Sir, and is there nothing due to me for my attention to you? What do you think made me take you from your poor relations, and place you in my own family?

Tim. I'm sure I can't tell, mistress; you must know best.

Mrs. Pat. Haven't I put money in your pocket, and made a gentleman of you?—have not I taught you breeding?

Tim. Very true.

Mrs. Pat. Have not I at length resolved to make you master of my shop, my fortune, and myself?

Tim. But then you wont let me be my own master.

Mrs. Pat. Your own master, indeed!—then you would be ruined presently.

Tim. Vell, and if so be I vas, what then? Vy there's some of the great folks, that pass in their striped coaches and pheatons, and look as fine as a king on a twelfth-cake—our Nancy says they have been ruined for some years—and yet, i'cod, they seem as gamesome and airy as if nothing had happened.

Mrs. Pat. Our Nancy, indeed!—there is another of your follies; always laughing and hallooing with that trapes in the shop, as if you were mad.

Tim. Vy, I can't help toying with her a little now and then, she is such a merry humoursome soul.

Mrs. Pat. The trollop shall not stay within my doors—Oh, Tim, Tim! I wish you *had* pride enough to keep such wretches at a distance.

Tim. Vy, so I have, sometimes—I can be as proud as Old Scratch to our journeymen and the shop-boy—but when I looks at a pretty girl, Lord, mistress, all my pride melts away, like our ice-cream in the sunshine.

Mrs. Pat. Don't provoke me, Timothy—I declare—

Enter MONFORD.

Mon. The card in your shop-window informed me, Madam, that you have a First Floor to let ready furnished.

Mrs. Pat. Yes, Sir; and as pretty a floor, though I say it—will you please to look at the rooms?

Mon. I have seen them already.

Mrs. Pat. Oh! you are the gentleman who called just now, while I was out.

Mon. I only wish to know, whether I can take possession of the lodgings this afternoon?

Mrs. Pat. This hour, Sir, if you please.

Mon. I expect my sister from the country this evening; and as I cannot accommodate her at my chambers, am obliged, at this short notice, to take lodgings.

Mrs. Pat. Very well, Sir.

Mon. I am now going to the place where she will arrive, to leave a card of your shop, and shall be back time enough to receive her. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Pat. Short and sweet, indeed!

Tim. I wonder vether his sister is a comely girl?

Mrs. Pat. What is that to you, Sir?—Do be so good as to send your favourite Nancy to me immediately—we must get every thing in order for the lady.

Tim. If she has but black eyes!—I likes black eyes monstrously.

Mrs. Pat. Never to ask the price of the lodgings!—I declare I can't tell what to make of him. [*Exit.*

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Tim. I'ced you'll make a pretty penny of him before you have done with him, I warrant. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—A Room in MRS. PATTYPAN'S *House.*

MRS. PATTYPAN *discovered.*

Mrs. Pat. Bless me, what a litter this room is in!—I shall be ashamed for the young lady to see it.

Enter NANCY.

Nancy. Ma'am, here is one of the oddest old gentlemen below; all we can get out of him is, that these are his son's lodgings, and he will come up stairs.

Mrs. Pat. His son's lodgings!

Nancy. There is a young lady with him, Ma'am.

Mrs. Pat. Oh! the sister of my new lodger, undoubtedly—show them up immediately.

Nancy. They are showing themselves up, Ma'am—here they are. [*Exit.*

Enter WHIMSEY *and* CHARLOTTE.

Whim. Ma'am, your most obedient—I find my son has taken lodgings here—I presume, you are Mrs. Pattypan.

Mrs. Pat. At your service, Sir.

Whim. Then we are all right—and so you are welcome to your brother's lodgings, Charlotte—

Mrs. Pat. That you are, Madam, I'll be sworn—Your brother seemed very anxious for your arrival, he will be home soon.

Enter SIMON, *with a portmanteau.*

Whim. There, sirrah, put the portmanteau in the corner—one should always have an eye to one's property. [*To* MRS. P.] Well, Mrs. Pattypan, what do you think of my son—how d'ye like him for a lodger?

Mrs. Pat. Indeed, Sir, he seems to be a mighty civil, agreeable, young gentleman—quite the reverse of my late lodger—a dissipated good-for-nothing—but give me leave to show you the apartments, Ma'am.

Whim. Mrs. Pattypan, let us have tea as soon as you can—I am rather fatigued with my journey. [*Exeunt* MRS. P. *and* CHARLOTTE; WHIM. *solus.*] I'faith, I like Jack's lodgings mightily—here are all the pictures I gave him, and the library of books—he has taken great care of them, I see—all look as good as new; and not a volume displaced—he is a careful reader, I dare say—I shall fancy myself quite at home among my old acquaintance. [*Looking round.*] But who have we here?

Enter MONFORD, *speaking as he enters.*

Mon. Let me know the moment the lady comes.

Whim. [*Aside.*] Some friend of my son's, I suppose. [*To him.*] Sir, your most obedient—very pretty apartments, Sir.

Mon. Yes, Sir—I don't dislike them.

Whim. I beg, Sir, you will be seated.

Mon. Sir, I, I—[*Aside.*] I see you don't wait for the same invitation.

Whim. What d'ye think of these pictures, Sir?—they are reckoned pretty good.

Mon. They seem to be very fine, indeed, Sir.

Whim. Very glad you like 'em—I bought 'em—Indeed I partly furnished this room.—[*Rings the bell.*

Mon. Furnished the room!—[*Aside.*] some upholsterer, egad!

Enter FRANK.

Whim. Let me have a pair of slippers, my lad, directly—I long to be out of my boots. [*Exit* FRANK.] Nothing so pleasant as to be perfectly at one's ease—that's my opinion.

Mon. So I perosive, Sir!

Re-enter FRANK.

Whim. I expect my son presently—You'll stay to tea, Sir? [*Pulls off his boots.*

Mon. Ha, ha, ha! I believe I shall, Sir.—[*Aside.*] A most impudent old fellow this seems to be.

Whim. [*Aside.*] Believe I shall—he might as well have said, thank ye.

Frank. [*Aside.*] A curious acquaintance my master seems to have picked up— [*Exit.*

Mon. Sir, I should be exceedingly sorry to be guilty of any rudeness to you—but I apprehend you are not apprized who has taken these lodgings.

Whim. Oh, yes, I am, Sir.

Mon. In short, I expect my sister from the country every moment; and perhaps the presence of a third person might not be quite agreeable to her.

Whim. Oh, as to that, I expect my daughter every moment too, and we may all drink tea together. [*Tea brought in by* NANCY.] Do tell my daughter to make haste. [*Aside to* NANCY.] There can be no harm to invite him, as he is a friend of Jack's.—May I ask your name, Sir? [*Exit* NANCY.

Mon. Monford, Sir.

Whim. [*Aside.*] Monford!—the very fellow who wants to run away with Charlotte!

Enter FRANK.

Frank. [*Aside to* MONFORD.] Miss Whimsey is now in the house, Sir.

Mon. In the house! Here, Frank, kick this damned portmanteau down stairs. [FRANK *offers to take it, but* WHIMSEY *prevents him.*] You must really pardon me, Sir—any other time I shall be glad to see you.

[*Attempting to force* WHIMSEY *out.*

Whim. Zounds, Sir! What d'ye mean by that?

Enter CHARLOTTE; MONFORD *catches her in his arms.*

Mon. My Charlotte! am I indeed so blest as to hold you in my arms again!—[*To* WHIMSEY.] Give me leave, Sir, to introduce you to my sister.

Char. [*Aside.*] Good heavens! what an adventure!

Whim. A fine girl, Mr. Monford—Pray are you both by the same father?

Mon. Sir!

Whim. I am sure, till this moment, I did

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not know I could boast of such a hopeful offspring as you. [*Exit* FRANK.

Char. Hear me, my dear father.

Mon. [*Aside.*] His daughter!—a curse on my unlucky stars!

Whim. Don't be disappointed, young man—you have had a devilish lucky escape in missing my daughter, I assure you—for not a shilling would I have given her, had she thrown herself on you.

Mon. [*Aside.*] What the devil shall I say?

Whim. I suppose you are muttering curses against the old fellow, because he wont suffer you to hum him—come, use no ceremony—let me hear what I am.

Mon. [*Aside.*] I have it—You are, Sir, indeed a friend.

Whim. For depriving you of your wife—that is indeed the part of a modern friend.

Mon. I thank you for your candour——you have discovered to me my mistake.

Whim. You expected then that the old codger would have whimpered a little, joined your hands, and have given you half his fortune, for making a fool of him?

Mon. I own it—but I see I was in an error. Miss Charlotte, I thought you were a woman of fortune—your father has convinced me that you will no longer be such, if you marry me; I should therefore be guilty of the greatest injustice in wishing to sacrifice your happiness to the gratification of my passion.

Char. Sir—you—you are perfectly in the right—I feel the delicacy of your conduct—and—you may be sure I approve it. [*Exit.*

Whim. Give me your hand, Monford——Egad, I begin to think you are a devilish sensible fellow.

Mon. Between you and I, Mr. Whimsey, it wont do for younger brothers, like me, to fall in love.

Whim. Certainly not. It may well be called falling in love. 'Tis in truth a false step, and many a man, who has once met with the accident, has found the ill effects of it ever afterwards.

Mon. Right, Sir; suppose now you were to recommend me to a wife—a rich widow, for instance.

Whim. Eh! why, what say you to the lady of this mansion, Mrs. Pattypan? My son Jack tells me, in his letters, she is worth a round sum.

Mon. A good thought, Sir; with your permission. I'll step to Miss Whimsey, and tell her my resolution of courting the old lady directly.

Whim. Don't trouble yourself—I'll step to Miss Whimsey myself; and return immediately, to have a little more talk with you on the subject. Od'so! but while I am looking after my daughter, I may lose my portmanteau.

[*Exit* WHIM. *who drags off his portmanteau.*

Enter FRANK.

Frank. So, sir, you are in a fine hobble here; this old man is the father of your mistress.

Mon. Even so, Frank—luckily a thought occurred to me, which I flatter myself has put him off his guard—I have pretended to give up his daughter, and pay my addresses to the old pastry-cook below stairs.

Frank. Lord, Sir, this scheme is too absurd to pass on any man, however credulous he may be.

Mon. To be sure—but, if I can make him believe this absurdity but for a few hours, all may yet be well—I think I can easily find means to convey my dear girl out of the reach of her father's power this evening. Go instantly, Frank, and order a chaise to be at the corner of the street exactly at twelve o' clock. [*Exit* FRANK.

Enter MRS. PATTYPAN.

Mrs. Pat. Sir, your most obedient humble servant. I did not understand that you expected your father in town.

Mon. Nor I neither, Madam. [*Aside.*] So I must pass for the old fellow's son, I find.

Mrs. Pat. I hope, Sir, you like the lodgings, and don't think them dear at three guineas a week.

Mon. Certainly not.

Enter WHIMSEY.

Mrs. Pat. Ay; I knew we should agree, Sir, ha, ha, ha!

Whim. Egad, he has put the question to her.—[*Aside.*] Monford, I perceive you have begun the attack.

Mon. And have conquered too—only don't interrupt me in my victory.

Whim. Not I—you may say what *you will* before me.

Mon. Ay; but the lady wont care to speak before you. Pray now, Sir, leave us to ourselves.

Mrs. Pat. [*To* WHIM.] Your servant, Sir; we had come to terms before you came in.

Whim. Oh, you had!

Mrs. Pat. Yes; we were proceeding to settle every thing.

Whim. Then I am sure I wont interrupt you; and so good by.—[*Aside.*] I'll take the liberty of listening to their conversation, however—nothing but the evidence of my own ears can remove my suspicions. [*Exit.*

Mon. Don't mind my father, Mrs. Pattypan; old folks have their peculiarities.

Mrs. Pat. True, Sir—I dare say it will *be* the same with you and I, when we grow old. —[*Enter* WHIMSEY, *and retires to the back scene.*] But, however, to return to business——right reckoning makes long friends, as I used to tell my first husband—

Mon. Ay, I dare say we shall be very happy together.

Whim. [*Aside.*] Happy together!

Mrs. Pat. I presume, Sir, you generally dine out.

Mon. Constantly.

Whim. [*Aside.*] Zounds, that's odd enough! not to dine at home, during the honey-moon at least.

Mrs. Pat. And you keep good hours, I hope, Sir.

Mon. Oh, yes, you'll always find me in bed by twelve o'clock.

Whim. [*Aside.*] That's a material article.

Mon. I think you have no family, Mrs. Pattypan?

Mrs. Pat. No, Sir, I never had any yet——but as I think of altering my situation, it may happen that—

Mon. I understand you—but that will make no sort of difference to me.

Mrs. Pat. Indeed! I am very happy to hear it—for you know, Sir, some gentlemen have an objection to children.

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Whim. [*Aside.*] Egad, there can be no deceit in all this—it will be a match, I see that—[*Coming forward. Aloud.*] I wish you both joy with all my soul—don't be confused, Mrs. Pattypan—you know this isn't the first bargain of the sort you have struck.

Mrs. Pat. Oh dear, no, Sir; nor I hope it will not be the last.

Whim. [*Aside.*] D——d good encouragement for a man to venture on her! I suppose, she expects to bury two or three husbands yet.

Mon. [*Aside to* WHIM.] Well, Sir, what do you say to all this?

Whim. [*Aside.*] Why—why—why—you are a bold man, that's all—[*Aloud.*] Come, as it is a bargain, take hands on it—take hands—nay, salute her——come, kiss her, my boy.

Mrs. Pat. [*Aside.*] My boy!—the old gentleman seems mighty fond of his son.

Mon. [*Aside.*] Egad, I wish this ceremony were well over, I shall never be able to carry on the farce. [*Salutes her.*

Whim. [*Joining their hands.*] May you live long together, and may no domestic quarrels obtrude on your happiness!—may you, Mrs. Pattypan, be surrounded by a numerous offspring!

Mrs. Pat. [*Aside.*] A numerous offspring!

Mon. Pray, my dear Sir, drop the subject—you see it distresses her; and you know one must consult a woman's feelings on some occasions.

Whim. Certainly! certainly!

Mon. I am sure I should be sorry to hurt Mrs. Pattypan's delicacy.

Whim. So should I—when a woman has but just enough left for her immediate use, it would be cruel indeed to damage that—I'll change the subject, Monford, depend upon it.

[*He converses with* MRS. PATTYPAN *in dumb show.*

Enter FRANK.

Frank. [*Aside to* MON.] Sir, it is an impossibility for you to procure an interview with Miss Charlotte.

Mon. Impossible, Frank!

Frank. Absolutely so—she is so closely watched—but I've engaged one in your interest, who will take any message to her for you. No less a person than Mr. Timothy Tartlett.

Mon. But how can he assist me?

Frank. By communicating to your mistress any message you wish; he will never be suspected.

Mon. Not a bad thought, i'faith.

Frank. He is a waiting to speak to you below stairs——slip away from the old gentleman directly.

Whim. Now, what the devil can they be whispering about?—I always suspect a man to be a rogue when I see him whisper. [WHIMSEY *interrupts, and looks anxiously at them.*] Eh! why you have not changed your mind as to matrimony, have you? [*Exit* FRANK.

Mon. Not in the least, I promise you, Sir—I am now going on some business which, I flatter myself, will hasten the match, and a few hours will, I hope, cure all your suspicions. [*Exit.*

Whim. Egad, though, I'll ask the old woman some questions about him; there can be no harm in that.—Pray, Mrs. Pattypan, if I don't hurt your delicacy by the question, how long may you have been acquainted with this young man whom you are going to marry?

Mrs. Pat. [*Aside.*] Young man whom I am going to marry! how the deuce could he hear of my intending to marry Tim Tartlett?

Whim. You'll excuse my curiosity—but pray is not he rather wild?

Mrs. Pat. [*Aside.*] Yes, yes—he means Tim—[*To him.*] Why, Sir, I believe he is rather flighty—he has his little gallantries.

Whim. Look ye, Mrs. Pattypan—as to his little gallantries, as you call them, perhaps I know more of the matter than you do.

Mrs. Pat. Dear Sir, you awaken my curiosity.

Whim. But, really, when I consider how disagreeable a task it is to interfere between man and wife—for such I consider you to be—

Mrs. Pat. 'Tis very true, Sir—in all the quarrels that I had with my poor dear soul that's dead and gone (and many they were) we never permitted any body to interfere, but fought them out by ourselves.

Whim. However, on this occasion, my friendship for you overcomes every other consideration.—In a word, your intended husband has made love to my daughter.

Mrs. Pat. What do I hear! I shall certainly faint.

Whim. [*Attempting to support her.*] For Heaven's sake, don't faint yet, for I can't support you, upon my soul.

Mrs. Pat. An ungrateful fellow!—who owes all he has in the world to me!

Whim. Then, of course, all he has in the world ought to be at your disposal: but he did not own to me that he was even acquainted with you.

Mrs. Pat. I have been a mother to him.

Whim. Perhaps he thought you fitter to be his mother than his wife.

Mrs. Pat. Oh, Sir, it is not to be repeated what I have done for that young man.

Whim. If it is not to be repeated, I'm sure I don't wish to hear it, Mrs. Pattypan.—But, between you and me—I suspect the girl is fond of him.

Mrs. Pat. Fond of him!

Whim. Indeed, I don't wonder at it—he is a handsome dog.

Mrs. Pat. He is, to be sure, a likely young fellow—not that I consider his person—the mind is my choice—what are fine eyes—flowing locks—brilliant complexion?—

Whim. [*Interrupting her.*] Mighty pretty things to look at, Mrs. Pattypan—[*Aside.*] Though you never found them in your glass.

Mrs. Pat. But what are they, compared to the beauties of the mind?

Whim. Faith, I don't know—Comparisons are odious, and therefore I sha'n't attempt them.

Mrs. Pat. Beauty is but skin deep—

Whim. [*Aside.*] Then i'faith your skin conceals it more effectually than any skin I ever saw in my life.

Mrs. Pat. But pray, Sir, how did you first discover this affair?—tell me all the particulars—

Whim. I would, if I had thought of it a little sooner—but, for aught I know, at this moment your scape-grace may be explaining to my daughter some particulars of which I should wish her at present to remain ignorant—so it behoves me to look about me. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Pat. [*Alone.*]—Why here they come!—

yes, to be sure!—Madam ogles and simpers; how ugly she looks when she smiles!

[*Retreats to the back of the stage.*

Enter CHARLOTTE *and* TIM.

Char. And what time is the chaise to be ready?

Tim. At twelve o'clock, Miss—that was the time 'Squire Monford fixed. Ah! how he'll be in the fidgets!—I know what it is to be a true lovier myself, as our Nancy can vitness.

Char. Oh! Mr. Timothy, I own to you my courage fails me, now I come to the point.

Mrs. Pat. [*Aside.*] I think your ladyship seems to have a pretty good share of courage, to come to the point so soon.

Tim. As to the matter of that, Miss, as I told you before, I am as much in love as you are—

Mrs. Pat. [*Aside.*] A mutual declaration of love!

Tim. Never mind—by this time to-morrow you'll be out of your father's reach.

Mrs. Pat. [*Aside.*] Gracious me! he is going to elope with her!

Tim. How the old gentleman will storm!

Char. You know, as people grow in years, their sentiments of love affairs naturally change.

Tim. E'cod, though—that is not the case with old mistress.

Mrs. Pat. [*Aside.*] Old mistress, indeed!

Tim. By all accounts she is just as loving now as she was thirty years ago.

Mrs. Pat. [*Aside.*] His ears shall pay for this.

Tim. If the old girl was to hear me, now—what would she say to it! Ha, ha, ha!—Well, Miss, I'll take my leave of you till twelve o'clock. I'm just a going to make merry with a few friends for an hour or two—I'll take care that you shall have an excellent chaise, and as good a pair of horses as ever passed Hyde-Park Corner.

Char. Many thanks to you, kind Mr. Timothy.

Tim. Courage, Miss—true love endures to the end, as the song says. And so a fig for your father and old mother Pattypan.

[*Exeunt* CHAR. *and* TIM.

Mrs. Pat. [*Coming forward.*] Old mother Pattypan! Old!—I shall run mad! What a plot!—'Tis lucky, however, I have discovered it—I'll take care there shall be no elopement.—Old, indeed!—and too loving!—I don't know what the deuce the fellows would have: when we are young, we are not half loving enough, forsooth!—and when a few years have taught us how to remedy the defect, they treat our improvement with contempt!

[*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Room in MRS. PATTYPAN'S *House, with two windows in the back scene.*

Enter YOUNG WHIMSEY *and* NANCY.

Y. Whim. Ah! my dear little Nancy—how lucky I am, to meet with you alone.

Nancy. I wish then, Sir, you would leave me alone as you found me; upon my word, Mr. Whimsey, I'll tell my mistress how rude you behave.

Y. Whim. Pray don't, my dear—she will want to try my rudeness herself.—By the bye, where is the old woman?

Nancy. At a neighbour's, over the way—you know she is as jealous as Old Scratch of poor Mr. Timothy, and so she means to watch his coming home.

Y. Whim. Oh! ho! then she is out, [*Aside.*] so much the better.—[*To her.*] Nancy, I want to give you a little good advice—step into my room with me, and—

Nancy. Into *your* room! you have no room in this house, Mr. Whimsey; we have let the lodgings.

Y. Whim. Let the lodgings! with all my furniture in them!—

Nancy. Pay what you owe, and you may have your furniture.

Y. Whim. Death and—but I can't stay to be in a passion—and so the lodgings are *let?*

Nancy. Ay—there is an old gentleman, and one of the sweetest young ladies—

Y. Whim. A young lady!—Egad, I must see her.

Nancy. And give *her* a little good advice too, eh?

Y. Whim. To be sure—nobody better qualified than myself to give good advice—I have received a great deal more than I make use of; and as I scorn to be a miser, am ready to give it away to any one who will take it.

Nancy. Bless me, here comes Mr. Furnish, the upholsterer, who has been so often after you with his bill, and our neighbour, Mr. Snap, the bailiff, with him, I vow.

Y. Whim. Furnish! that is the man to whom you have denied me so often—What shall I do?—he never saw me, I believe?

Nancy. Never.

Y. Whim. Then I fear nothing. However, a little disguise of my dress may not be amiss—here is an old laced hat, and a morning-gown, which I guess, from its antique appearance, belongs to your old lodger.

Nancy. Yes; his servant has just been unpacking his portmanteau.

Y. Whim. Then on they go—in cases of necessity one cannot stand upon punctilio.

[*Putting on the hat and morning gown.*

Enter FURNISH.

Nancy. Your servant, Mr. Furnish; I suppose you want Mr. Whimsey?

Fur. Yes, my dear, I own a part of my business is with him.

Nancy. I'll go and see if he's at home.

[*Exit.*

Fur. You may save yourself that trouble, my dear; I am pretty sure he is within.

Y. Whim. I think, Sir, Mr. Whimsey is indebted to you for the furniture of a house, taken by a very fine girl, who referred you to him for payment——I have read many of your letters to him.

Fur. Yes, Sir—a number of letters passed between us.—I suppose I have received a quire of paper from him at different times; and, egad, that is all I ever received from him.—You are his friend, I presume, Sir?

Y. Whim. I am partial to him, I own; though I confess he has been duped by women.

Fur. That I can pardon, Sir. Gallantry has always been a part of my business.

Y. Whim. Rather a small part of your business at present, I should think, Mr. Furnish.

Fur. But you were speaking of Mr. Whimsey, Sir;—I fear the poor gentleman is much distressed.—Ah, Sir, there is no putting an old head on young shoulders.

Y. Whim. And, really, if that could be done, I don't think it would be any great addition to a man's appearance.

Fur. I dare say, you would take pleasure in affording him relief.

Y. Whim. That I would, I assure you.

Fur. Mine is not a large bill, [*Giving him the bill.*] and, I believe, I could afford to make a small abatement in it—a trifling sum will save an unhappy youth from disgrace.—Consider the exquisite luxury of a feeling mind in relieving distress—consider, that generosity is part of the business of man.—Consider compassion—[Y. WHIM. *shakes his head.*] You wont pay the bill—then come in, Mr. Snap, and do your duty—follow me, and arrest him directly.

Enter SNAP.

Y. Whim. Hey-day! what's become of the exquisite luxury of a feeling mind in relieving distress?

Fur. It may do very well for people of fortune; but a tradesman should never indulge in luxury.

Y. Whim. Consider, generosity is part of the business of a man.

Fur. And a d——d losing trade it is—therefore it sha'n't be a part of my business.

Y. Whim. Ha, ha, ha! egad, Furnish, you are very right not to engage in a business where you have no stock in trade to begin with.

Enter NANCY.

Nancy. [*Aside to* Y. WHIM.] Lud, Mr. Whimsey, here's the old gentleman, our lodger, coming this way in a confounded huff about something.

Y. Whim. [*Aside to* NANCY.] I'm very glad of it; I'll have a little sport with the old boy—and engage him with Furnish, whilst I get a peep at the young lass.—[*To* FURN.] My dear Furnish, I would advise you to arrest him by all means.

Nancy. [*Aside.*] What can he mean now?

Y. Whim. Let your friend, Mr. Snap, retire for a minute, and I'll explain myself. [*Exit* SNAP.] Between you and me he is now here in disguise.

Fur. Here! where?

Y. Whim. You will see the old fellow presently—Nancy tells me he is coming this way—

Nancy. Ha, ha, ha! I wish I dared laugh out.

Fur. Old fellow! Why I thought he was not above two-and-twenty.

Y. Whim. Very true; but in his present disguise he appears thrice that age.

Fur. His present disguise!

Y. Whim. To deceive his creditors is, as you call it, a part of his business. He wears as many different sorts of wigs in a month as a barber's block; and all Monmouth-street can scarcely supply him with a sufficient change of wardrobe.

Fur. Egad, he must be a comical dog!——I shall be ready to laugh in his face.

Nancy. Here he comes, I vow.

Y. Whim. Ay, here he is—[*Aside.*] Eh!—what the devil—my father, by all that's whimsical!

Fur. What's the matter, Sir? You are not going?

Y. Whim. No, no, Sir;—only, if Mr. Whimsey should discover that I have told you this—a disagreeable altercation might ensue.

[*Goes to the corner of the scene.*

Enter OLD WHIMSEY, *with open letters in his hand.*

Whim. What an extravagant dog is this son of mine!

Fur. [*Aside to* Y. WHIM.] His son!—so he pretends to have a son:—that's a devilish good thought, i'faith.

Whim. Egad, it is lucky I broke open his letters, and discovered his tricks. But I'll make him pay for all this when he comes home.—[*Turns and sees* NANCY.] Ah! my little blossom of beauty, are you there?—[*Aside.*] To spend two hundred pounds upon a painted doll in three months!—[*To her.*] Why, you look mighty pretty to-night, child! but what the devil are you tittering about?

Nancy. Dear Sir, I don't know—I'm in a merry humour, that's all.

Whim. Ah! you dear little—egad, I'm in a merry humour too. No,—I lie, I am not merry—[*Aside.*] That scoundrel Jack—I'll disinherit him. [*To her.*] Well, my little dear, and how d'ye do? the slut fires me—but then again that dog Jack fires me—so that I'm in a manner between too fires.

Nancy. You seem in a fluster, Sir.

Whim. Yes, my love, I am in a fluster——[*Aside.*] That spendthrift! What eyes she has! He must have his wench, forsooth!—the dog has no excuse for his fault! There is no resisting that girl, i'faith.

Y. Whim. [*Aside.*] Well said, Philosophy at threescore.

[*Just as* OLD WHIMSEY *is going to take* NANCY'S *hand,* FURNISH *comes forward.*

Fur. [*Aside.*] Ay, ay! his young blood begins to boil—Mr. Whimsey, I kiss your hand.

Nancy. A lucky release.

[*Exeunt* NANCY *and* Y. WHIM.

Whim. Sir, your humble servant—you really have the advantage of me, in knowing me.

Fur. Yes, Sir, I really deem it an advantage, and hope to avail myself of it——my name, Sir, is Furnish. [*Aside.*] Who the deuce would think he is but two-and-twenty years old! I hope you have had your health lately, Sir?

Whim. Very well, I thank ye; I have not been better for these forty years past.

Fur. [*Aside.*] Forty years past! And then his coat—a devilish smart coat, to come from Monmouth-street.

Whim. Why, you seem to be mighty well acquainted with me, Mr. Furnish.

Fur. Ha, ha, ha! I know you, Sir, by name, to be sure; and I believe I can form a nearer guess at your age than any one would do merely from your appearance.

Whim. [*Angrily.*] Eh! well, Sir, and how old do you suppose I am, then?—Damme, d'ye take me for threescore, you blockhead?

Fur. Not I, upon my soul, Sir.

Whim. [*Less angry.*] Then I suppose you think me near fifty.

Fur. Nothing like it, I assure you.

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Whim. Perhaps then, my good friend, you imagine me to be about forty.

Fur. Indeed I do not, Mr. Whimsey.

Whim. [*Shaking hands with him.*] Nay, nay, my dear fellow, 'tis impossible you can suppose me to be much under fifty, ha, ha, ha!

Fur. Egad, but I do though, ha, ha, ha!——[*Aside.*] How well he counterfeits the laugh of an old man! [*Both laugh some time.*

Whim. Upon my soul, Furnish, you are a mighty pleasant fellow.

Fur. I believe I am—I make it a part of my business to be pleasant—but there is another part of my business which I must not forget—I have a small bit of paper here—a little slip, which I must trouble you to look over. [*Giving him a bill.*

Whim. Certainly——I am always ready to look over the little slips of my friends, Mr. Furnish—let me put on my spectacles.

Fur. [*Aside.*] Spectacles, too! he carries on the joke rarely.

Whim. [*Reading.*] "John Whimsey, Esquire, debtor, for furnishing Miss Fanny Flighty's house in Newman-street!" Why, what the devil's all this? I know nothing of Miss Flighty's house in Newman-street.

Fur. I believe you have passed many a night there.

Whim. I pass the night at Miss Fanny Flighty's!

Fur. Don't think to deceive me, young gentleman—don't I know that you have not paid for the three last gigs you had?—that you have as many tricks as a juggler to chouse your creditors?—that you keep women in every corner of the town, and change them as often as your horses.

Whim. I can't tell what you may know—but curse me if I know a word of the matter.

Fur. This I know, that I will have my money.

Whim. So you may, but d——n me if you shall have any of mine.

Fur. Why, you brazen young dog!——you'll break your poor parent's heart.

Whim. I'll break your head first, however. [*Attempting to strike him.*

Enter SNAP.

Fur. Mr. Snap, there's your prisoner.

Snap. I ax your pardon, Master Furnish—he shall be no prisoner of mine—why I find you have mistaken the father for the son—'tis lucky the business stopped here——false imprisonment is a dangerous mistake in this land of liberty. [*Exit.*

Fur. False imprisonment! Bless me—why I met a fellow here, who told me a cock-and-a-bull story about you—and yet as gentleman-like a man, with a red morning gown and a gold-laced hat.

Whim. [*Aside.*] Eh! i'faith there is some trick in all this—my hat and gown have not been borrowed for nothing—[*To him.*] but what a cursed fool must you be to trust to appearances!

Fur. If I had trusted to your appearance, I should not have mistaken a gouty old rake of threescore for a young rake of two-and-twenty.

Whim. Why, you abusive dirty plebeian——you rascally vamper of crazy moveables—out of the house directly!

Fur. With all my heart—I'm sure I've no reason to like my company—only don't threaten me—if you dare to lay one of your rheumatic old bones upon my person—I'll knock you down, I will, egad—remember I'm an auctioneer—and to knock down a lot of old lumber is often a part of my business. [*Exit.*

Enter CHARLOTTE.

Whim. Oh! I am glad you are come—you must set off for home to-night.

Char. To-night, Sir!—

Whim. Ay, Ma'am—to-night—I have been plundered, abused, laughed at, and nearly arrested, all in the course of half an hour—I have lost my morning-gown and my best hat; but I'll find my property, if it is in the house.

Char. Dear Sir, what can they mean by a trick of that sort?

Whim. Mean! why, to be witty, to be sure—I suppose there is some clever creature in the house, who, having no room for wit in his skull, has learnt to jest with his fingers—I am always treated thus whenever I visit this cursed town; thank Heaven, however, I shall be off in an hour. Let all the things be packed up again—I'll just stay to recover my hat and gown—leave a letter to tell Jack he is disinherited, and then trundle into the *country*, where the people are not sufficiently well bred to laugh at the follies of their betters. [*Exit.*

Char. To-night, did my father say, we were to set off? Perhaps he may order the chaise even before the hour I've appointed to elope with Monford—surely this is about the time Monford was to meet me here—but this unlucky accident!

Enter NANCY, *in tears.*

Nancy. Ah! Madam, I think there is nothing but unlucky accidents in this house—I know you're in love, Ma'am, as well as me—Tim told me all—we are such true lovers, that we never hide any thing from each other.

Char. Am I then betrayed?

Nancy. I hope not, Ma'am—I'm sure your sweetheart must be a vile fellow to betray such a pretty lady; and yet there is no answering for youth, when they get into company.

Char. What d'ye mean, child?

Nancy. Young men will be young men—but I did'nt think Tim would have served me so, when he knew the consequences.

Char. [*Aside.*] Serve her so, when he knew the consequences!

Nancy. Oh, Ma'am, if you did but know my situation. I tremble to think what a noise old mistress will make—I am sure the whole story will come out. Tim has got—got—got— [*Sobbing.*

Char. What?—poor girl, I pity her distress. [*Aside.*

Nancy. But, perhaps, Ma'am, your gentleman has sometimes served you just the same—I beg pardon—

Char. My dear, you really—confuse me—so—what has he got?

Nancy. He has got—tipsey, Ma'am—and when he is tipsey he does not care what he does—I know old mistress will find out that he and I are fallen in love together—and here he comes, I vow.

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Char. How unlucky! But he wont stay in this room, will he?

Nancy. Indeed, Ma'am, I can't answer for him.

Char. To say the truth, my dear girl—I engaged to meet my lover, as you call him, in this very room, presently—pray, contrive that I may not be disappointed.

Nancy. I will, indeed, Ma'am, if I possibly can—but Tim sometimes is so boisterous, I'm obliged to let him do as he pleases—[*Exit* CHARLOTTE.] Bless me, when this love gets into one's head!—I shall be scolded for not putting this room to rights.

[*Lets down one of the window curtains; as she begins to let down the other—*

Enter TIM TARTLETT, *tipsey.*

Tim. Oh, Nancy! my dear—sweet—pretty little Nancy! tol de rol.

[*Singing and dancing.*

Nancy. Oh, Tim, how can you be so merry in such a situation?

Tim. Vy every body is merry; and all is merry round me—The very tables and chairs dance—and you know the old saying, ven one is at Rome, one must do as Rome does.

Nancy. Pray, sit down.

Tim. I will, since you ax me so civilly—[*Sits down in a chair.*] Oh, Nancy! how I do love you.

Nancy. Consider, Tim—

Tim. I can't consider—I can do nothing but be in love—and one can do that without considering at all.

Nancy. I wish you would go to bed, my dear Tim—Do, take my advice.

Tim. I will, Nancy, my dear—I will take your advice.

Nancy. Come, then.

Tim. I am going—I am going.

Nancy. But you don't stir—Hark! I hear some body on the stairs—make haste.

Tim. I will—I tell you I am going.

Nancy. Lord! if the old woman should catch me here—I am so frightened—here somebody comes, I vow—What shall I do?—I must e'en leave him to himself. [*Exit.*

Tim. Don't be in a hurry, my love—you see I am going—going—going—— [*Falls asleep.*

Enter MONFORD.

Mon. I can't conceive where Charlotte can be—she ought to have been punctual at this time, when the crisis of our fate approaches—when—[TIM *snores.*] Hey dey! what have we here? my friend Timothy stopped short on his journey to bed, and fallen asleep by the way—Hush! I hear a noise on the stairs—let me listen. [*Retires.*

Enter YOUNG WHIMSEY, *on the other side.*

Y. Whim. Egad, I have had a hard chase of it—the old gentleman could not have been warmer in the pursuit, had he been hunting a petticoat—What the deuce is this? Old mother Pattypan's husband elect!—My father's voice again!—I should like to see the end of the joke, but where can I hide myself? I'faith this window curtain would keep me out of sight, and at the same time give me an opportunity of hearing what passes; and, lest Mr. Timothy should catch cold, I'll lend him my spoils to cover him, as I have no further use for them. [*Lays the gown over* TIM TARTLETT, *and puts the hat on his head.*] But the sound seems to retire, I'll follow it. [*Exit.*

MONFORD *comes forward.*

Mon. There are voices on the stairs, sure enough—I must not be seen here—and yet, if I quit the spot, I shall miss the opportunity of seeing Charlotte—but hold, a bustle again!—if a convenient closet could be found now—not one in the room, by all that's unlucky!—however, here is a curtain will do just as well—

[*Seems to listen at the corner of the scenes, and* YOUNG WHIMSEY *enters on the opposite side.*

Y. Whim. [*Aside.*] And now, having set all my puppets in motion, I retire behind the curtain, like a cunning statesman, from the storm I have raised.

[Y. WHIMSEY *and* MONFORD *steal softly from opposite sides of the stage, towards the curtain; and do not perceive each other till they are both on the point of concealing themselves behind it.*

Y. Whim. [*Aside.*] Zounds! who is this?

Mon. Really, Sir, this is an extraordinary—a most unexpected visit. I expect a person here presently, from whom I must be concealed.

Y. Whim. So do I.

Mon. And I have chosen this place for my retreat.

Y. Whim. There we agree, my dear Sir.

Mon. Zounds! this impertinence——

Y. Whim. Piano, my dear Sir, piano!——If you must swear, let it be in a whisper—consider, you will discover yourself.——

Mon. [*Aside.*] Egad, that's very true.

Whim. [*Without.*] I'll warrant you I'll ferret the dog out at last.

Y. Whim. There, Sir—you have no time to lose—we must pursue the old English policy—forget our private disputes, when the common enemy is at the door—and so, Sir, in we go. [*They go behind the curtain.*

Enter OLD WHIMSEY.

Whim. Where can this thief be hid? I am sure I have searched the house from the cellar to the garret, as narrowly as if I had been bred an exciseman——[*Seeing* TIM.] Oh! here is the facetious gentleman——asleep too! ha, ha!——Come, my lad you may as well open your eyes——it don't signify your sitting there, and snoring like a damaged organ-pipe——Halloo!

Tim. [*Waking.*] Nancy, my dear Nancy—I am going.

Whim. Indeed you are not going—What are you, sirrah?

Tim. A little tipsey, your honour.

Whim. How did you come by this hat and morning gown?

Tim. I came by them! You should rather ask how they came by me?

Whim. What made you sit down here?

Tim. Because I could not stand.

Whim. Quite intoxicated—a thorough-bred rogue, I'll warrant him.——How have you managed so long to escape hanging, sirrah.

Tim. Your honour seems to have lived many years longer than me in the world, without any accident; and why should not I have as good luck as my neighbours?

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Whim. Ha, ha!—He has a budget of jokes too—all second-hand, I suppose—stick to that, my boy—you'll find it much safer to steal jokes than gold-laced hats.

Tim. Well, your honour, I suppose you have no commands for me. I'll e'en finish my nap.

Whim. By all means, my lad—and when you are sober, I would have you exchange your wit for a little honesty, if you can find any at market——good bye t'ye. [*Exit* TIM.

Y. Whim. [*Peeping from behind the curtain.*] One of them is gone.

Whim. [*Aside.*] Eh! what's that?

Mon. [*Peeping from the other side of the curtain.*] Which of them is it?

Whim. [*Aside.*] Another voice!—There is more mischief going forward in this house.—I'll listen.—[*Lays himself back in the chair, puts on the hat, and covers himself with the gown.*

Y. Whim. The old gentleman is off—I don't hear his tongue.

Whim. [*Aside.*] It is my plague—it is Jack, as I live.

Y. Whim. Yes, yes, here lies Tim, taking a second nap: I perceive you are surprised at his appearance——you must know, I was his dresser.

Mon. You!

Y. Whim. In imitation of dame Fortune, I have deprived one man of what he really wanted, to lavish it on another, who had no use for it.

Mon. Well, Sir; as the circumstance under which we met prove that each of us have some reasons for wishing to be concealed at present—

Y. Whim. I'll e'en take my leave; but before I go, upon my soul, I long to have one knock at that rascal, who lies sleeping there—You must know, he has had the impudence to be my rival, with a devilish pretty little black-eyed wench who twirls a mop in this house.

Whim. [*Aside.*] Zounds! I believe the dog has discovered me.

Y. Whim. Do let me fetch a horse-whip—I ask but for three cuts at him—only three cuts—Zounds! here comes Mrs. Pattypan—Then I'm off—and Tim may sleep on in whole bones. [*Exit.*

Enter MRS PATTYPAN.

Mon. [*To* MRS. P.] Ah! Mrs. Pattypan—I suppose you are in search of your apprentice—there he sits, in a kind of double disguise, both of dress and liquor.

Mrs. Pat. Yes, yes, Sir, I have heard of it all; and shall give him a lecture on the subject. [*Exit* MON.

Whim. [*Aside.*] The devil? it will be a fine joke against me, to be discovered in this situation—I'll e'en feign to be asleep.

Mrs. Pat. Oh, Tim Tartlett! I did mean to scold you—but your presence softens all my resentment.—Come, you must not be too bashful—you have to be sure taken a liberty, by your conduct this evening—but when a woman loves a man—she can pardon little liberties in him. [*Taking his hand.*

Enter CHARLOTTE *and* MONFORD, *with his arm round her waist, as if talking to her*—MRS. PATTYPAN *starts, and* OLD WHIMSEY *discovers himself.*

Mrs. Pat. Upon my word, Ma'am, this intrusion.

Whim. Is a very agreeable intrusion, Mrs. Pattypan, I really began to be afraid of you.

Mrs. Pat. Afraid of me—but I went be out of temper.

Char. I declare, I thought it was Mr. Timothy.

Mrs. Pat. Yes, Ma'am, I thought it was Mr. Timothy too. The old gentleman could never suppose I meant to make love to him—ha, ha, ha!

Whim. Faith, I don't know, Mrs. Pattypan—the love of some ladies is a kind of universal philanthropy—it extends to all mankind.—[*Exit* MRS. P.] And pray, Sir, did you think it was Mr. Timothy too?—In short, Monford, we have all passed a mighty agreeable evening, and it is now time to go to bed. One word at parting—if you marry Mrs. Pattypan—you had better continue to keep a sharp look out after Mr. Timothy. So good night t'ye. [*Exeunt* WHIM. *and* CHAR., *and* MON. *on the opposite side.*

Scene changes and discovers the doors of four rooms.

Enter YOUNG WHIMSEY *and* SIMON.

Y. Whim. Let me see—you say the gentleman who took shelter with me behind the window-curtain, is Mr. Monford, my sister Charlotte's lover.

Simon. Yes, Sir, and he is going to run away with her this evening. I know where they ordered the chaise.

Y. Whim. Then run back instantly to the inn, and countermand Mr. Monford's chaise in his name—I'll take the consequences—when the other comes, tell the post-boy to let me know—I'll step into the room which I find was intended for my father—the old gentleman will hardly go into it, as he does not mean to sleep there—be quick—don't lose a moment.

[*Exit* SIMON. *Exit* Y. WHIM. *into the first room.*

Enter MONFORD *and* CHARLOTTE, *meeting.*

Char. Oh! Monford—my father has ordered me to meet him in his room directly——the moment your chaise is ready, come to me in my chamber—Remember that the farthest door is mine, and don't venture to speak above a whisper. [*Points to the door.*

Mon. My charmer—my Charlotte!

Char. Hush! this is not a time for fine speeches—I'm sure I hear my father's footsteps——I must be gone. [*Exeunt different ways.*

Enter OLD WHIMSEY.

Whim. Ha, ha, ha! Well done, old Whimsey—who will pretend to deny that I am an excellent politician!—to set off at a moment's notice—without giving Monford the most distant inkling of my intentions!—Egad, I shall jockey them all; and leave Jack to pay for the lodgings as well as he can—and now I'll e'en retire to my own room, and wait for Charlotte. [*Goes into the room where his son is concealed—shuts the door.*

Enter MRS. PATTYPAN.

Mrs. Pat. My young Madam's door open!—That's the signal I suppose for Mr. Timothy to wait on her—but she is mistaken—at these

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years I think I know the value of a lover too well to lose him so easily—but I hear somebody coming, and I must not be seen here—I'll e'en step into my new lodger's room for a minute, till they are gone.

[*Exit into the second room.*

Enter MONFORD.

Mon. That must be Charlotte by her tiptoe tread, and the rustling of her gown—but then why retire into my room instead of her own—I'll follow her, however—the devil take the people, will they never be in bed in this house!

[*Exit into the room where* MRS. P. *is gone.*

Enter TIM TARTLETT.

Tim. What shall I do!—I fear I am not quite sober yet; the plaguy old woman haunts me like a ghost—By jingo, I believe here she comes—Where shall I hide myself?—Here is a door open, I'faith; any port in a storm they say.

[*Exit into the third room, and shuts the door.*

Enter CHARLOTTE.

Char. I think the whole house is now at rest, except our faithful Nancy. My father is undoubtedly in his own chamber. My door is shut; so Monford is certainly gone into my room. Lud, I am so frightened—I wish I were safe out of the house.

[*Exit into the room where* TIM TARTLETT *is gone.*

Enter SIMON *and the* POSTBOY.

Simon. I'll bring you to my master, my lad, he'll give you his orders here.

Postboy. I suppose his honour pays handsomely—travels with a silver spur, eh!—I've all my paces—from eighteen pence to five shillings a stage. But where is the gentleman?

Simon. I'faith, that's more than I can tell—perhaps he is in his bed-chamber; but which it is of those rooms I'm sure I don't know. Stay here a moment, while I step down stairs and inquire. [*Exit.*

Postboy. And so I'm to kick my heels here while he is looking for his master, and my horses standing in the street all the while. I'll e'en try all the doors—I shall find the right one at last. [*Knocking at each of the doors in turn.*] Nobody answers—rot me, if I don't believe the people are all asleep—Halloo! gentlefolks! the chaise is ready.

[*Cracking his whip; all the doors fly open at once, and the several persons who had concealed themselves in the rooms come out.*

Whim. [*Taking* YOUNG WHIMSEY'S *hand.*]—Come along, Charlotte, come along. Hey-dey! how did you come here, you dog?—[*Looking round him.*]—and you?—and you?—

Char. Heavens! we are discovered! [*Turning round, and seeing* TIM.] Bless me! Mr. Timothy?

Mrs. Pat. Yes, Ma'am—you are discovered, indeed.

Mon. Mr. Whimsey!—I'm really all confusion.

Whim. Yes, faith—so the rest of the company seem to be. Here we are—fat and lean—old and young—paired as badly as the city train-bands at a Lord Mayor's show; but how the devil we came here in couples, seems as yet to remain a secret.

Mrs. Pat. I can explain it. Your shameless daughter seduced the affections of my intended husband; and has attempted to tear him from my arms.

Whim. Tear him from your arms! Egad, I should think that no easy matter, Mrs. Pattypan, if you were resolved to hold him fast.

Mon. I believe, Sir, my confession will explain every thing to you. I own I did intend to elope with Miss Charlotte this evening.

Whim. Very obliging of you, indeed——to make a confession, when your scheme is discovered—I have seen a highwayman do as much just before his execution.

Y. Whim. Then, Sir, as execution follows confession—let them be tied up directly—with Benefit of Clergy.

Tim. Suppose you and I follow the example, mistress! I believe my hour is come; and so the sooner I am out of my pain the better.

Mrs. Pat. Then, Tim is constant after all.

Tim. Ah! mistress, that I am. [*Sighing.*

Char. My dear father will not let me petition in vain.

Y. Whim. Nay—Nancy will join her entreaties; and then, Sir, you will a second time be between two fires.

Whim. Ah! rot your two fires!——the dog has me fast—I dare not refuse my consent; and so, Monford, take my daughter; but, curse me, if I intended you should have had her. As for you, Mrs. Pattypan, may you find marriage like one of your own tarts, with no more acid in it, than is just enough to render the sweets more poignant.—To crown your satisfaction, may your lodgings never remain empty! and may every friend, who takes a peep at the First Floor, honour it with their approbation. [*Exeunt*

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THE SIEGE OF DAMASCUS:

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY JOHN HUGHES, ESQ.

REMARKS.

THIS is a very noble production from the pen of Hughes. The characters are finely sustained and well contrasted—Barbarian fierceness and christian firmness are in fine opposition throughout. The business is now highly interesting, and was originally more so, before the ignorance of the Managers of the Play-house altered the original design—They had, it seems, certain fairy notions of chivalry and heroism in their heads, and could not tolerate a hero after he had changed his religion.

The excellent author altered his play, for the benefit of his relations; for he himself died on the night of its first representation, Feb. 17, 1719-20.

We now see this piece usually once in a season, chiefly in benefit time; it merits, however, to be constantly seen and read, for, as a composition, modern times have shown nothing near it.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

COVENT GARDEN.

CHRISTIANS.

EUMENES, Governor of Damascus,	*Mr. Hull.*
HERBIS, his Friend, one of the Chiefs of the City,	*Mr. Fearon.*
PHOCYAS, a noble and valiant Syrian, privately in love with Eudocia,	*Mr. Pope.*
ARTAMON, an Officer of the Guards,	*Mr. Davies.*
SERGIUS, an Express from the Emperor Heraclius,	*Mr. Cubitt.*
EUDOCIA, Daughter to Eumenes,	*Mrs. Pope.*

Officers, Soldiers, Citizens, and Attendants.

SARACENS.

CALED, General of the Saracen Army,	*Mr. Henderson.*
ABUDAH, next in command under Caled,	*Mr. Farren.*
DARAN, a wild Arabian, professing Mahometanism for the sake of the spoil,	*Mr. Thompson.*
SERJABIL, RAPHAN, &c. Captains,	*Mr. Helme.* *Mr. Ledger.*

Officers, Soldiers, and Attendants.

SCENE.—The City of Damascus, in Syria, and the Saracen Camp before it. And, in the last Act, a Valley adjacent.

PROLOGUE.

OFT has the muse here tried her magic arts,
To raise your fancies, and engage your hearts.
When o'er this little spot she shakes her wand,
Towns, cities, nations, rise at her command;
And armies march obedient to her call,
New states are form'd, and ancient empires fall.

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To vary your instruction and delight,
Past ages roll renew'd before your sight.
His awful form the Greek and Roman wears,
Waked from his slumber of two thousand years:
And man's whole race, restored to joy and pain,
Act all their little greatness o'er again.
No common woes to-night we set to view;
Important in the time, the story new.
Our opening scenes shall to your sight disclose
How spiritual dragooning first arose;
Claims drawn from Heaven by a barbarian lord,
And faith first propagated by the sword.
In rocky Araby this post began,
And swiftly o'er the neighbouring country ran:
By faction weaken'd, and disunion broke,
Degenerate provinces admit the yoke;
Nor stopp'd their progress, till resistless grown,
Th' enthusiasts made all Asia's world their own.
Britons, be warn'd; let e'en your pleasures here
Convey some moral to th' attentive ear.
Beware, lest blessings long possess'd displease;
Nor grow supine with liberty and ease.
Your country's glory be your constant aim,
Her safety all is yours——think yours her fame.
Unite at home—forego intestine jars;
Then scorn the rumours of religious wars:
Speak loud in thunder from your guarded shores,
And tell the Continent the sea is yours.
Speak on--and say, by war, you'll peace maintain,
'Till brightest years, reserved for George's reign
Advance, and shine in their appointed round:
Arts then shall flourish, plenteous joys abound,
And, cheer'd by him, each loyal muse shall sing,
The happiest island, and the greatest King.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—The City.

Enter EUMENES, *followed by a crowd of people.*

Eum. I'LL hear no more. Begone!
Or stop your clamorous mouths, that still are open
To bawl sedition, and consume our corn.
If you will follow me, send home your women,
And follow to the walls; there earn your safety,
As brave men should.——Pity your wives and children!
Yes, I do pity them, Heaven knows I do,
Even more than you; nor will I yield them up,
Though at your own request, a prey to ruffians—
Herbis, what news?

Enter HERBIS.

Her. News!—we're betray'd, deserted;
The works are but half mann'd; the Saracens
Perceive it, and pour on such crowds, they blunt
Our weapons, and have drain'd our stores of death.
What will you next?
Eum. I've sent a fresh recruit;
The valiant Phocyas leads them on——whose deeds
In early youth assert his noble race;
A more than common ardour seems to warm
His breast, as if he loved and courted danger.
Her. I fear 'twill be too late.
Eum. [*Aside.*] I fear it too:
And though I braved it to the trembling crowd,
I've caught th' infection, and I dread th' event.
Would I had treated——but 'tis now too late——
Come, Herbis. [*Exeunt.*

[*A noise is heard without, of Officers giving orders.*

1st Offi. Help there! more help! all to the eastern gate!
2d Offi. Look where they cling aloft, like cluster'd bees!
Here, archers, ply your bows.
1st Offi. Down with the ladders.
What, will you let them mount?
2d Offi. Aloft there! give the signal, you that wait
In St. Mark's tower.
1st Offi. Is the town asleep?
Ring out the alarum bell!

[*Bell rings, and the citizens run to and fro in confusion. A great shout.*

Enter HERBIS.

Her. So—the tide turns; Phocyas has driven it back.
The gate once more is ours.

Enter EUMENES, PHOCYAS, ARTAMON, *&c.*

Eum. Brave Phocyas, thanks! mine and the people's thanks.

[*People shout and cry, A* PHOCYAS! *&c.*

Yet, that we may not lose this breathing space,
Hang out the flag of truce. You, Artamon,
Haste with a trumpet to the Arabian chiefs,
And let them know, that, hostages exchanged,
I'd meet them now upon the eastern plain.

[*Exit* ARTAMON.

Pho. What means Eumenes?
Eum. Phocyas, I would try
By friendly treaty, if on terms of peace
They'll yet withdraw their powers.
Pho. On terms of peace!
What peace can you expect from bands of robbers?
What terms from slaves, but slavery?——You know
These wretches fight not at the call of honour;
For injured rights, or birth, or jealous greatness,
That sets the princes of the world in arms.
Base-born, and starved amidst their stony deserts,
Long have they view'd from far, with wishing eyes,
Our fruitful vales, our fig-trees, olives, vines,
Our cedars, palms, and all the verdant wealth
That crowns fair Lebanon's aspiring brows.
Here have the locusts pitch'd, nor will they leave
These tasted sweets, these blooming fields of plenty,

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For barren sands, and native poverty,
Till driven away by force.
Eum. What can we do?
Our people in despair, our soldiers harrass'd
With daily toil, and constant nightly watch:
Our hopes of succour from the emperor
Uncertain; Eutyches not yet return'd,
That went to ask them; one brave army beaten; [conquest.
Th' Arabians numerous, cruel, flush'd with
Her. Besides, you know what frenzy fires their minds
Of their new faith, and drives them on to danger.
Eum. True; they pretend the gates of Paradise,
Stands ever open to receive the souls
Of all that die in fighting for their cause.
Pho. Then would I send their souls to Paradise,
And give their bodies to our Syrian eagles.
Our ebb of fortune is not yet so low
To leave us desperate. Aids may soon arrive;
Mean time, in spite of their late bold attack,
The city still is ours; their force repell'd,
And therefore weaker; proud of this success,
Our soldiers too have gain'd redoubled courage,
And long to meet them on the open plain.
What hinders, then, but we repay this out-
And sally on their camp? [rage,
Eum. No—let us first
Believe th' occasion fair, by this advantage,
To purchase their retreat on easy terms:
That failing, we the better stand acquitted
To our own citizens. However, brave Phocyas,
Cherish this ardour in the soldiery,
And in our absence form what force thou canst,
Then if these hungry blood-hounds of the war
Should still be deaf to peace, at our return
Our widen'd gates shall pour a sudden flood
Of vengeance on them, and chastise their scorn. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—A Plain before the city. A Prospect of Tents at a distance.

Enter CALED, ABUDAH, *and* DARAN.

Dar. To treat, my chiefs!——What! are we merchants then,
That only come to traffic with those Syrians,
And poorly cheapen conquest on conditions?
No; we were sent to fight the caliph's battles,
'Till every iron neck bend to obedience.
Another storm makes this proud city ours;
What need we treat?——I am for war and plunder.
Caled. Why, so am I——and but to save the lives
Of mussulmans, not christians, I would not treat:
I hate these christian dogs; and 'tis our task,
As thou observ'st, to fight; our law enjoins it:
Heaven too is promised only to the valiant.
Oft has our prophet said, the happy plains
Above, lie stretch'd beneath the blaze of swords.
Abu. Yet, Daran's loth to trust that Heaven for pay; [more.
This earth, it seems, has gifts that please him
Caled. Check not his zeal, Abudah.
Abu. No: I praise it.
Yet, I could wish that zeal had better motives.
Has victory no fruits but blood and plunder?
That we were sent to fight, 'tis true; but wherefore?
For conquest, not destruction. That obtain'd,
The more we spare, the caliph has more subjects, [come.
And heaven is better served——But see, they

Enter EUMENES, HERBIS, *and* ARTAMON.

Caled. Well, christians, we are met—and war awhile,
At your request, has still'd his angry voice,
To hear what you will purpose.
Eum. We come to know,
After so many troops you're lost in vain,
If you'll draw off in peace, and save the rest.
Her. Or rather to know first—for yet we know not—
Why on your heads, you call our pointed arrows, [visit?
In our own just defence! What means this
And why see we so many thousand tents
Rise in the air, and whiten all our fields?
Caled. Is that a question now? you had our summons,
When first we march'd against you to surrender. [third
Two moons have wasted since, and now the
Is in its wane. 'Tis true, drawn off a while,
At Aiznadin we met and fought the powers
Sent by your emperor to raise our siege.
Vainly you thought us gone; we gain'd a conquest.
You see we are return'd; our hearts, our
Our swords the same. [cause,
Her. But why those swords were drawn,
And what's the cause, inform us.
Eum. Speak your wrongs,
If wrongs you have received, and by what means
They may be now repair'd.
Abu. Then, christians, hear!
And Heaven inspire you to embrace its truth!
Not wrongs t' avenge, but to establish right
Our swords were drawn: For such is Heaven's command
Immutable. By us great Mahomet,
And his successor, holy Abubeker,
Invite you to the faith.
Arta. [*Aside.*] So—then, it seems
There's no harm meant; we're only to be beaten
Into a new religion—If that's all,
I find I am already half a convert.
Eum. Now, in the name of Heaven, what faith is this,
That stalks gigantic forth, thus arm'd with terrors,
As if it meant to ruin, not to save?
That leads embattled legions to the field,
And marks its progress out with blood and slaughter?
Her. Bold, frontless men! that impudently dare
To blend religion with the worst of crimes!
And sacrilegiously usurp that name,
To cover fraud, and justify oppression!
Eum. Where are your priests? What doctors of your law
Have you e'er sent t' instruct us in its precepts?
To solve our doubts, and satisfy our reason,
And kindly lead us through the wilds of error

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To these new tracts of truth—This would be friendship,
And well might claim our thanks.
Caled. Friendship like this
With scorn had been received: your numerous vices, [strife,
Your clashing sects, your mutual rage and
Have driven religion, and her angel guards,
Like out-casts from among you. In her stead,
Usurping superstition bears the sway,
And reigns in mimic state, 'midst idol shows,
And pageantry of power. Who does not mark
Your lives? Rebellious to your own great prophet
Who mildly taught you—Therefore Mahomet
Has brought the sword to govern you by force,
Nor will accept obedience so precarious.
Eum. O solemn truths! though from an impious tongue! [*Aside.*
That we're unworthy of our holy faith,
To Heaven, with grief and conscious shame, we own.
But what are you that thus arraign our vices,
And consecrate your own? Vile hypocrite!
Are you not sons of rapine, foes to peace,
Base robbers, murderers——
Caled. Christians, no—
Eum. Then say,
Why have you ravaged all our peaceful borders?
Plunder'd our towns? and by what claim e'en now,
You tread this ground?
Her. What claim, but that of hunger?
The claim of ravenous wolves, that leave their dens [lage,
To prowl at midnight round some sleeping vil-
Or watch the shepherd's folded flock for prey?
Caled. Blasphemer, know, your fields and towns are ours;
Our prophet has bestow'd them on the faithful,
And Heaven itself has ratify'd the grant.
Eum. Oh! now indeed you boast a noble title! [slave!
What could your prophet grant? a hireling
Not e'en the mules and camels which he drove
Were his to give; and yet the bold impostor
Has canton'd out the kingdoms of the earth,
In frantic fits of visionary power,
To sooth his pride, and bribe his fellow madmen!
Caled. Was it for this you sent to ask a parley, [phet?
T' affront our faith, and to traduce our pro-
Well might we answer you with quick revenge
For such indignities—Yet, hear, once more,
Hear this, our last demand; and this accepted, [still,
We yet withdraw our war. Be Christians
But swear to live with us in firm alliance,
To yield us aid, and pay us annual tribute.
Eum. No, should we grant you aid, we must be rebels;
And tribute is the slavish badge of conquest.
Yet since, on just and honourable terms,
We ask but for our own—Ten silken vests,
Weighty with pearl and gems, we'll send your caliph; [dah.
Two, Caled, shall be thine; two thine, Abdu-
To each inferior captain we decree
A turban spun from our Damascus flax,
White as the snows of heaven; to every soldier
A scimitar. This, and of solid gold
Ten ingots, be the price to buy your absence.
Caled. This, and much more, even all your shining wealth,
Will soon be ours: look round your Syrian frontiers!
See in how many towns our hoisted flags
Are waving in the wind: Sachna, and Hawran,
Proud Tadmor, Aracah, and stubborn Bosra
Have bow'd beneath the yoke—behold our march
O'er half your land, like flame through fields of harvest.
And last view Aiznadin, that vale of blood!
There seek the souls of forty thousand Greeks
That, fresh from life, yet hover o'er their bodies.
Then think, and then resolve.
Her. Presumptuous men!
What though you yet can boast successful guilt,
Is conquest only yours? Or dare you hope
That you shall still pour on the swelling tide,
Like some proud river that has left its banks,
Nor ever know repulse?——
Eum. Have you forgot?
Not twice seven years are past since e'en your prophet,
Bold as he was, and boasting aid divine,
Was by the tribe of Corish forced to fly,
Poorly to fly, to save his wretched life,
From Mecca to Medina?
Abu. No—forgot!
We well remember how Medina screen'd
That holy head, preserved for better days,
And ripening years of glory!
Dar. Why, my chiefs,
Will you waste time in offering terms despised
To these idolaters?—Words are but air,
Blows would plead better.
Caled. Daran, thou say'st true.
Christians, here end our truce. Behold once more
The sword of Heaven is drawn! nor shall be sheath'd
But in the bowels of Damascus.
Eum. That,
Or speedy vengeance, and destruction due
To the proud menacers, as Heaven sees fit! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—A Garden

Enter EUDOCIA.

Eudo. All's hush'd around!—No more the shout of soldiers,
And clash of arms tumultuous fill the air.
Methinks this interval of terror seems
Like that, when the loud thunder just has roll'd
O'er our affrighted heads, and in the heavens
A momentary silence but prepares
A second and a louder clap to follow.

Enter PHOCYAS.

O no—my hero comes, with better omens,
And every gloomy thought is now no more.
Pho. Where is the treasure of my soul!—Eudocia,
Behold me here impatient, like the miser
That often steals in secret to his gold,
And counts with trembling joy, and jealous transport,
The shining heaps which he still fears to lose

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Eudo. Welcome, thou brave, thou best deserving lover!
How do I doubly share the common safety,
Since 'tis a debt to thee!—But tell me, Phocyas,
Dost thou bring peace?—Thou dost, and I am happy!
Pho. Not yet, Eudocia; 'tis decreed by Heaven
I must do more to merit thy esteem.
Peace, like a frighted dove, has wing'd her flight
To distant hills, beyond these hostile tents;
And through them we must thither force our way,
If we would call the lovely wanderer back
To her forsaken home.
Eudo. False, flattering hope!
Vanish'd so soon!—alas, my faithful fears
Return, and tell me, we must still be wretched!
Pho. Not so, my fair; if thou but gently smile,
Inspiring valour, and presaging conquest,
These barbarous foes to peace and love shall soon
Be chased, like fiends before the morning light,
And all be calm again.
Eudo. Is the truce ended?
Must war, alas! renew its bloody rage?
And Phocyas ever be exposed to danger?
Pho. Think for whose sake danger itself has charms.
Dismiss thy fears; the lucky hour comes on,
Full fraught with joys, when my big soul no more
Shall labour with this secret of my passion,
To hide it from thy jealous father's eyes.
Just now, by signals from the plain, I've learn'd
That the proud foe refuse us terms of honour;
A sally is resolved; the citizens
And soldiers, kindled into sudden fury,
Press all in crowds, and beg I'll lead them on.
Oh, my Eudocia! if I now succeed——
Did I say if——I must, I will; the cause
Is love, 'tis liberty, it is Eudocia!——
What then shall hinder, since our mutual faith
Is pledged, and thou consenting to my bliss,
But I may boldly ask thee of Eumenes,
Nor fear a rival's more prevailing claim?
Eudo. May blessings still attend thy arms!
——Methinks
I've caught the flame of thy heroic ardour!
And now I see thee crown'd with palm and olive;
The soldiers bring thee back with songs of triumph
And loud applauding shouts; thy rescued country
Resounds thy praise; our emperor, Heraclius,
Decree thee honours for a city saved;
And pillars rise of monumental brass,
Inscribed——To Phocyas the deliverer.
Pho. The honours and rewards which thou hast named,
Are bribes too little for my vast ambition.
My soul is full of thee!——Thou art my all
Of fame, of triumph, and of future fortune.
'Twas love of thee first sent me forth in arms,
My service is all thine, to thee devoted,
And thou alone canst make e'en conquest pleasing.
Eudo. O, do not wrong thy merit, nor restrain it
To narrow bounds; but know, I best am pleased
To share thee with thy country. Oh, my Phocyas!
With conscious blushes oft' I've heard thy vows,
And strove to hide, yet more revealed my heart;
But 'tis thy virtue justifies my choice,
And what at first was weakness, now is glory.
Pho. Forgive me, thou fair pattern of all goodness,
If in the transport of unbounded passion,
I still am lost to every thought but thee,
Yet sure to love thee thus is every virtue;
Nor need I more perfection.—Hark! I'm call'd.
[*Trumpet sounds.*
Eudo. Then go——and Heaven with all its angels guard thee!
Pho. Farewell!——for thee once more I draw the sword.
Now to the field to gain the glorious prize;
'Tis victory—the word—Eudocia's eyes!
[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—The Governor's Palace.

Enter EUMENES *and* HERBIS.

Her. Still I must say, 'twas wrong, 'twas wrong, Eumenes,
And mark th' event!
Eum. What could I less? You saw
'Twas vain t' oppose it, whilst his eager valour,
Impatient of restraint——
Her. His eager valour!
His rashness, his hot youth, his valour's fever!
Must we, whose business is to keep our walls,
And manage warily our little strength,
Must we at once lavish away our blood,
Because his pulse beats high, and his mad courage
Wants to be breath'd in some new enterprize?—
You should not have consented.
Eum. You forget.
'Twas not my voice alone; you saw the people
(And sure such sudden instincts are from Heaven!)
Rose all at once to follow him, as if
One soul inspired them, and that soul was Phocyas'.
Her. I had indeed forgot; and ask your pardon.
I took you for Eumenes, and I thought
That in Damascus you had chief command.
Eum. What dost thou mean?
Her. Nay, who's forgetful now?
You say, the people—Yes, that very people,
That coward tribe that press'd you to surrender!
Well may they spurn at lost authority;
Whom they like better, better they'll obey.
Eum. O! I could curse the giddy changeful slaves,
But that the thought of this hour's great event
Possesses all my soul.—If we are beaten!——
Her. The poison works; 'tis well—I'll give him more. [*Aside.*
True, if we're beaten, who shall answer that?
Shall you, or I?——Are you the governor——
Or say we conquer, whose is then the praise?
Eum. I know thy friendly fears; that thou and I
Must stoop beneath a beardless rising nero;

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And in Heraclius' court it shall be said,
Damascus, nay perhaps the empire too,
Owed its deliverance to a boy.——Why be it,
So that he now return with victory;
'Tis honour greatly won, and let him wear it.
Yet I could wish I needed less his service.
Were Eutyches return'd——
Her. [*Aside.*] That, that's my torture.
I sent my son to th' emperor's court, in hopes
His merit at this time might raise his fortunes;
But Phocyas——curse upon his froward virtues!——
Is reaping all this field of fame alone,
Or leaves him scarce the gleanings of a harvest.
Eum. See, Artamon with hasty strides returning.
He comes alone!——O friend, thy fears were just.
What are we now, and what is lost Damascus?

Enter ARTAMON.

Arta. Joy to Eumenes!
Eum. Joy!——is't possible?
Dost thou bring news of victory?
Arta. The sun
Is set in blood, and from the western skies
Has seen three thousand slaughter'd Arab's fall.
Her. Is Phocyas safe?
Arta. He is, and crown'd with triumph.
Her. [*Aside.*] My fears indeed were just.
[*Shout, A* PHOCYAS! *A* PHOCYAS!
Eum. What noise is that?
Her. The people worshipping their new divinity,
Shortly they'll build him temples.
Eum. Tell us, soldier,
Since thou hast shared the glory of this action,
Tell us how it began.
Arta. At first the foe
Seem'd much surprised; but taking soon the alarm
Gather'd some hasty troops, and march'd to meet us.
The captain of these bands look'd wild and fierce,
His head unarm'd, as if in scorn of danger,
And naked to the waist; as he drew near
He raised his arm and shook a ponderous lance;
When all at once, as at a signal given,
We heard the tecbir, so these Arabs call
Their shouts of onset, when with loud appeal
They challenge Heaven, as if demanding conquest.
The battle join'd, and through the barbarous host
Fight, fight, and Paradise, was all the cry.
At last our leaders met; and gallant Phocyas——
But what are words to tell the mighty wonders
We saw him then perform?——Their chief unhorsed,
The Saracens soon broke their ranks and fled;
And had not a thick evening fog arose
(Which sure the devil raised up to save his friends)
The slaughter had been double——But, behold!
The hero comes.

Enter PHOCYAS, EUMENES *meeting him.*

Eum. Joy to brave Phocyas!
Eumenes gives him back the joy he sent.
The welcome news has reach'd this place before thee.
How shall thy country pay the debt she owes thee?
Pho. By taking this as earnest of a debt
Which I owe her, and fain would better pay.
Her. In spite of envy I must praise him too.
[*Aside.*
Phocyas, thou hast done bravely, and 'tis fit
Successful virtue take a time to rest.
Fortune is fickle, and may change; besides,
What shall we gain, if from a mighty ocean
By sluices we draw off some little streams?
If thousands fall, ten thousands more remain.
Nor ought we hazard worth so great as thine
Against such odds. Suffice what's done already:
And let us now, in hopes of better days,
Keep wary watch, and wait th' expected succours.
Pho. What!——to be coop'd whole months within our walls?
To rust at home, and sicken with inaction?
The courage of our men will droop and die,
If not kept up by daily exercise.
Again the beaten foe may force our gates;
And victory, if slighted thus, take wing,
And fly where she may find a better welcome.
Art. [*Aside.*] It must be so—he hates him on my soul!
This Herbis is a foul old envious knave.
Methinks Eumenes too might better thank him.
Eum. [*To* HERBIS *aside.*] Urge him no more;——
I'll think of thy late warning;
And thou shalt see I'll yet be governor.

A Letter brought in.

Pho. [*Looking on it.*] 'Tis to Eumenes.
Eum. Ha! from Eutyches.
[*Reads.*] "The emperor, awaken'd with the danger
That threatens his dominions, and the loss
At Aiznadin, has drain'd his garrisons
To raise a second army. In few hours
We will begin our march. Sergius brings this,
And will inform you further."——
Her. [*Aside.*] Heaven, I thank thee!
'Twas even beyond my hopes.
Eum. But where is Sergius?
Mess. The letter, fasten'd to an arrow's head,
Was shot into the town.
Eum. I fear he's taken——
O Phocyas, Herbis, Artamon! my friends!
You all are sharers in this news: the storm
Is blowing o'er, that hung like night upon us,
And threaten'd deadly ruin——Haste, proclaim
The welcome tidings loud through all the city.
Let sparkling lights be seen from every turret
To tell our joy, and spread their blaze to heaven.
Prepare for feasts; danger shall wait at distance,
And fear be now no more. The jolly soldier
And citizen shall meet o'er their full bowls,
Forget their toils, and laugh their cares away,
And mirth and triumphs close this happy day.
[*Exeunt* HER. *and* ARTA.
Pho. And may succeeding days prove yet more happy!
Well dost thou bid the voice of triumph sound
Through all our streets; our city calls thee father;
And say, Eumenes, dost thou not perceive

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A father's transport rise within thy breast,
Whilst in this act thou art the hand of Heaven
To deal forth blessings, and distribute joy?
Eum. The blessings Heaven bestows are freely sent,
And should be freely shared.
Pho. True——Generous minds
Redoubled feel the pleasure they impart.
For me, if I've deserved by arms or counsels,
By hazards gladly sought, and greatly prosper'd,
Whate'er I've added to the public stock,
With joy I see it in Eumenes' hands,
And wish but to receive my share from thee.
Eum. I cannot, if I would, withhold thy share. [own;
What thou hast done is thine, the fame thy
And virtuous actions will reward themselves.
Pho. Fame——What is that, if courted for herself?
Less than a vision; a mere sound, an echo,
That calls with mimic voice through woods and labyrinths
Her cheated lovers; lost and heard by fits,
But never fix'd: a seeming nymph, yet nothing.
Virtue indeed is a substantial good,
A real beauty; yet with weary steps
Through rugged ways, by long, laborious service,
When we have traced, and woo'd, and won the dame, [brings?
May we not then expect the dower she
Eum. Well——ask that dowry; say, can Damascus pay it?
Her riches shall be tax'd: name but the sum,
Her merchants with some costly gems shall grace thee;
Nor can Heraclius fail to grant thee honours,
Proportion'd to thy birth and thy desert.
Pho. And can Eumenes think I would be bribed
By trash, by sordid gold, to venal virtue?
What! serve my country for the same mean hire,
That can corrupt each villain to betray her?
Why is she saved from these Arabian spoilers,
If to be stripp'd by her own sons?——Forgive me
If the thought glows on my cheeks! I know
'Twas mention'd, but to prove how much I scorn it.
As for the emperor, if he owns my conduct,
I shall indulge an honest pride in honours
Which I have strove to merit. Yes, Eumenes,
I have ambition——yet the vast reward
That swells my hopes, and equals all my wishes
Is in thy gift alone——it is Eudocia.
Eum. Eudocia! Phocyas, I am yet thy friend, [doubt.
And therefore will not hold thee long in
Thou must not think of her.
Pho. Not think of her?
Impossible!——She's ever present to me,
My life, my soul! She animates my being,
And kindles up my thoughts to worthy actions.
And why, Eumenes, why not think of her?
Is not my rank——
Eum. Forbear——What need a herald
To tell me who thou art?—Yet once again—
Since thou wilt force me to a repetition,
I say, thou must not think of her.
Pho. Yet hear me;
Why wilt thou judge, ere I can plead my cause?
Eum. Why wilt thou plead in vain; hast thou not heard
My choice has destined her to Eutyches?
Pho. And has she then consented to that choice?
Eum. Has she consented!——What is her consent?
Is she not mine?
Pho. She is——and in that title
Even kings with envy may behold thy wealth,
And think their kingdoms poor!——and yet, Eumenes,
Shall she, by being thine, be barr'd a privilege
Which even the meanest of her sex may claim?
Thou wilt not force her?
Eum. Who has told thee so?
I'd force her to be happy.
Pho. That thou canst not.
What happiness subsists in loss of freedom?
The guest constrain'd, but murmurs at the banquet; [dance.
Nor thanks his host, but starves amidst abun-
Eum. 'Tis well, young man—Why then, I'll learn from thee
To be a very tame obedient father.
Thou hast already taught my child her duty.
I find the source of all her disobedience,
Her hate of me, her scorn of Eutyches;
Ha! Is't not so?——Come, tell me? *I'll forgive thee:*
Hast thou not found her a most ready scholar?
I know thou hast——Why what a dull old wretch
Was I, to think I ever had a daughter!
Pho. I'm sorry that Eumenes thinks——
Eum. No——sorry!
Sorry for what? Then thou dost own thou wrong'd me!
That's somewhat yet——Curse on my stupid blindness
For had I eyes I might have seen it sooner.
Was this the spring of thy romantic bravery,
Thy boastful merit, thy officious service?
Pho. It was——with pride I own it——'twas Eudocia.
I have served thee in serving her, thou know'st it,
And thought I might have found a better treatment.
Why wilt thou force me thus to be a braggart,
And tell thee that which thou shouldst tell thyself?
It grates my soul—I am not wont to talk thus.
But I recall my words—I have done nothing,
And would disclaim all merit but my love.
Eum. O no——say on, that thou hast saved Damascus;
Is it not so?——Look o'er her battlements
See if the flying foe have left their camp!
Why are our gates yet closed, if thou hast freed us?
'Tis true, thou'st fought a skirmish——What of that?
Had Eutyches been present——
Pho. Eutyches! [trifler?
Why wilt thou urge my temper with that
O let him come! that in yon spacious plain
We may together charge the thickest ranks,
Rush on to battle, wounds, and glorious death, [Eudocia.
And prove who 'twas that best deserved
Eum. That will be seen ere long—But since I find
Thou arrogantly wouldst usurp dominion,

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Believest thyself the guardian genius here,
And that our fortunes hang upon thy sword;
Be that first tried—for know, that from this moment
Thou here hast no command—Farewell!——So stay,
Or hence and join the foe—thou hast thy choice. [*Exit.*

Pho. Spurn'd and degraded!—Proud, ungrateful man!
Am I a bubble then, blown up by thee,
And toss'd into the air to make thee sport?
Hence to the foe! 'Tis well——Eudocia,
Oh, I will see thee, thou wrong'd excellence!
But how to speak thy wrongs, or my disgrace—
Impossible!—Oh, rather let me walk
Like a dumb ghost, and burst my heart in silence. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*The Garden.*

Enter EUDOCIA.

Eudo. Why must we meet by stealth, like guilty lovers!
But 'twill not long be so——What joy 'twill be
To own my hero in his ripen'd honours,
And hear applauding crowds pronounce me bless'd!
Sure he'll be here—See the fair rising moon,
Ere day's remaining twilight scarce is spent,
Hangs up her ready lamp, and with mild lustre
Drives back the hovering shade! Come, Phocyas, come;
This gentle season is a friend to love;
And now methinks I could with equal passion,
Meet thine, and tell thee all my secret soul.

Enter PHOCYAS.

He hears me—O my Phocyas?—What——not answer! [speak.
Art thou not he; or art some shadow?——
Pho. I am indeed a shadow—I am nothing—
Eudo. What dost thou mean?——for now I know thee, Phocyas.
Pho. And never can be thine!
It will have vent—O barbarous, cursed—but hold—
I had forgot——it was Eudocia's father!——
O, could I too forget how he has used me!
Eudo. I fear to ask thee——
Pho. Dost thou fear?——Alas,
Then thou wilt pity me——O generous maid!
Thou hast charm'd down the rage that swell'd my heart,
And choak'd my voice——now I can speak to thee. [suffer'd;
And yet 'tis worse than death what I have
It is the death of honour?—Yet that's little;
'Tis more, Eudocia, 'tis the loss of thee!
Eudo. Has thou not conquer'd?——What are all these shouts,
This voice of general joy, heard far around?
What are these fires, that cast their glimmering light
Against the sky? are not all these thy triumphs?
Pho. O name not triumph! talk no more of conquest!
It is indeed a night of general joy,
But not to me! Eudocia. I am come
To take a last farewell of thee for ever!
Eudo. A last farewell!
Pho. Yes;——How wilt thou hereafter
Look on a wretch despised, reviled, cashier'd?
Stripp'd of command, like a base beaten coward!
Thy cruel father——I have told too much;
I should not but for this have felt the wounds
I got in fight for him——now, now they bleed.
But I have done——and now thou hast my story,
Is there a creature so accursed as Phocyas?
Eudo. And can it be? is this then thy reward?
O Phocyas! never wouldst thou tell me yet
That thou had'st wounds; now I must feel them too.
For is it not for me thou hast borne this?
What else could be thy crime?—Wert thou a traitor,
Had'st thou betray'd us, sold us to the foe—
Pho. Would I be yet a traitor, I have leave
Nay, I am dared to it with mocking scorn.
My crime indeed was asking thee; that only
Has cancell'd all, if I had any merit;
The city now is safe, my service slighted,
And I discarded, like a useless thing,
Nay, bid begone——and, if I like that better,
Seek out new friends, and join yon barbarous host.
Eudo. Hold—let me think a while—— [*Walks aside.*
Though my heart bleed, [tears!—
I would not have him see these dropping
And wilt thou go, then, Phocyas?
Pho. To my grave;
Where can I bury else this foul disgrace:
Alas! that question shows how poor I am,
How very much a wretch; for if I go,
It is from thee, thou only joy of life:
And death will then be welcome.
Eudo. Art thou sure
Thou hast been used thus? Art thou quite undone?
Pho. Yes, very sure——What dost thou mean?
Eudo. That then, it is a time for me——O, Heaven! that I
Alone am grateful to this wondrous man
To own thee, Phocyas, thus—[*Giving her hand.*] nay, glory in thee,
And show, without a blush, how much I love.
We must not part——
Pho. Then I am rich again! [*Embracing her.*
O, no—we will not part! Confirm it, Heaven!
Now thou shalt see how I will bend my spirit,
With what soft patience I will bear my wrongs,
'Till I have wearied out thy father's scorn.
Yet I have worse to tell thee—Eutyches——
Eudo. Why wilt thou name him?
Pho. Now, even now, he's coming!
Just hovering o'er thee, like a bird of prey.
Thy father vows—for I must tell thee all——
'Twas this that wrung my heart, and rack'd my brain,
Even to distraction!—vows thee to his bed;
Nay, threaten'd force, if thou refuse obedience.
Eudo. Force! threaten'd force!—my father——where is nature?
Is that, too, banish'd from his heart!——O then
I have no father——How have I deserved this!— [*Weeping.*
No home, but am henceforth an out-cast orphan;
For I will wander to earth's utmost bounds,
Ere give my hand to that detested contract.

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O save me, Phocyas! thou hast saved my father——
Must I yet call him so, this cruel father——
How wilt thou now deliver poor Eudocia?
Pho. See, how we're join'd in exile! How our fate
Conspires to warn us both to leave this city!
Thou know'st the emperor is now at Antioch;
I have an uncle there, who, when the Persian,
As now the Saracen, had nigh o'er-run
The ravaged empire, did him signal service,
And nobly was rewarded. There, Eudocia,
Thou might'st be safe, and I may meet with justice.
Eudo. There—any where, so we may fly this place.
See, Phocyas, what thy wrongs and mine have wrought
In a weak woman's frame! for I have courage
To share thy exile now through every danger.
Danger is only here, and dwells with guilt,
With base ingratitude, and hard oppression.
Pho. Then let us lose no time, but hence this night.
The gates I can command, and will provide
The means of our escape. Some five hours hence
('Twill then be turn'd of midnight) we may meet
In the piazza of Honoria's convent.
Eudo. I know it well; the place is most secure,
And near adjoining to this garden wall.
There thou shalt find me—O protect us, Heaven!
Pho. Fear not;—thy innocence will be our guard.
I've thought already how to shape our course;
Some pitying angel will attend thy steps,
Guide thee unseen, and charm the sleeping foe,
'Till thou art safe! O, I have suffer'd nothing:
Thus gaining thee, and this great generous proof,
How bless'd I am in my Eudocia's love!
My only joy, farewell!
Eudo. Farewell, my Phocyas!
I have no friend but thee—yet thee I'll call
Friend, father, lover, guardian!—Thou art all! [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—Caled's *Tent.*

Enter Caled *and Attendants.* Sergius *brought in bound with cords.*

Caled. Mercy! What's that?—Look, yonder on the field
Of our late fight!—Go, talk of mercy there.
Will the dead hear thy voice?
Ser. O spare me yet.
Caled. Thou wretch!—Spare thee; to what? To live in torture?
Are not thy limbs all bruised, thy bones disjointed, [drag
To force thee to confess? And wouldst thou
Like a crush'd serpent, a vile mangled being?
My eyes abhor a coward—Hence, and die!
Ser. Oh, I have told thee all—When first pursued
I fix'd my letters on an arrow's point,
And shot them o'er the walls——
Caled. Hast thou told all?
Well, then thou shalt have mercy to requite thee:
Behold, I'll send thee forward on thy errand.
Strike off his head; then cast it o'er the gates
There let thy tongue tell o'er its tale again.
Ser. O, bloody Saracens! [*Exit, dragged away by the Guards.*

Enter Abudah.

Caled. Abudah, welcome!
Abu. O Caled, what an evening was the last!
Caled. Name it no more; remembrance sickens with it,
And therefore sleep is banish'd from this night;
Nor shall to-morrow's sun open his eye
Upon our shame, ere doubly we've redeem'd [it.
Have all the captains notice?
Abu. I have walk'd
The rounds to-night, ere the last hour of prayer
From tent to tent, and warn'd them to be ready.
What must be done?
Caled. Thou know'st th' important news,
Which we have intercepted by this slave,
Of a new army's march. The time now calls,
While these soft Syrians are disolved in riot,
Fool'd with success, and not suspecting danger,
Neglectful of their watch, or else fast bound
In chains of sleep, companion of debauches,
To form a new attack ere break of day,
So, like the wounded leopard, shall we rush
From out our covers on these drowsy hunters
And seize them, unprepared to 'scape our vengeance.
Abu. Great captain of the armies of the faithful!
I know thy mighty and unconquer'd spirit;
Yet hear me, Caled, hear and weigh my doubts,
Our angry prophet frowns upon our vices,
And visits us in blood. Why else did terror,
Unknown before, seize all our stoutest bands?
The angel of destruction was abroad;
The archers of the tribe of Thoal fled,
So long renown'd, or spent their shafts in vain;
The feather'd flights err'd through the boundless air, [bow!
Or the death turn'd on him that drew the
What can this bode?—Let me speak plainer yet;
Is it to propagate th' unspotted law
We fight? 'Tis well; it is a noble cause;
But much I fear infection is among us;
A boundless lust of rapine guides our troops.
We learn the Christian vices we chastise,
And tempted with the pleasures of the soil,
More than with distant hopes of Paradise,
I fear may soon—but, oh, avert it Heaven!
Fall even a prey to our own spoils and conquests.
Caled. No——thou mistak'st; thy pious zeal deceives thee.
Our prophet only chides our sluggard valour.
Thou saw'st how in the vale of Honan once
The troops, as now defeated, fled confused
Even to the gates of Mecca's holy city;
'Till Mahomet himself there stopp'd their entrance,
A javelin in his hand, and turn'd them back

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Upon the foe; they fought again and conquered.
Behold how we may best appease his wrath!
His own example points us out the way.
Abu. Well——be it then resolved. Th' indulgent hour
Of better fortune is, I hope, at hand.
And yet, since Phocyas has appear'd its champion,
How has this city raised its drooping head!
As if some charm prevail'd where'er he fought;
Our strength seems wither'd, and our feeble weapons [sent—
Forget their wonted triumph——were he ab-
Caled. I would have sought him out in the last action
To single fight, and put that charm to proof;
Had not a foul and sudden mist arose
Ere I arrived, to have restored the combat.
But let it be—'tis past. We yet may meet,
And 'twill be known whose arm is then the stronger.

Enter DARAN.

Daran. Health to the race of Ismael! and days [captive
More prosperous than the last——a christian
Is fallen within my watch, and waits his doom.
Caled. Bring forth the slave!—O thou keen vulture, death!
Do we then feed thee only thus by morsels!
Whole armies never can suffice thy anger.

DARAN *goes out, and re-enters with* PHOCYAS.

Whence, and what art thou!—Of Damascus!
—Daran, [thing,
Where didst thou find this dumb and sullen
That seems to lower defiance on our anger!
Daran. Marching in circuit, with the horse thou gav'st me,
T' observe the city gates, I saw from far
Two persons issue forth; the one advanced,
And ere he could retreat my horsemen seized him;
The other was a woman, and had fled,
Upon a signal given at our approach,
And got within the gates. Wouldst thou know more,
Himself, if he will speak, can best inform thee.
Caled. Have I not seen thy face?
Abu. [*To* CALED.] He hears thee not;
His eyes are fix'd on earth; some deep distress
Is at his heart. This is no common captive.
Caled. A lion in the toils! We soon shall tame him.
Still art thou dumb?—Nay, 'tis in vain to cast
Thy gloomy looks so oft around this place,
Or frown upon thy bonds——thou canst not 'scape.
Pho. Then be it so——the worst is pass'd already,
And life is now not worth a moment's pause.'
Do you not know me yet—think of the man
You have most cause to curse, and I am he.
Caled. Ha! Phocyas?
Abu. Phocyas!—Mahomet, we thank thee!
Now dost thou smile again.
Daran. [*Aside.*] O devil, devil!
And I not know him!—'twas but yesterday
He kill'd my horse, and drove me from the field.
Now I'm revenged! No; hold you there, not yet,
Not while he lives.
Caled. [*Aside.*] This is indeed a prize!
Is it because thou know'st what slaughter'd heaps
There yet unburied lie without the camp,
Whose ghosts have all this night, passing the Zorat,
Call'd from the bridge of death to thee to follow, [cry?
That now thou'rt here to answer to their
Howe'er it be, thou know'st thy welcome——.
Pho. Yes,
Thou proud, blood-thirsty Arab!——Well I know
What to expect from thee: I know ye all.
How should the author of distress and ruin
Be moved to pity? That's a human passion.
No—in your hungry eyes, that look revenge,
I read my doom. Where are your racks, your tortures?
I'm ready——lead me to them; I can bear
The worst of ills from you. You're not my friends,
My countrymen.—Yet were you men, I could
Unfold a story—But no more—Eumenes,
Thou hast thy wish, and I am now—a worm!
Abu. [*To* CALED *aside.*] Leader of armies, hear him! for my mind
Presages good accruing to our cause
By this event.
Caled. I tell thee then, thou wrong'st us,
To think our hearts thus steel'd, or our ears deaf
To all that thou may'st utter. Speak, disclose
The secret woes that throbs within thy breast.
Now, by the silent hours of night, we'll hear thee,
And mute attention shall await thy words.
Pho. This is not then the palace in Damascus! [you.
If you will hear, then I indeed have wrong'd
How can this be?——When he for whom I've fought, [me!
Fought against you, has yet refused to hear
You seem surprised.—It was ingratitude
That drove me out an exile from those walls
Which I so late defended.
Abu. Can it be?
Are these thy christian friends?
Caled. 'Tis well—we thank them:
They help us to subdue themselves—But who
Was the companion of thy flight?—A woman,
So Daran said——
Pho. 'Tis there I am most wretched——
Oh, I am torn from all my soul held dear,
And my life's blood flows out upon the wound!
That woman——'twas for her——How shall I speak it?
Eudocia, Oh farewell!—I'll tell you, then,
As fast as these heart-rending sighs will let me;
I loved the daughter of the proud Eumenes,
And long in secret woo'd her; not unwelcome
To her my visits; but I fear'd her father,
Who oft had press'd her to detested nuptials,
And therefore durst not, 'till this night of joy,
Avow to him my courtship. Now I thought her
Mine, by a double claim, of mutual vows,
And service yielded at his greatest need:
When, as I moved my suit, with sour disdain,

He mock'd my service, and forbade my love;
Degraded me from the command I bore,
And with defiance bade me seek the foe.
How has his curse prevail'd!—The generous maid
Was won by my distress to leave the city;
And cruel fortune made me thus your prey.
Abu. [*Aside.*] My soul is moved—Thou wert a man, oh, prophet!
Forgive, if 'tis a crime, a human sorrow,
For injured worth, though in an enemy!
Pho. Now——since you have heard my story, set me free,
That I may save her yet, dearer then life,
From a tyrannic father's threaten'd force;
Gold, gems, and purple vests, shall pay my ransom;
Nor shall my peaceful sword henceforth be drawn
In fight, nor break its truce with you for ever.
Caled. No——there's one way, a better, and but one,
To save thyself, and make some reparation
For all the numbers thy bold hand has slain.
Pho. Oh, name it quickly and my soul will bless thee!
Caled. Embrace our faith, and share with us our fortunes.
Pho. Then I am lost again!
Caled. What; when we offer
Not freedom only, but to raise thee high
To greatness, conquest, glory, heavenly bliss!
Pho. To sink me down to infamy, perdition,
Here and hereafter! Make my name a curse
To present times, to every future age
A proverb and a scorn!—take back thy mercy,
And know I now disdain it.
Caled. As thou wilt,
The time's too precious to be wasted longer
In words with thee. Thou know'st thy doom ——farewell.
Abu. [*To* CAL. *aside.*] Hear me, Caled, grant him some short space;
Perhaps he will at length accept thy bounty.
Try him, at least——
Caled. Well——be it so, then. Daran,
Guard well thy charge—Thou hast an hour to live; [term;
If thou art wise, thou may'st prolong that
If not—why—Fare thee well, and think of death. [*Exeunt* CALED *and* ABU.
Pho. [DAR. *waiting at a distance.*] Farewell, and think of death! Was it not so?
Do murderers then preach morality?——
But how to think of what the living know not,
And the dead cannot, or else may not tell?
What art thou, O thou great mysterious terror!
The way to thee we know! disease, famine,
Sword, fire, and all thy ever-open gates
That day and night stand ready to receive us,
But what's beyond them?——Who will draw that veil?
Yet death's not there——No; 'tis a point of time,
The verge 'twixt mortal and immortal beings.
It mocks our thoughts! On this side all is life; [instant
And when we have reach'd it, in that very
'Tis past the thinking of! Oh! if it be
The pangs, the throes, the agonizing struggles
When soul and body part, sure I have felt it,
And there's no more to fear.
Daran. [*Aside.*] Suppose I now
Despatch him—Right—What need to stay for orders?
I wish I durst!—Yet what I dare I'll do,
Your jewels, christian—You'll not need these trifles— [*Searching him.*
Pho. I pray thee, slave, stand off—my soul's too busy
To lose a thought on thee.

Enter ABUDAH.

Abu. What's this!——forbear!
Who gave thee leave to use this violence?
[*Takes the jewels from him, and lays them on a table.*
Daran. [*Aside.*] Denied my booty?—Curses on his head!
Was not the founder of our law a robber?
Why 'twas for that I left my country's gods,
Menaph and Uzza. Better still be pagan,
Than starve with a new faith.
Abu. What dost thou mutter?
Daran, withdraw, and better learn thy duty.
[*Exit* DARAN.
Phocyas, perhaps, thou know'st me not——
Pho. I know
Thy name Abudah, and thy office here,
The second in command. What more thou [art
Indeed I cannot tell.
Abu. True, for thou yet
Know'st not I am thy friend.
Pho. Is't possible?——
Thou speak'st me fair.
Abu. What dost thou think of life?
Pho. I think not of it; death was in my thoughts.
On hard conditions life were but a load,
And I will lay it down.
Abu. Art thou resolved?
Pho. I am, unless thou bring'st me better [terms
Than those I have rejected.
Abu. Think again.
Caled, by me, once more renews that offer.
Pho. Thou say'st thou art my friend! Why dost thou try
To shake the settled temper of my breast?
My soul hath just discharged her cumbrous train
Of hopes and fears, prepared to take her voyage
To other seats, where she may rest in peace;
And now thou call'st me back, to beat again
The painful road of life—Tempt me no more
To be a wretch, for I despise the offer.
Abu. The general knows thee brave, and 'tis for that
He seeks alliance with thy noble virtues.
Pho. He knows me brave!——Why does he then thus treat me?
No! he believes I am so poor of soul,
That barely for the privilege to live,
I would be bought his slave. But go tell him,
The little space of life his scorn bequeathed me
Was lent in vain, and he may take the forfeit.
Abu. Why wilt thou wed thyself to misery,
When our faith courts thee to eternal blessings!
When truth itself is, like a seraph, come
To loose thy bands?—The light divine, whose beams
Pierced through the gloom of Hera's sacred cave,
And there illumined the great Mahomet,
Arabia's morning star, now shines on thee,
Arise salute with joy the guest from Heaven,
Follow her steps, and be no more a captive.
Pho. But whither must I follow?—answer that, [vine,
Is she a guest from Heaven? What marks di-

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What signs, what wonders vouch her boasted mission?
Abu. What wonders—turn thy eye to Mecca! mark
How far from Caaba first, that hallow'd temple, [course,
Her glory dawn'd!——then look how swift its
As when the sun beams shooting through a cloud
Drive o'er the meadow's face the flying shades!
Have not the nations bent before our swords,
Like ripen'd corn before the reaper's steel?
Why is all this? Why does success still wait
Upon our laws, if not to show that Heaven
First sent it forth, and owns it still by conquest.
Pho. Dost thou ask why is this!—O why, indeed?
Where is the man can read Heaven's secret counsels?—
Why did I conquer in another cause,
Yet now am here——
Abu. I'll tell thee—thy good angel
Has seized thy hand unseen, and snatch'd thee out [dawn,
From swift destruction; know, ere day shall
Damascus will in blood lament its fall!
We've heard what army is design'd to march
Too late to save her. Now, e'en now, our force
Is just preparing for a fresh assault.
Now too thou might'st revenge thy wrongs—so Caled [thee;
Charged me to say, and more—that he invites
Thou know'st the terms——to share with him the conquest.
Pho. Conquest!—Revenge—Hold, let me think—O horror!
Revenge!—O what revenge? Bleed on, my wounds,
For thus to be revenged, were it not worse
Than all that I can suffer?——But Eudocia—
Where will she then—Shield her, ye pitying powers,
And let me die in peace!
Abu. Hear me once more,
'Tis all I have to offer; mark me now!
Caled has sworn Eudocia shall be safe.
Pho. Ha! safe—but how! A wretched captive too?
Abu. He swears she shall be free, she shall be thine.
Pho. Then I am lost indeed——O cruel bounty! [py!
How can I be at once both cursed and hap-
Abu. The time draws near, and I must quickly leave thee;
But first reflect, that in this fatal night
Slaughter and rapine may be loosed abroad,
And while they roam with unextinguish'd rage,
Should she thou lov'st—well may'st thou start, —be made, [prey;
Perhaps unknown, some barbarous soldier's
Should she then fall a sacrifice to lust—
Or brutal fury.—
Pho. Oh——this pulls my heart strings! [*Falls.*
Earth open——save me, save me from that thought;
There's ruin in it, 'twill, it will undo me!
Abu. Nay, do not plunge thyself in black despair!
Look up, poor wretch, thou art not shipwreck'd yet,
Behold an anchor; am not I thy friend?
Yet hear me, and be bless'd.
Pho. [*Rising.*] Ha. Who, what art thou? [*Raving.*
My friend? that's well; but hold——are all friends honest?
What's to be done?—Hush, hark! what voice is that?
Abu. There is no voice; 'tis yet the dead of night, [us.
The guards, without, keep silent watch around
Pho. Again—it calls—'tis she—O lead me to her—
Abu. Thy passion mocks thee with imagined sounds.
Pho. Sure 'twas Eudocia's voice cried out —Forbear,
What shall I do?——Oh Heaven!
Abu. Heaven shows thee what.
Nay, now it is too late; see, Caled comes
With anger on his brow. Quickly withdraw
To the next tent, and there——
Pho. [*Rising.*] What do I see?
Damascus! conquest! ruin! rapes and murder!
Villains!—Is there no more—Oh save her, save her! [*Exeunt.*

Enter CALED *and* DARAN.

Daran. Behold, on thy approach, they shift their ground.
Caled. 'Tis as thou say'st, he trifles with my mercy.
Daran. Speak, shall I fetch his head?
Caled. No, stay you here,
I cannot spare thee yet. Raphan, go thou. [*To an Officer.*
But hold—I've thought again—he shall not die.
Go, tell him he shall live, 'till he has seen
Damascus sink in flames, 'till he behold
That slave, that woman-idol he adores,
Or given a prize to some brave Mussulman,
Or slain before his face; then if he sue
For death as for a boon——perhaps we'll grant it, [*Exit* RAPHAN.
Daran. The captains wait thy orders.
Caled. Are the troops
Ready to march?
Daran. They are.
[*The Captains pass by as they are named.*
Caled. Where's Abu-Taleb?
Alcorash?——O your valiant tribes, I thank them,
Fled from their standard! Will they now redeem it?
Omar and Serjabil?——'tis well, I see them,
You know your duty. You, Abdorraman,
Must charge with Raphan. Mourn, thou haughty city!
The bow is bent, nor canst thou 'scape thy doom.
Who turns his back henceforth, our prophet curse him!
Daran. But who commands the trusty bands of Mecca?
Thou know'st their leader fell in the last fight.
Caled. 'Tis true; thou, Daran, well deserv'st that charge;
I've mark'd what a keen hatred, like my own,
Dwells in thy breast against these Christian dogs.
Daran. Thou do'st me right.
Caled. And therefore I'll reward it.
Be that command now thine. And here—this sabre,
Bless'd in the field by Mahomet himself,

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At Chaibar's prosperous fight, shall aid thy arm.
Daran. Thanks, my good chief; with this I'll better thank thee.
[*Taking the scimitar.*
Caled. Myself will lead the troops of the black standard,
And at the eastern gate begin the storm.
Daran. But why do we not move? 'twill soon be day.
Methinks I'm cold, and would grow warm with action.
Caled. Then haste, and tell Abudah——O thou'rt welcome.

Enter ABUDAH.

Thy charge awaits thee. Where's the stubborn captive?
Abu. Indeed he's brave. I left him for a moment
In the next tent. He's scarcely yet himself.
Caled. But is he ours?
Abu. The threats of death are nothing;
Though thy last message shook his soul, as winds
On the bleak hills bend down some lofty pine;
Yet still he held his root, till I found means,
Abating somewhat of thy first demand,
If not to make him wholly ours at least
To gain sufficient to our end.
Caled. Say how?
Abu. Oft he inclined, oft started back; at last,
When just consenting, for a while he paused,
Stood fix'd in thought, and lift his eyes to heaven;
Then, as with fresh recover'd force, cried out,
Renounce my faith! Never——I answer'd, No,
That now he should not do it.
Caled. How!
Abu. Yet hear,
For since I saw him now so lost in passion,
That must be left to his more temperate thoughts.
Mean time I urged, conjured, at last constrain'd him
By all he held most dear, nay, by the voice
Of Providence, that call'd him now to save,
With her he loved, perhaps the lives of thousands,
No longer to resist his better fate,
But join his arms in present action with us,
And swear he would be faithful.
Caled. What, no more?
Then he's a christain still!
Abu. Have patience yet:
For if by him we can surprise the city——
Caled. Say'st thou?
Abu. Hear what's agreed; but on the terms
That every unresisting life be spared.
I shall command some chosen faithful bands,
Phocyas will guide us to the gate, from whence
He late escaped, nor do we doubt but there
With ease to gain admittance.
Caled. This is something.
And yet I do not like this half-ally——
Is he not still a christian?—But no matter——
Mean time I will attack the eastern gate;
Who first succeeds gives entrance to the rest.
Hear, all!—Prepare ye now for boldest deeds,
And know, the prophet will reward your valour.
Think that we all to certain triumph move;
Who falls in fight yet meets the prize above.
There, in the gardens of eternal spring,
While birds of Paradise around you sing,
Each, with his blooming beauty by his side,
Shall drink rich wines that in full rivers glide,
Breathe fragrant gales o'er fields of spice that blow,
And gather fruits immortal as they grow;
Ecstatic bliss shall your whole powers employ,
And every sense be lost in every joy.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A great Square in the City; before the Governor's Palace.

Enter ABUDAH, *Saracen Captains and Soldiers; with* EUMENES, HERBIS, *and other Christians, unarmed.*

Eum. It must be so——farewell, devoted walls!
To be surprised thus!—Hell, and all ye fiends,
How did ye watch this minute for destruction!
Her. We've been betray'd by riot and debauch;
Curse on the traitor guard.
Eum. The guard above,
Did that sleep too?
Abu. Christians, complain no more,
What you have ask'd is granted. Are ye men,
And dare ye question thus, with bold impatience, [Heaven
Eternal justice!——Know, the doom from
Falls on your towers, resistless as the bolt
That fires the cedars on your mountain tops.
Be meek, and learn with humble awe to bear
The mitigated ruin. Worse had follow'd,
Had ye opposed our numbers. Now you're safe;
Quarter and liberty are given to all;
And little do ye think how much ye owe
To one brave enemy, whom yet ye know not.

Enter ARTAMON *hastily.*

Arta. All's lost!——Ha!——Who are these?
Eum. All's lost, indeed.
Yield up thy sword, if thou wouldst share our safety.
Thou com'st too late to bring us news.
Arta. Oh!——no,
The news I bring is from the eastern guard.
Caled has forced the gate, and——but he's here.
[*A cry without.*] Fly, fly; they follow——Quarter, mercy, quarter!
[*Several Persons as pursued run over the Stage.*
Caled. [*Without.*] No quarter! Kill, I say
Are they not christians?
More blood! our prophet asks it.

He enters with DARAN, *&c.*

What, Abudah!
Well met!——but wherefore are the looks of peace?
Why sleeps thy sword?
Abu. Caled, our task is over.
Behold the chiefs; they have resign'd the palace.

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Caled. And sworn t' obey our law?
Abu. No.
Caled. Then fall on.
Abu. Hold yet, and hear me—Heaven by me has spared
The sword its cruel task. On easy terms
We've gain'd a bloodless conquest.
Caled. I renounce it.
Curse on those terms! The city's mine by
Fall on, I say——— [storm.
Abu. Nay then, I swear ye shall not.
Caled. Ha!——Who am I?
Abu. The general—and I know
What reverence is your due.
[CALED *gives signs to his men to fall on.*
———Nay, he who stirs,
First makes his way through me. My honour's pledged;
Rob me of that who dares. [*They stop.*] I know thee, Caled,
Chief in command; bold, valiant, wise, and faithful;
But yet, remember, I'm a Mussulman;
Nay, more, thou know'st, companion of the prophet,
And what we vow is sacred.
Caled. Thou'rt a christian,
I swear thou art, and hast betray'd the faith,
Curse on thy new allies!
Abu. No more—this strife
But ill beseems the servants of the caliph,
And casts reproach——Christians, withdraw a while;——
I pledge my life to answer the conditions——
[*Exeunt* EUMENES, HERBIS, *&c.*
Why, Caled, do we thus expose ourselves
A scorn to nations that despise our law?
Thou call'st me christian——What! Is it because
I prize my plighted faith, that I'm a christian?
Come, 'tis not well, and if——
Caled. What terms are yielded?
Abu. Leave to depart, to all that will; an oath
First given, no more to aid the war against us,
An unmolested march. Each citizen
To take his goods, not more than a mule's burden;
The chiefs six mules, and ten the governor;
Beside some few slight arms for their defence
Against the mountain robbers.
Caled. Now, by Mahomet,
Thou hast equipp'd an army!
Abu. Canst thou doubt
The greatest part by far will choose to stay,
Receive our law, or pay th' accustom'd tribute?
What fear we then from a few wretched bands
Of scatter'd fugitives?——Besides, thou know'st
What towns of strength remain yet unsubdued.
Let us appear this once like generous victors,
So future conquests shall repay this bounty,
And willing provinces even court subjection.
Caled. Well—be it on thy head, if worse befall!
This once I yield——but see it thus proclaim'd
Through all Damascus, that who will depart
Must leave the place this instant———Pass, move on. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—The outside of a Nunnery.

Enter EUDOCIA.

Eudo. Darkness is fled; and yet the morning light
Gives me more fears than did night's deadly gloom. [cyas,
Within, without, all, all are foes——Oh, Pho-
Thou art perhaps at rest! would I were too!
[*After a pause.*
This place has holy charms; rapine and murder
Dare not approach it, but are awed to distance. [spared
I've heard that even these infidels have
Walls sacred to devotion——World, farewell!
Here will I hide me, 'till the friendly grave
Opens its arms and shelters me for ever!
[*Exit.*

Enter PHOCYAS.

Pho. Did not I hear the murmurs of a voice,
This way?——a woman's too?——and seem'd complaining? [me?
Hark!—No—O torture! Whither shall I turn
I've search'd the palace rooms in vain! and now, [hither,
I know not why, some instinct brought me
'Twas here last night we met. Dear, dear Eudocia!
Might I once more— [*Going out he meets her.*
Eudo. Who calls the lost Eudocia?
Sure 'tis a friendly voice.
Pho. 'Tis she——O rapture!
Eudo. Is't possible—my Phocyas!
Pho. My Eudocia!
Do I yet call thee mine?
Eudo. Do I yet see thee?
Yet hear thee speak?—Oh how hast thou escaped
From barbarous swords, and men that know not mercy?
Pho. I've borne a thousand deaths since our last parting.
But wherefore do I talk of death?—for now,
Methinks, I'm raised to life immortal,
And feel I'm bless'd beyond the power of change
Eudo. Oh, yet beware—lest some event unknown
Again should part us.
Pho. [*Aside.*] Heaven avert the omen!
None can, my fair, none shall.
Eudo. Alas! thy transports
Makes thee forget; is not the city taken?
Pho. It is.
Eudo. And are we not beset with foes?
Pho. There are no foes—or none to thee——No danger.
Eudo. No foes?
Pho. I know not how to tell thee yet.
But think, Eudocia, that my matchless love
And wondrous causes pre-ordain'd conspiring,
For thee have triumph'd o'er the fiercest foes,
And turn'd them friends.
Eudo. Amazement! Friends!——
O all ye guardian powers!—Say on—Oh lead me,
Lead me through this dark maze of Providence
Which thou hast trod, that I may trace thy steps
With silent awe, and worship as I pass.
Pho. Inquire no more—thou shalt know all hereafter——
Let me conduct thee hence—
Eudo. Oh whither next?
To what far distant home?——But 'tis enough,
That favour'd thus of Heaven, thou art my guide.
And as we journey on the painful way,
Say, wilt thou then beguile the passing hours,

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And open all the wonders of the story?
Pho. Indulge no more thy melancholy
Damascus is thy home. [thoughts,
Eudo. And yet thou say'st
It is no longer ours!—Where is my father?
Pho. To show thee too, how fate seems every way
To guard thy safety, e'en thy father now,
Wert thou within his power, would stand defeated
Of his tyrannic vow. Thou know'st last night
What hope of aid flatter'd this foolish city;
At break of day th' Arabian scouts had seized
A second courier, and from him 'tis learn'd
That on their march the army mutinied,
And Eutyches was slain.
Eudo. And yet, that now
Is of the least importance to my peace.
But answer me; say, where is now my father?
Pho. Or gone, or just preparing to depart.
Eudo. What! Is our doom reversed? And is he then
The wretched fugitive?
Pho. Thou heavenly maid!
To free thee, then, from every anxious thought,
Know, I've once more, wrong'd as I am, even saved
Thy father's threaten'd life; nay, saved Damascus [ruin.
From blood and slaughter, and from total
Terms are obtain'd, and general freedom granted
To all that will, to leave in peace the city.
Eudo. Is't possible!—now trust me I could chide thee:
'Tis much unkind to hold me thus in doubt:
I pray thee clear these wonders.
Pho. 'Twill surprise thee,
When thou shalt know.——
Eudo. What?
Pho. To what deadly gulphs
Of horror and despair, what cruel straits
Of agonizing thought I have been driven.
This night, ere my perplex'd, bewilder'd soul
Could find its way—thou said'st that thou wouldst chide;
I fear thou wilt; indeed I have done that
I could have wish'd t' avoid——but for a cause
So lovely, so beloved——
Eudo. What dost thou mean?
I'll not indulge a thought that thou could'st do
One act unworthy of thyself, thy honour,
And that firm zeal against these foes of Heaven,
Which won my heart at first to share in all
Thy dangers and thy fame, and wish thee mine.
Thou could'st not save thy life by means inglorious.
Pho. Alas! thou know'st me not—I'm man, frail man,
To error born; and who, that's man, is perfect?
To save my life? O no, well was it risk'd
For thee! had it been lost, 'twere not too much,
And thou art safe;—O what wouldst thou have said,
If I had risk'd my soul to save Eudocia!
Eudo. Ha! speak—Oh, no, be dumb—it cannot be! [pale.
And yet thy looks are changed, thy lips grow
Why dost thou shake?——Alas! I tremble too! [met?
Thou could'st not, hast not sworn to Maho-
Pho. No—I should first have died—nay, given up thee.
Eudo. O Phocyas! was it well to try me thus?—
And yet another deadly fear succeeds.
How came these wretches hither? Who revived
Their fainting arms to unexpected triumph?
For while thou fought'st, and fought'st the Christian cause,
These batter'd walls were rocks impregnable,
Their towers of adamant. But O, I fear
Some act of thine——
Pho. Oh, I must tell thee all;
But, pr'ythee, do not frown on me, Eudocia!
I found the wakeful foe in midnight council
Resolved ere day to make a fresh attack,
Keen for revenge, and hungry after slaughter—
Could my rack'd soul bear that, and think of thee?
Nay, think of thee exposed a helpless prey
To some fierce ruffian's violating arms!
O had the world been mine in that extreme
I should have given whole provinces away,
Nay all—and thought it little for thy ransom!
Eudo. For this then—Oh—thou hast betray'd the city!
Distrustful of the righteous powers above
That still protect the chaste and innocent:
And to avert a feign'd, uncertain danger,
Thou hast brought certain ruin on thy country!
Pho. No, thou forget'st the friendly terms—the sword, [blood,
Which threaten'd to have fill'd the streets with
I sheath'd in peace; thy father, thou, and all
The citizens are safe, uncaptived, free.
Eudo. Safe! free! O no——life, freedom, every good,
Turns to a curse, if sought by wicked means.
Yet sure it cannot be! Are these the terms
On which we meet?—No—we can never meet
On terms like these; the hand of death itself
Could not have torn us from each other's arms
Like this dire act, this more than fatal blow!
In death, the soul and body only part
To meet again, and be divorced no more;
But now——
Pho. Ha! lightning blast me! strike me,
Ye vengeful bolts! if this is my reward,
Are these my hoped for joys! Is this the welcome [loved
The wretched Phocyas meets, from her he
More than life, fame—even to his soul's distraction!
Eudo. Hast thou not help'd the slaves of Mahomet, [try?
To spread their impious conquest o'er thy coun-
What welcome was there in Eudocia's power
She has withheld from Phocyas? But, alas!
'Tis thou hast blasted all our joys for ever,
And cut down hope, like a poor, short-lived flower,
Never to grow again!
Pho. Cruel Eudocia!
If in my heart's deep anguish I've been forced
A while from what I was——dost thou reject me?
Think of the cause——
Eudo. The cause? There is no cause—
Not universal nature could afford
A cause for this. What were dominion, pomp,
The wealth of nations, nay of all the world,
The world itself, or what a thousand worlds,
If weigh'd with faith unspotted, heavenly truth, [mind,
Thoughts free from guilt, the empire of the
And all the triumphs of a godlike breast

Firm and unmoved in the great cause of virtue?

Pho. How shall I answer thee?—My soul is awed,
And trembling owns the eternal force of reason!
But oh; can nothing then atone, or plead
For pity from thee?

Eudo. Can'st thou yet undo
The deed that's done; recal the time that's past?
O, call back yesterday; call back last night,
Though with its fears, its dangers, its distress;
Bid the fair hours of innocence return,
When, in the lowest ebb of changeful fortune,
Thou wert more glorious in Eudocia's eyes,
Than all the pride of monarchs!—But that deed—

Pho. No more——thou waken'st in my tortured heart
The cruel, conscious worm that stings to madness.
Oh, I'm undone!——I know it, and can bear
To be undone for thee, but not to lose thee.

Eudo. Poor wretch!—I pity thee!—but art thou Phocyas,
The man I loved?—I could have died with thee
Ere thou did'st this; then we had gone together,
A glorious pair, and soar'd above the stars,
Bright as the stars themselves; and as we pass'd
The heavenly roads and milky ways of light
Had heard the bless'd inhabitants with wonder
Applaud our spotless love. But never, never
Will I be made the cursed reward of treason,
To seal thy doom, to bind a hellish league,
And to ensure thy everlasting wo.

Pho. What league?—'tis ended—I renounce it—thus— [*Kneels.*
I bend to Heaven and thee——O thou divine,
Thou matchless image of all perfect goodness!
Do thou but pity yet the wretched Phocyas,
Heaven will relent, and all may yet be well.

Eudo. No—we must part. 'Twill ask whole years of sorrow
To purge away this guilt. Then do not think
Thy loss in me is worth one drooping tear:
But if thou wouldst be reconciled to Heaven,
First sacrifice to Heaven that fatal passion
Which caused thy fall—Farewell: forget the lost—
But how shall I ask that!——I would have said,
For my soul's peace, forget the lost Eudocia.
Can'st thou forget her?—Oh! the killing torture
To think 'twas love, excess of love, divorced us!
Farewell for——still I cannot speak that word,
These tears speak for me—O farewell——
[*Exit.*

Pho. [*Raving.*] For ever!
Return, return and speak it; say, for ever!
She's gone—and now she joins the fugitives.
And yet she did not quite pronounce my doom.
O hear, all gracious Heaven! wilt thou at once
Forgive, and oh inspire me to some act
This day, that may, in part, redeem what's past!
Prosper this day, or let it be my last. [*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—An open place in the City.

Enter CALED *and* DARAN, *meeting.*

Caled. Soldier, what news? thou look'st as thou wert angry.

Daran. And durst I say it, so my chief I am.
I've spoke——if it offends, my head is thine,
Take it, and I am silent.

Caled. No; say on.
I know thee honest, and perhaps I guess
What knits thy brows in frowns——

Daran. Is this, my leader,
A conquer'd city?——View yon vale of palms:
Behold the vanquish'd Christian triumphs still
Rich in his flight, and mocks thy barren war.

Caled. The vale of palms!

Daran. Beyond those hills, the place
Where they agreed this day to meet and halt,
To gather all their forces; there disguised,
Just now I've viewed their camp—O, I could curse
My eyes for what they've seen.

Caled. What hast thou seen?

Daran. Why all Damascus:—All its souls, its life,
Its heart blood, all its treasure, piles of plate,
Crosses enrich'd with gems, arras and silks,
And vests of gold, unfolded to the sun,
That rival all his lustre.

Caled. How!

Daran. 'Tis true.
The bees are wisely bearing off their honey,
And soon the empty hive will be our own.

Caled. So forward too! Curse on this foolish treaty.

Daran. Forward——it looks as if they had been forewarn'd.
By Mahomet, the land wears not the face
Of war, but trade! and thou wouldst swear its merchants
Were sending forth their loaded caravans
To all the neighbouring countries.

Caled. [*Aside.*] Ha! this starts
A lucky thought of Mahomet's first exploit,
When he pursued the caravan of Corash,
And from a thousand misbelieving slaves
Wrested their ill-heap'd goods, transferr'd to thrive
In holier hands, and propagate the faith.——
'Tis said, [*To* DARAN.] the emperor had a wardrobe here
Of costly silks.

Daran. That too they have removed.

Caled. Dogs! infidels! 'tis more than was allow'd.

Daran. And shall we not pursue them——Robbers! thieves!
That steal away themselves, and all they're worth,
And wrong the valiant soldier of his due.

Caled. [*Aside.*] The caliph shall know this—he shall, Abudah,
This is thy coward bargain—I renounce it.
Daran, we'll stop their march, and search.

Daran. And strip—

Caled. And kill.

Daran. That's well. And yet I fear
Abudah's Christian friend——

Caled. If possible,
He should not know of this. No, nor Abudah,
By the seven heavens! his soul's a Christian too,
And 'tis by kindred instinct he thus saves
Their cursed lives, and taints our cause with mercy.

Daran. I knew my general would not suffer this,
Therefore I've troops prepared without the gate;
Just mounted for pursuit. Our Arab horse
Will in few minutes reach the place; yet still
I must repeat my doubts—that devil Phocyas
Will know it soon—I met him near the gate,

My nature sickens at him, and forebodes
I know not what of ill.
Caled. No more, away
With thy cold fears—we'll march this very instant,
And quickly make this thriftless conquest good:
The sword too has been wrong'd, and thirsts for blood. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—A Valley full of Tents; Baggage and Harness lying up and down amongst them. The prospect terminating with palm trees and hills at a distance.

Enter EUMENES *with* OFFICERS, *Attendants, and crowds of the people of Damascus.*

Eum. [*Entering.*] Sleep on—and angels be thy guard!—soft slumber
Has gently stole her from her griefs a while,
Let none approach the tent—Are out-guards placed
On yonder hills? [*To an* OFFICER.
Offi. They are.
Eum. [*Striking his breast.*] Damascus, O—
Still art thou here!—Let me intreat you, friends,
To keep strict order: I have no command,
And can but now advise you.
1st Citizen. You are still
Our head and leader.
2d Citizen. We resolve t' obey you.
3d Citizen. We're all prepared to follow you.
Eum. I thank you.
The sun will soon go down upon our sorrows,
And 'till to-morrow's dawn this is our home:
Mean while, each as he can, forget his loss,
And bear the present lot—
Offi. Sir, I have mark'd
The camp's extent: 'tis stretch'd quite through the valley.
I think that more than half the city's here.
Eum. The prospect gives me much relief.—I'm pleased,
My honest countrymen, t' observe your numbers;
And yet it fills my eyes with tears—'Tis said
The mighty Persian wept, when he survey'd
His numerous army, but to think them mortal;
Yet he then flourish'd in prosperity.
Alas! what's that?—Prosperity!—a harlot,
That smiles but to betray! O shining ruin!
Thou nurse of passions, and thou bane of virtue!
O self-destroying monster! that art blind,
Yet putt'st out reason's eye, that still should guide thee—
Then plungeth down some precipice unseen,
And art no more!—Hear me, all-gracious Heaven,
Let me wear out my small remains of life
Obscure, content, with humble poverty,
Or in affliction's hard but wholesome school,
If it must be—I'll learn to know myself,
And that's more worth than empire. But, O Heaven,
Curse me no more with proud prosperity!
It has undone me!——Herbis! where, my friend,
Hast thou been this long hour?

Enter HERBIS.

Her. On yonder summit,
To take a farewell prospect of Damascus.
Eum. And is it worth a look?
Her. No—I've forgot it.
All our possessions are a grasp of air:
We're cheated whilst we think we hold them fast:
And when they're gone, we know that they were nothing.—
But I've a deeper wound.
Eum. Poor, good old man!
'Tis true—thy son—there thou'rt indeed unhappy.

Enter ARTAMON.

What Artamon!—art thou here, too?
Art. Yes, Sir,
I never boasted much of my religion,
Yet I've some honour and a soldier's pride;
I like not these new lords.
Eum. Thou'rt brave and honest.
Nay, we'll not yet despair. A time may come
When from the brute barbarians, we may wrest
Once more our pleasant seats.—Alas! how soon
The flatterer hope is ready with his song
To charm us to forgetfulness!—no more—
Let that be left to Heaven—See, Herbis, see,
Methinks we've here a goodly city yet.
Was it not thus our great forefathers lived,
In better times—in humble fields and tents,
With all their flocks and herds, their moving wealth?
See too, where our own Pharphar winds his stream
Through the long vale, as if to follow us,
And kindly offers his cool, wholesome draughts,
To ease us in our march!—Why, this is plenty.

Enter EUDOCIA.

My daughter!—wherefore hast thou left thy tent?
What breaks so soon thy rest?
Eudo. Rest is not there,
Or I have sought in vain, and cannot find it.
Oh no—we're wanderers, it is our doom;
There is no rest for us.
Eum. Thou art not well.
Eudo. I would, if possible, avoid myself,
I'm better now, near you.
Eum. Near me! alas,
The tender vine so wreathes its folded arms
Around some falling elm—it wounds my heart
To think thou followest but to share my ruin.
I have lost all but thee.
Eudo. Oh say not so.
You have lost nothing; no——you have preserved,
Immortal wealth, your faith inviolate
To Heaven and to your country. Have you not
Refused to join with prosperous wicked men,
And hold from them a false inglorious greatness?
Ruin is yonder, in Damascus now
The seat abhorr'd of cursed infidels.
Infernal error, like a plague has spread
Contagion through its guilty palaces,
And we are fled from death.
Eum. Heroic maid!
Thy words are balsam to my griefs. Eudocia,
I never knew thee 'till this day; I knew not
How many virtues I had wrong'd in thee!
Eudo. If you talk thus, you have not yet forgiven me.
Eum. Forgiven thee!—Why, for thee it is, thee only,
I think, Heaven yet may look with pity on us;

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Yes, we must all forgive each other now.
Poor Herbis too——we both have been to blame.
Oh, Phocyas! but it cannot be recall'd.
Yet were he here, we'd ask him pardon too.
My child!——I meant not to provoke thy tears.
Eudo. [*Aside.*] Oh why is he not here! Why do I see
Thousands of happy wretches, that but seem
Undone, yet still are bless'd in innocence,
And why was he not one?

Enter an OFFICER.

Offi. Where is Eumenes?
Eum. What means thy breathless haste?
Offi. I fear there's danger:
For as I kept my watch, I spy'd afar
Thick clouds of dust, and on a nearer view
Perceived a body of Arabian horse
Moving this way. I saw them wind the hill,
And then lost sight of them.
Her. I saw them too,
Where the roads meet on t'other side these hills, [Arabs
But took them for some band of christian
Crossing the country.——This way did they move?
Offi. With utmost speed.
Eum. If they are christian Arabs,
They come as friends; if other, we're secure
By the late terms. Retire a while, Eudocia,
Till I return. [*Exit* EUDOCIA.
I'll to the guard myself.
Soldier, lead on the way.

Enter another OFFICER.

2d Offi. Arm, arm! we're ruined!
The foe is in the camp.
Eum. So soon!
2d Offi. They've quitted
Their horses, and with sword in hand have forced
Our guard; they say they come for plunder.
Eum. Villains!
Sure Caled knows not of this treachery.
Come on—we can fight still. We'll make them know
What 'tis to urge the wretched to despair.
[*Exeunt.*
[*A noise of fighting is heard for some time.*

Enter DARAN, *with a Party of Saracen Soldiers.*

Daran. Let the fools fight at distance——Here's the harvest.
Reap, reap, my countrymen!—Ay, there—first clear
Those further tents——
[*Exeunt Soldiers, bearing off baggage, &c.*
[*Looking between the Tents.*] What's here, a woman—fair
She seems, and well attired!——It shall be so,
I'll strip her first, and then——
[*Exit and returns with* EUDOCIA.
Eudo. [*Struggling.*] Mercy! Oh spare me!
Help, save me!——What, no help!——Barbarian! Monster!
Heaven hear my cries!
Daran. Woman, thy cries are vain.
No help is near.

Enter PHOCYAS.

Pho. Villain, thou lyest! take that
To loose thy hold——
[*Pushing at him with his spear.*
Daran. What, thou!—my evil spirit!
Is't thou that haunt'st me still?—but thus I thank thee,
[*Offering to strike him with his scimitar.*
It will not be——Lightning for ever blast
This coward arm that fails me!—Oh, vile Syrian, [*Falls.*
I'm kill'd——Oh curse—— [*Dies.*
Pho. Die then; thy curses choak thee!——
Eudocia?
Eudo. Phocyas!——Oh, astonishment!
Then is it thus that Heaven has heard my prayers?
I tremble still—and scarce have power to ask thee [outrage?
How thou art here, or whence this sudden
Pho. [*Walking aside.*] The blood ebbs back that fill'd my heart, and now
Again her parting farewell awes my soul,
As if 'twere fate, and not to be revoked.
Will she not now upbraid me? See thy friends!
Are these, are these the villains thou hast trusted?
Eudo. What means this murmur'd sorrow to thyself?
Is it in vain that thou hast rescued me
From savage hands?—Say, what's the approaching danger?
Pho. Sure every angel watches o'er thy safety!
Thou see'st 'tis death t' approach thee without awe,
And barbarism itself cannot profane thee.
Eudo. Thou dost not answer; whence are these alarms?
Pho. Some stores removed, and not allow'd by treaty,
Have drawn the Saracens to make a search.
Perhaps 'twill quickly be agreed——But, oh!
Thou know'st, Eudocia, I'm a banish'd man,
And 'tis a crime I'm here once more before thee; [sent
Else might I speak, 'twere better for the pre-
If thou wouldst leave this place.
Eudo. No——I have a father,
(And shall I leave him?) Whom we both have wrong'd,
Or he had not been thus driven out, exposed
The humble tenant of this sheltering vale
For one poor night's repose.——And yet, alas!
For this last act how would I thank thee, Phocyas!—
I've nothing now but prayers and tears to give,
Cold, fruitless thanks!——But 'tis some comfort yet
That fate allows this short reprieve, that thus
We may behold each other, and once more
May mourn our woes, ere yet again we part—
Pho. For ever!
'Tis then resolved——It was thy cruel sentence,
And I am here to execute that doom.
Eudo. What dost thou mean?
Pho. [*Kneeling.*] Thus at thy feet——
Eudo. O rise!
Pho. Never——No, here I'll lay my burden down;
I've tried its weight, nor can support it longer.
Take thy last look; if yet thy eyes can bear
To look upon a wretch accursed, cast off
By Heaven and thee——A little longer yet,
And I am mingled with my kindred dust,
By thee forgotten and the world——
Eudo. Forbear,

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O cruel man! Why wilt thou rack me thus?
Did'st thou not mark—thou did'st, when last we parted,
The pangs, the strugglings of my suffering soul;
That nothing but the hand of Heaven itself
Could ever drive me from thee!——Dost thou now
Reproach me thus? or canst thou have a thought
That I can e'er forget thee?

Pho. [*Rising.*] Have a care!
I'll not be tortured more with thy false pity!
No, I renounce it. See I am prepared.
[*Showing a dagger.*
Thy cruelty is mercy now——Farewell!
And death is now but a release from torment!

Eudo. Hold—Stay thee yet.—O madness of despair!
And wouldst thou die? Think, ere thou leap'st the gulph,
When thou hast trod that dark, that unknown way, [worse?
Canst thou return? What if the change prove
O think, if then——

Pho. No——thought's my deadliest foe;
'Tis lingering racks, and slow consuming fires,
And therefore to the grave I'd fly to shun it!

Eudo. Oh fatal error!—Like a restless ghost,
It will pursue and haunt thee still; even there,
Perhaps in forms more frightful. Death's a name
By which poor guessing mortals are deceived,
'Tis no where to be found. Thou fliest in vain
From life, to meet again with that thou fliest.
How wilt thou curse thy rashness then? How start,
And shudder, and shrink back? yet how avoid
To put on thy new being?

Pho. I thank thee!
For now I'm quite undone——I gave up all
For thee before, but this; this bosom friend,
My last reserve—There——
[*Throws away the dagger.*
Tell me now, Eudocia,
Cut off from hope, denied the food of life,
And yet forbid to die, what am I now?
Or what will fate do with me?

Eudo. Oh—— [*Turns away weeping.*

Pho. Thou weep'st!
Canst thou shed tears, and yet not melt to mercy?
O say, ere yet returning madness seize me,
Is there in all futurity no prospect,
No distant comfort? Not a glimmering light
To guide me through this maze? Or must I now
Sit down in darkness and despair for ever?
[*They both continue silent for some time.*
Still thou art silent?——Speak, disclose my doom,
That's now suspended in this awful moment!
O speak—for now my passions wait thy voice:
My beating heart grows calm, my blood stands still,
Scarcely I live, or only live to hear thee.

Eudo. If yet——but can it be!—I fear—Oh Phocyas,
Let me be silent still!

Pho. Hear then this last,
This only prayer——Heaven will consent to this.
Let me but follow thee, where'er thou goest,
But see thee, hear thy voice; be thou my angel,
To guide and govern my returning steps,
Till long contrition and unwearied duty,
Shall expiate my guilt. Then say, Eudocia,
If like a soul anneal'd in purging fires,
After whole years thou see'st me white again,
When thou, even thou shalt think——

Eudo. No more——This shakes
My firmest thoughts, and if——
[*A cry is heard of persons slaughtered in the camp.*
——What shrieks of death!
I fear a treacherous foe—have now
Begun a fatal harvest!—Haste,
Prevent—O wouldst thou see me more with comfort,
Fly, save them, save the threaten'd lives of Christians,
My father and his friends!—I dare not stay—
Heaven be my guide to shun this gathering ruin! [*Exit.*

Enter CALED.

Caled. [*Entering.*] So—Slaughter, do thy work!
——These hands look well.
[*Looking on his hands*
The jovial hunter, ere he quits the field,
First signs him in the stag's warm vital stream
With stains like these, to show 'twas gallant sport.
Phocyas! Thou'rt met—But whether thou art here [*Comes forward.*
A friend or foe I know not; if a friend,
Which is Eumenes' tent?

Pho. Hold——pass no further.

Caled. Say'st thou, not pass?

Pho. No——on thy life no further.

Caled. What, dost thou frown too!—sure thou know'st me not!

Pho. Not know thee!—Yes, too well, I know thee now,
O murderous fiend! Why all this waste of blood?
Didst thou not promise——

Caled. Promise!——Insolence!
'Tis well, 'tis well——for now I know thee too. [traitor!
Perfidious mungrel slave! Thou double
False to thy first and to thy latter vows!
Villain!

Pho. That's well—go on—I swear I thank thee.
Speak it again, and strike it through my ear!
A villain! Yes, thou mad'st me so, thou devil!
And mind'st me now what to demand from thee. [our,
Give, give me back my former self, my hon-
My country's fair esteem, my friends, my all—
Thou canst not—O thou robber!——Give me then
Revenge, or death! The last I well deserve,
That yielded up my soul's best wealth to thee,
For which accursed be thou, and cursed thy prophet!

Caled. Hear'st thou this, Mahomet?—Blaspheming mouth!
For this thou soon shalt chew the bitter fruit
Of Zacon's tree, the food of fiends below.
Go——speed thee thither——
[*Pushing at him with his lance, which* PHOCYAS *puts by, and kills him.*

Pho. Go thou first thyself.

Caled. [*Falling.*] O dog! Thou gnaw'st my heart!—False Mahomet,
Is this then my reward——Oh—— [*Dies.*

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Pho. Thanks to the gods, I have revenged
my country! [*Exit.*

Several parties of Christians and Saracens pass over the farther end of the Stage, fighting. The former are beaten. At last EUMENES *rallies them, and makes a stand. Then enters* ABUDAH *attended.*

Abu. Forbear, forbear, and sheath the bloody sword,
Eum. Abudah! is this well?
Abu. No——I must own
You've cause——O Mussulmans, look here! Behold
Where, like a broken spear, your arm of war
Is thrown to earth!
Eum. Ha! Caled?
Abu. Dumb and breathless.
Then thus has Heaven chastised us in thy fall
And thee for violated faith. Farewell,
Thou great, but cruel man!
Eum. This thirst of blood
In his own blood is quench'd.
Abu. Bear hence his clay
Back to Damascus. Cast a mantle first
O'er this sad sight: so should we hide his faults——
Now hear, ye servants of the prophet, hear!
A greater death than this demands your tears,
For know, your lord the caliph is no more!
Good Abubeker has breathed out his spirit
To him that gave it. Yet your Caliph lives,
Lives now in Omar. See, behold his signet,
Appointing me, such is his will, to lead
His faithful armies warring here in Syria.
Alas!—foreknowledge sure of this event
Guided his choice!—Obey me then your chief.
For you, O christians! know, with speed I came,
On the first notice of this foul design,
Or to prevent it, or repair your wrongs.
Your goods shall be untouch'd, your persons safe, [death,
Nor shall our troops, henceforth, on pain of
Molest your march.——If more you ask, 'tis granted.
Eum. Still just and brave! thy virtues would adorn
A purer faith! Thou, better than thy sect,
That dar'st decline from that to acts of mercy!
Pardon, Abudah, if thy honest heart
Makes us even wish thee ours.
Abu. [*Aside.*] O, Power Supreme!
That mad'st my heart, and know'st its inmost frame!
If yet I err, oh lead me into truth,
Or pardon unknown error!—Now, Eumenes,
Friends as we may be, let us part in peace.
[*Exeunt severally.*

Enter ARTAMON *and* EUDOCIA.

Eudo. Alas! but is my father safe?
Arta. Heaven knows.
I left him just preparing to engage;
When doubtful of the event he bade me haste
To warn his dearest daughter of the danger,
And aid your speedy flight.
Eudo. My flight! but whither?
Oh no——if he is lost——
Arta. I hope not so.
The noise is ceased. Perhaps they're beaten off.
We soon shall know;——here's one that can inform us.

Enter first OFFICER.

Soldier, thy looks speak well. What says thy tongue?
1st Offi. The foe's withdrawn; Abudah has been here,
And has renew'd the terms. Caled is kill'd—
Art. Hold——first thank Heaven for that!
Eudo. Where is Eumenes?
1st Offi. I left him well; by his command I came [news.
To search you out: and let you know this
I've more; but that——
Art. Is bad, perhaps, so says
This sudden pause. Well, be it so; let's know
'Tis but life's chequer'd lot. [it.
1st Offi. Eumenes mourns
A friend's unhappy fall; Herbis is slain;
A settled gloom seem'd to hang heavy on him,
Th' effect of grief, 'tis thought, for his lost son.
When, on the first attack, like one that sought
The welcome means of death, with desperate valour
He press'd the foe, and met the fate he wish'd.
Art. See where Eumenes comes!——What's this? He seems
To lead some wounded friend——Alas! 'tis—
[*They withdraw to one side of the stage.*

Enter EUMENES *leading in* PHOCYAS *with an arrow in his breast.*

Eum. Give me thy wound! Oh I could bear it for thee,
This goodness melts my heart. What, in a moment
Forgetting all thy wrongs, in kind embraces
T' exchange forgiveness thus!
Pho. Moments are few,
And must not now be wasted. Oh, Eumenes,
Lend me thy helping hand a little farther;
O where, where is she? [*They advance.*
Eum. Look, look here, Eudocia!
Behold a sight that calls for all our tears!
Eudo. Phocyas, and wounded!—Oh what cruel hand—
Pho. No, 'twas a kind one—Spare thy tears, Eudocia!
For mine are tears of joy.—
Eudo. Is't possible?
Pho. 'Tis done——the powers supreme have heard my prayer, [day.
And prosper'd me with some fair deed this
I've fought once more, and for my friends, my country.
By me the treacherous chiefs are slain; a while
I stopp'd the foe; 'till, warn'd by me before
Of this their sudden march, Abudah came;
But first this random shaft had reach'd my breast.
Life's mingled scene is o'er——'tis thus that Heaven
At once chastises, and, I hope, accepts me;
And now I wake as from the sleep of death.
Eudo. What shall I say to thee to give thee comfort?
Pho. Say only thou forgivest me——Oh, Eudocia!
No longer now my dazzled eyes behold thee
Through passion's mists; my soul now gazes on thee,
And sees thee lovelier in unfading charms!
Bright as the shining angel host that stood—
Whilst I——but there it smarts——
Eudo. Look down, look down,
Ye pitying powers! and help his pious sorrow!

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Eum. 'Tis not too late, we hope, to give thee help. [ther;
See! yonder is my tent; we'll lead thee thi-
Come, enter there, and let thy wound be
Perhaps it is not mortal. [dress'd.

Pho. No! not mortal!
No flattery now. By all my hopes hereafter,
For the world's empire I'd not lose this death!
Alas! I but keep in my fleeting breath
A few short moments, till I have conjured you
That to the world you witness my remorse
For my past errors, and defend my fame,
For know——soon as this pointed steel's drawn out
Life follows through the wound.

Eudo. What dost thou say?
Oh touch not yet the broken springs of life!
A thousand tender thoughts rise in my soul.
How shall I give them words? Oh, 'till this hour
I scarce have tasted wo!——this is indeed
To part——but, oh!——

Pho. No more——death is now painful!
But say, my friends, whilst I have breath to ask, [mine)
(For still methinks all your concerns are
Whither have you design'd to bend your journey?

Eum. Constantinople is my last retreat,
If Heaven indulge my wish; there I've resolved
To wear out the dark winter of my life,
An old man's stock of days—I hope not many.

Eudo. There will I dedicate myself to Heaven.
Oh, Phocyas, for thy sake, no rival else
Shall e'er possess my heart. My father too
Consents to this my vow. My vital flame
There, like a taper on the holy altar,
Shall waste away; 'till Heaven relenting hears
Incessant prayers for thee and for myself,
And wing my soul to meet with thine in bliss.
For in that thought I find a sudden hope,
As if inspired, springs in my breast, and tells me
That thy repenting frailty is forgiven,
And we shall meet again to part no more.

Pho. [*Plucking out the arrow.*] Then all is done—'twas the last pang—at length—
I've given up thee, and the world now is——nothing.

Eum. Alas! he falls. Help, Artamon, support him. [down.
Look how he bleeds! Let's lay him gently
Night gathers fast upon him—so—look up,
Or speak, if thou hast life—Nay then——my daughter!
She faints—Help there, and bear her to her tent. [EUDOCIA *faints away.*

Art. [*Weeping aside.*] I thank ye, eyes!
This is but decent tribute.
My heart was full before.

Eum. O Phocyas, Phocyas!
Alas! he hears not now, nor sees my sorrows!
Yet will I mourn for thee thou gallant youth!
As for a son——so let me call thee now.
A much-wrong'd friend, and an unhappy hero!
A fruitless zeal, yet all I now can show;
Tears vainly flow for errors learnt too late,
When timely caution should prevent our fate.
[*Exeunt omnes.*

EPILOGUE.

WELL, Sirs; you've seen, his passion to approve,
A desperate lover give up all for love,
All but his faith,—Methinks now I can 'say,
Among you airy sparks, some who would cry,
Phoo, pox,—for that what need of such a pother? [other.—
For one faith left, he would have got an-
True: 'twas your very case. Just what you say,
Our rebel fools were ripe for, t'other day;
Though disappointed now, they're wiser grown,
And with much grief—are forced to keep their own. [ruin,
These generous madmen gratis sought their
And set no price, not they—on their undoing.
For gain, indeed, we've others would not dally,
Or with stale principles, stand shilly-shally—
You'll find all their religion in 'Change-Ally,
There all pursue, or better means or worse,
Iago's rule "Put money in your purse,"
For though you differ still in speculation,
For why—each head is wiser than the nation,
The points of faith for ever will divide you,
And bravely you declare—none e'er shall ride you.
In practice all agree, and every man
Devoutly strives to get what wealth he can:
All parties at this golden altar bow,
Gain, powerful gain's the new religion now.
But leave we this—Since in the circle sun
So many shining beauties of our isle,
Who to more generous ends direct their aim,
And show us virtue in its fairest frame;
To these, with pride, the author bids me say,
'Twas chiefly for your sex he wrote this play
And if in one bright character you find
Superior honour, and a noble mind,
Know from the life Eudocia's charms he drew,
And hopes the piece shall live, that copies you
Sure of success, he cannot miss his end,
If every British heroine prove his friend.

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THE PROVOKED WIFE:

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY SIR JOHN VANBRUGH.

REMARKS.

THIS play has abundance of whimsical situation, although the characters are not very powerfully discriminated. Sir John was sensible of the grossness of making cuckoldom familiar, and thus left the point doubtful to the object, at the close of the play.

Through the whole Drama, the dialogue is excessively smart, and frequently witty. The manners are so far valuable to us, as they exhibit what was thought a Rake in the time of Vanbrugh. To say the truth, however, the character has suffered little change; the whole consists in abusing an unfortunate class of females, and assaulting the nightly guardians of the Peace.

It was as a full atonement for the licentiousness of the Provoked Wife, that he conceived and began the Provoked Husband.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

CONSTANT.
HEARTFREE.
SIR JOHN BRUTE.
LORD RAKE.
COLONEL BULLY.
RAZOR.
JUSTICE OF THE PEACE.

LADY BRUTE.
BELINDA.
LADY FANCIFUL.
MADEMOISELLE.
CORNET.

Constable and Watch.

PROLOGUE.

SINCE 'tis the intent and business of the stage,
To copy out the follies of the age;
To hold to every man a faithful glass,
And show him of what species he's an ass:
I hope the next that teaches in the school,
Will show our author he's a scribbling fool.
And that the satire may be sure to bite,
Kind Heaven! inspire some venom'd priest to write,
And grant some ugly lady may indite.
For I would have him lash'd, By Heaven! I would,
Till his presumption swam away in blood.
Three plays at once proclaim a face of brass,
No matter what they are; that's not the case,
To write three plays, e'en that's to be an ass.
But what I least forgive, he knows it too,
For to his cost he lately has known you.
Experience shows, to many a writer's smart,
You hold a court, where mercy ne'er had part;
So much of the old serpent's sting you have,
You love to damn, as Heaven delights to save.
In foreign parts, let a bold volunteer,
For public good, upon the stage appear,
He meets ten thousand smiles to dissipate his fear.
All tickle on th' adventuring young beginner,
And only scourge th' incorrigible sinner;
They touch indeed his faults, but with a hand
So gentle, that his merits still may stand:
Kindly they buoy the follies of his pen,
That he may shun 'em when he writes again.
But 'tis not so in this good natured town:
All's one, an ox, a poet, or a crown:
Old England's play was always knocking down.

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ACT I.

SCENE I.—SIR JOHN BRUTE'S *House.*

Enter SIR JOHN.

Sir J. What cloying meat is love—when matrimony's the sauce to it! Two years marriage has debauched my five senses.—Every thing I see, every thing I hear, every thing I feel, every thing I smell, and every think I taste—methinks has wife in't.—No boy was ever so weary of his tutor, no girl of her bib, no nun of doing penance, or old maid of being chaste, as I am of being married. Sure there's a secret curse entailed upon the very name of wife. My lady is a young lady, a fine lady, a witty lady, a virtuous lady—and yet I hate her. There is but one thing on earth I loath beyond her: that's fighting.—Would my courage come up to a fourth part of my ill-nature, I'd stand buff to her relations, and thrust her out of doors. But marriage has sunk me down to such an ebb of resolution, I dare not draw my sword, though even to get rid of my wife. But here she comes.

Enter LADY BRUTE.

Lady B. Do you dine at home to-day, Sir John?

Sir J. Why, do you expect I should tell you what I don't know myself?

Lady B. I thought there was no harm in asking you.

Sir J. If thinking wrong were an excuse for impertinence, women might be justified in most things they say or do.

Lady B. I'm sorry I have said any thing to displease you.

Sir J. Sorry for things past, is of as little importance to me, as my dining at home or abroad ought to be to you.

Lady B. My inquiry was only that I might have provided what you liked.

Sir J. Six to four you had been in the wrong there again; for what I liked yesterday I don't like to-day, and what I like to-day 'tis odds I mayn't like to-morrow.

Lady B. But if I had asked you what you liked?

Sir J. Why then there would be more asking about it than the thing is worth.

Lady B. I wish I did but know how I might please you.

Sir J. Ay, but that sort of knowledge is not a wife's talent.

Lady B. Whate'er my talent is, I'm sure my will has ever been to make you easy.

Sir J. If women were to have their wills, the world would be finely governed.

Lady B. What reason have I given you to use me as you do of late? It once was otherwise; you married me for love.

Sir J. And you me for money; so you have your reward, and I have mine.

Lady B. What is't that disturbs you?

Sir J. A parson.

Lady B. Why, what has he done to you?

Sir J. He has married me, and be damned to him. [*Exit.*

Lady B. The devil is in the fellow, I think.—I was told before I married him, that thus 'twould be: but I thought I had charms enough to govern him; and that where there was an estate, a woman must needs be happy; so my vanity has deceived me, and my ambition has made me uneasy. But there's some comfort still; if one would be revenged of him, these are good times; a woman may have a gallant, and a separate maintenance too—The surly puppy—yet he's a fool for't: for hitherto he has been no monster: but who knows how far he may provoke me? I never loved him, yet I have been ever true to him; and that, in spite of all the attacks of art and nature upon a poor weak woman's heart, in favour of a tempting lover. Methinks so noble a defence as I have made, should be rewarded with a better usage—Or who can tell——Perhaps a good part of what I suffer from my husband, may be a judgment upon me for my cruelty to my lover—But hold—let me go no further—I think I have a right to alarm this surly brute of mine—but if I know my heart—it will never let me go so far as to injure him.

Enter BELINDA.

Lady B. Good morrow, dear cousin.

Bel. Good morrow, Madam, you look pleased this morning.

Lady B. I am so.

Bel. With what, pray?

Lady B. With my husband.

Bel. Drown husbands! for yours is a provoking fellow: as he went out just now, I prayed him to tell me what time of day 'twas; and he asked me if I took him for the church-clock, that was obliged to tell all the parish.

Lady B. He has been saying some good obliging things to me too. In short, Belinda, he has used me so barbarously of late, that I could almost resolve to play the downright wife—and cuckold him.

Bel. That would be downright indeed.

Lady B. Why, after all, there's more to be said for't than you'd imagine, child. He is the first aggressor, not I.

Bel. Ah, but you know we must return good for evil.

Lady B. That may be a mistake in the translation.—Pr'ythee, be of my opinion, Belinda; for I'm positive I'm in the right; and if you'll keep up the prerogative of a woman, you'll likewise be positive you are in the right, whenever you do any thing you have a mind to.—But I shall play the fool and jest on, till I make you begin to think I'm in earnest.

Bel. I sha'n't take the liberty, Madam, to think of any thing that you desire to keep a secret from me.

Lady B. Alas, my dear, I have no secrets.—My heart could ne'er yet confine my tongue.

Bel. Your eyes, you mean; for I am sure I have seen them gadding, when your tongue has been locked up safe enough.

Lady B. My eyes gadding! Pr'ythee, after who, child?

Bel. Why, after one that thinks you hate him, as much as I know you love him.

Lady B. Constant, you mean.

Bel. I do so.

Lady B. Lord, what should put such a thing into your head?

Bel. That which puts things into most people's heads, observation.

Lady B. Why, what have you observed, in the name of wonder?

Bel. I have observed you blush when you met him: force yourself away from him; and then be out of humour with every thing about

you: in a word, never was a poor creature so spurred on by desire, or so reined in with fear.

Lady B. How strong is fancy!

Bel. How weak is woman!

Lady B. Pr'ythee, niece, have a better opinion of your aunt's inclination.

Bel. Dear aunt, have a better opinion of your niece's understanding.

Lady B. You'll make me angry.

Bel. You'll make me laugh.

Lady B. Then you are resolved to persist!

Bel. Positively.

Lady B. And all I can say—

Bel. Will signify nothing—

Lady B. Though I should swear 'twere false—

Bel. I should think it true.

Lady B. Then let us forgive, [*Kissing her.*] for we have both offended; I, in making a secret; you, in discovering it.

Bel. Good-nature may do much: but you have more reason to forgive one, than I have to pardon t'other.

Lady B. 'Tis true, Belinda, you have given me so many proofs of your friendship, that my reserve has been indeed a crime: but that you may more easily forgive me, remember, child, that when our nature prompts us to a thing our honour and religion forbid us, we would, were it possible, conceal even from the soul itself, the knowledge of the body's weakness.

Bel. Well, I hope, to make your friend amends, you'll hide nothing from her for the future, though the body should still grow weaker and weaker.

Lady B. No, from this moment I have no more reserve; and as proof of my repentance, I own, Belinda, I am in danger. Merit and wit assault me from without, nature and love solicit me within; my husband's barbarous usage piques me to revenge; and Satan, catching the fair occasion, throws in my way that vengeance which of all vengeance pleases woman best.

Bel. 'Tis well Constant don't know the weakness of the fortification; for, o' my conscience, he'd soon on to the assault.

Lady B. Ay, and I'm afraid carry the town too. But whatever you may have observed, I have dissembled so well as to keep him ignorant. So you see I'm no coquet, Belinda: and if you'll follow my advice, you'll never be one neither. 'Tis true, coquetry is one of the main ingredients in the natural composition of a woman; and I, as well as others, could, be well enough pleased to see a crowd of young fellows ogling, and glancing, and watching all occasions to do forty foolish officious things: nay, should some of them push on, even to hanging, or drowning: why—faith—if I should let pure woman alone, I should e'en be too well pleased with it.

Bel. I'll swear 'twould tickle me strangely.

Lady B. But after all, 'tis a vicious practice in us to give the least encouragement, but where we design to come to a conclusion.—For 'tis an unreasonable thing to engage a man in a disease, which we before-hand resolve we will never apply a cure to.

Bel. 'Tis true; but then a woman must abandon one of the supreme blessings of her life. For I am fully convinced, no man has half that pleasure in gallanting a mistress, as a woman has in jilting a gallant.

Lady B. The happiest woman then on earth must be our neighbour.

Bel. Oh, the impertinent composition!—She has vanity and affectation enough to make her a ridiculous original, and in spite of all that art and nature ever furnished to any of her sex before her.

Lady B. She concludes all men her captives; and whatever course they take, it serves to confirm her in that opinion.

Bel. If they shun her, she thinks 'tis modesty, and takes it for a proof of their passion.

Lady B. And if they are rude to her, 'tis conduct, and done to prevent town-talk.

Bel. When her folly makes them laugh, she thinks they are pleased with her wit.

Lady B. And when her impertinence makes them dull, concludes they are jealous of her favours.

Bel. All their actions and their words, she takes for granted, aim at her.

Lady B. And pities all other women, because she thinks they envy her.

Bel. Pray, out of pity to ourselves, let us find a better subject—for I'm weary of this.—Do you think your husband inclined to jealousy?

Lady B. O no; he does not love me well enough for that. Lord, how wrong men's maxims are! They are seldom jealous of their wives, unless they are very fond of them: whereas they ought to consider the women's inclinations, for there depends their fate. Well, men may talk, but they are not so wise as we—that's certain.

Bel. At least in our affairs.

Lady B. Nay, I believe we should outdo them in the business of the state too: for, methinks, they do, and undo, and make but bad work on't.

Bel. Why then don't we get into the intrigues of government, as well as they?

Lady B. Because we have intrigues of our own, that make us more sport, child. And so let's in, and consider of them. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—A Dressing-room.

Enter LADY FANCIFUL, MADEMOISELLE, *and* CORNET.

Lady F. How do I look this morning?

Cor. Your ladyship looks very ill, truly.

Lady F. Lard, how ill-natured thou art, Cornet, to tell me so, though the thing should be true. Don't you know that I have humility enough to be but too easily out of conceit with myself? Hold the glass; I dare say that will have more manners than you have. Mademoiselle, let me have your opinion too.

Mad. My opinion pe, Matam, dat your ladyship never look so well in your life.

Lady F. Well, the French are the prettiest obliging people; they say the most acceptable, well-mannered things—and never flatter.

Mad. Your ladyship say great justice inteed.

Lady F. Nay, every thing is just in my house but Cornet. The very looking-glass gives her the *dementi*. But I'm almost afraid it flatters me, it makes me look so very engaging. [*Looking affectedly in the glass.*

Mad. Inteed, Matam, your face be handsomer den all de looking-glass in de world, *croyez moy.*

Lady F. But is it possible my eyes can be so languishing—and so very full of fire?

Mad. Matam, if de glass was burning-

glass, I believe your eyes set de fire in de house.

Lady F. You may take that night-gown, Mademoiselle: get out of the room, Cornet—I can't endure you. This wench, methinks, does look so insufferably ugly.

Mad. Every ting look ugly, Matam, dat stand by your latyship.

Lady F. No, really, Mademoiselle, methinks you look mighty pretty.

Mad. Ah, Matam; de moon have no *eclat*, ven de sun appear.

Lady F. O, pretty expression! Have you ever been in love, Mademoiselle?

Mad. Ouy, Matam. [*Sighing.*

Lady F. And were you beloved again?

Mad. No, Matam. [*Sighing.*

Lady F. O ye gods! what an unfortunate creature should I be in such a case! But nature has made me nice for my own defence: I'm nice, strangely nice, Mademoiselle. I believe were the merit of whole mankind bestowed upon one single person, I should still think the fellow wanted something to make it worth my while to take notice of him: and yet I could love—nay, fondly love, were it possible to have a thing made on purpose for me: for I'm not cruel, Mademoiselle; I'm only nice.

Mad. Ah, Matam, I wish I was fine gentleman for your sake. I do all de ting in de world to get a little way into your heart. I make song, I make verse, I give you de serenade, I give great many present to Mademoiselle; I no eat, I no sleep, I be lean, I be mad, I hang myself, I drown myself. Ah, *ma chere dame, que je vous aimerois.* [Embracing her.

Lady F. Well, the French have strange obliging ways with them; you may take those two pair of gloves, Mademoiselle.

Mad. Me humbly tank my sweet lady.

Enter SERVANT *with a letter.*

Serv. Madam, here's a letter for your ladyship.

Lady F. 'Tis thus I'm importuned every morning, Mademoiselle. Pray, how do the French ladies when they are thus accablees?

Mad. Matam, dey never complain. *Au contraire*, when one Frense laty have got a hundred lover—den she do all she can—to get a hundred more.

Lady F. Well, let me die, I think they have *le gout bon*: for 'tis an unutterable pleasure to be adored by all the men, and envied by all the women—Yet I'll swear I'm concerned at the torture I give them. Lard, why was I formed to make the whole creation uneasy. But let me read my letter. [*Reads.*] "If you have a mind to hear of your faults, instead of being praised for your virtues, take the pains to walk in the Green-walk in St. James's Park, with your woman, an hour hence. You'll there meet one, who hates you for some things, as he could love you for others, and therefore is willing to endeavour your reformation—If you come to the place I mention, you'll know who I am: if you don't, you never shall; so take your choice."—This is strangely familiar, Mademoiselle; now have I a provoking fancy to know who this impudent fellow is.

Mad. Den take your scarf and your mask, and go to de *rendezvous*. De Frense laty do *justement comme ca.*

Lady F. Rendezvous! What, *rendezvous* with a man, Mademoiselle?

Mad. Eh, pourquoy non?

Lady F. What, and a man perhaps I never saw in my life?

Mad. Tant mieux: c'est donc quelque chose de nouveau.

Lady F. Why, how do I know what designs he may have? He may intend to ravish me for aught I know.

Mad. Ravish! *Bagatelle!* I would fain see one impudent rogue ravish Mademoiselle. *Oui, je le voudrois.*

Lady F. Oh, but my reputation, Mademoiselle, my reputation; ah, *ma chere* reputation!

Mad. Matam—*Quand on l'a une fois perdue—On n'en est plus embarassée.*

Lady F. Fy, Mademoiselle, fy; reputation is a jewel.

Mad. Qui coute bien chere, Matam.

Lady F. Why sure you would not sacrifice your honour to your pleasure.

Mad. Je suis philosophe.

Lady F. Bless me, how you talk! Why, what if honour be a burden, Mademoiselle, must it not be borne?

Mad. Chaqu'un à sa façon——Quand quelque-chose m'incommode, moi—je m'en defais, vite.

Lady F. Get you gone, you little naughty Frenchwoman you: I vow and swear I must turn you out of doors, if you talk thus.

Mad. Turn me out of doors! turn yourself out of doors, and go see what de gentleman have to say to you—*Tenez. Voilà* [Giving her her things hastily.] *votre esharp, voilà votre coife, voilà votre masque, voilà tout.* Hey *Mercure, coquin:* call one chair for Matam and one oder [*Calling within.*] for me. *Va t'en vite* [Turning to her lady, and helping her on hastily with her things.] *Allons*, Matam; *depechez vous donc. Mon dieu, quelles scrupules!*

Lady F. Well for once, Mademoiselle, I'll follow your advice out of the intemperate desire I have to know who this ill-bred fellow is. But I have too much *delicatease* to make a practice on't.

Mad. *Belle chose vrayment que la delicatesse, lors qu'il s'agit que divertir—à ca—Vous voilà équipée, partons.—Hé bien? qu' avez vous donc!*

Lady F. *J'ay peur.*

Mad. *Je n'en ai point moi.*

Lady F. I dare not go.

Mad. *Demeurez donc.*

Lady F. *Je suis poltrone.*

Mad. *Tant pis pour vous.*

Lady F. Curiosity's a wicked devil.

Mad. *C'est une charmante sainte.*

Lady F. It ruined our first parents.

Mad. *Elle a bien diverti leurs enfans.*

Lady F. *L'honneur est contre.*

Mad. *Le plaisir est pour.*

Lady F. Must I then go?

Mad. Must you go?—must you eat, must you drink, must you sleep, must you live? De nature bid you do one, de nature bid you do toder. *Vous me ferrez enrager.*

Lady F. But when reason corrects nature, Mademoiselle.

Mad. *Elle est donc bien insolente, c'est sa sœur ainée.*

Lady F. Do you then prefer your nature to your reason, Mademoiselle.

Mad. *Oui da.*

Lady F. *Pourquoi?*

Mad. Because my nature makes me merry, my reason makes me mad.

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Lady F. *Ah, la mechante Françoise.*
Mad. *Ah, la belle Angloise.*
[Exit, forcing her lady off.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—St. James's Park.

Enter Lady FANCYFUL *and* MADEMOISELLE.

Lady F. Well, I vow, Mademoiselle, I'm strangely impatient to know who this confident fellow is.

Enter HEARTFREE.

Look, there's Heartfree. But sure it can't be him: he's a professed woman-hater. Yet who knows what my wicked eyes may have done?

Mad. *Il nous approache*, Matam.

Lady F. Yes, 'tis he; now will he be most intolerably cavalier, though he should be in love with me.

Heart. Madam, I'm your humble servant. I perceive you have more humility and good-nature than I thought you had.

Lady F. What you attribute to humility and good nature, Sir, may perhaps be only due to curiosity. I had a mind to know who 'twas had ill manners enough to write that letter.
[*Throwing him his letter.*

Heart. Well, and now I hope you are satisfied.

Lady F. I am so, Sir; good-by t'ye.

Heart. Nay, hold there; though you have done your business, I ha'n't done mine: by your ladyship's leave, we must have one moment's prattle together. Have you a mind to be the prettiest woman about town, or not? How she stares upon me! What! this passes for an impertinent question with you now, because you think you are so already.

Lady F. Pray, Sir, let me ask you a question in my turn: by what right do you pretend to examine me?

Heart. By the same right that the strong govern the weak, because I have you in my power; for you cannot get so quickly to your coach, but I shall have time enough to make you hear every thing I have to say to you.

Lady F. These are strange liberties you take, Mr. Heartfree.

Heart. They are so, Madam, but there's no help for't; for know that I have a design upon you.

Lady F. Upon me, Sir!

Heart. Yes; and one that will turn to your glory, and my comfort, if you will be but a little wiser than you use to be.

Lady. F. Very well, Sir.

Heart. Let me see—your vanity, Madam, I take to be about some eight degrees higher than any woman's in the town, let t'other be who she will; and my indifference is naturally about the same pitch. Now could you find the way to turn this indifference into fire and flame, methinks your vanity ought to be satisfied: and this, perhaps, you might bring about upon pretty reasonable terms.

Lady F. And pray at what rate would this indifference be bought off, if one should have so depraved an appetite to desire it?

Heart. Why, Madam, to drive a quaker's bargain, and make but one word with you, if I do part with it—you must lay down—your affectation.

Lady F. My affectation, Sir!

Heart. Why I ask you nothing but what you may very well spare.

Lady F. You grow rude, Sir. Come, Mademoiselle, it is high time to be gone.

Mad. *Allons, allons, allons.*

Heart. [*Stopping them.*] Nay, you may as well stand still; for hear me you shall, walk which way you please.

Lady F. What mean you, Sir?

Heart. I mean to tell you, that you are the most ungrateful woman upon earth.

Lady F. Ungrateful! to whom?

Heart. To nature.

Lady F. Why, what has nature done for me?

Heart. What you have undone by art: it made you handsome; it gave you beauty to a miracle, a shape without a fault, wit enough to make them relish, and so turned you loose to your own discretion; which has made such work with you, that you are become the pity of our sex, and the jest of your own. There is not a feature in your face, but you have found the way to teach it some affected convulsion; your feet, your hands, your very fingers' ends are directed never to move without some ridiculous air or other; and your language is a suitable trumpet, to draw people's eyes upon the raree-show.

Mad. [Aside.] *Est ce qu'on fait l'amour en Angleterre comme ça?*

Lady F. [*Aside.*] Now could I cry for madness, but that I know he'd laugh at me for it.

Heart. Now do you hate me for telling you the truth; but that's because you don't believe 'tis so; for were you once convinced of that, you'd reform for your own sake.

Lady F. Every circumstance of nice breeding must needs appear ridiculous to one who has so natural an antipathy to good manners.

Heart. But suppose I could find the means to convince you, that the whole world is of my opinion.

Lady F. Sir, though you, and all the world you talk of, should be so impertinently officious, as to think to persuade me I don't know how to behave myself; I should still have charity enough for my own understanding, to believe myself in the right, and all you in the wrong.

Mad. *Le violà mort.*
[Exeunt LADY F. and MAD.

Heart. [*Gazing at her.*] There her single clapper has published the sense of the whole sex. Well, this once I have endeavoured to wash the black-moor white; but henceforward I'll sooner undertake to teach sincerity to a courtier, generosity to a usurer, honesty to a lawyer, than discretion to a woman I see has once set her heart upon playing the fool.

Enter CONSTANT.

Morrow, Constant.

Con. Good morrow, Jack: what are you doing here this morning?

Heart. Doing! guess if you can.—Why, I have been endeavouring to persuade my Lady Fanciful, that she's the most foolish woman about town.

Con. A pretty endeavour truly.

Heart. I have told her, in as plain English as I could speak, both what the town says of her, and what I think of her. In short, I have used her as an absolute king would do Magna Charta.

Con. And how does she take it?

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Heart. As children do pills; bite them, but can't swallow them.

Con. But pr'ythee, what has put it into your head, of all mankind, to turn reformer?

Heart. Why, one thing was, the morning hung upon my hands, I did not know what to do with myself; and another was, that as little as I care for women, I could not see with patience one that Heaven had taken such wondrous pains about, be so very industrious to make herself the Jack-pudding of the creation.

Con. Well, now could I almost wish to see my cruel mistress make the self same use of what Heaven has done for her, that so I might be cured of the same disease that makes me so very uneasy; for love, love is the devil, Heartfree.

Heart. And why do you let the devil govern you?

Con. Because I have more flesh and blood than grace and self-denial. My dear, dear mistress, 'sdeath! that so genteel a woman should be a saint, when religion's out of fashion.

Heart. Nay, she's much in the wrong truly: but who knows how far time and good example may prevail?

Con. Oh! they have played their parts in vain already; 'tis now two years since the fellow her husband invited me to his wedding; and there was the first time I saw this charming woman, whom I have loved ever since; but she is cold, my friend, still cold as the northern star.

Heart. So are all women by nature, which maketh them so willing to be warmed.

Con. O, don't profane their sex: pr'ythee think them all angels for her sake; for she's virtuous even to a fault.

Heart. A lover's head is a good accountable thing truly; he adores his mistress for being virtuous, and yet is very angry with her because she wont be kind.

Con. Well, the only relief I expect in my misery is to see thee, some day or other, as deeply engaged as myself, which will force me to be merry in the midst of all my misfortunes.

Heart. That day will never come, be assured, Ned: not but that I can pass a night with a woman, and for the time, perhaps, make myself as good sport as you can do. Nay, I can court a woman too, call her nymph, angel, goddess, what you please: but here's the difference between you and I; I persuade a woman she's an angel, and she persuades you she's one. But, pr'ythee, let me tell you how I avoid falling in love; that which serves me for prevention, may chance to serve you for a cure.

Con. Well, use the ladies moderately then, and I'll hear you.

Heart. That using them moderately undoes us all: but I'll use them justly, and that you ought to be satisfied with. I always consider a woman, not as the tailor, the shoe-maker, the tire-woman, the sempstress, and, (which is more than all that) the poet makes her; but I consider her as pure nature has contrived her, and that more strictly than I should have done our old grandmother Eve, had I seen her naked in the garden; for I consider her turned inside out. Her heart well examined, I find there pride, vanity, covetousness, indiscretion; but above all things, malice: plots eternally forging to destroy one another's reputations, and as honestly to charge the levity of men's tongues with the scandal; hourly debates how to make poor gentlemen in love with them, with no other intent but to use them like dogs when they have done; a constant desire of doing more mischief, and an everlasting war waged against truth and good-nature.

Con. Very well, Sir, an admirable composition, truly!

Heart. Then for her outside, I consider it merely as an outside; she has a thin tiffany covering, just over such stuff as you and I are made on. As for her motion, her mien, her airs, and those tricks, I know they affect you mightily. If you should see your mistress at a coronation, dragging her peacock's train, with all her state and insolence about her, 'twould strike you with all the awful thoughts that Heaven itself could pretend to form in you: whereas I turn the whole matter into a jest, and suppose her strutting in the self-same stately manner, with nothing on but her stays and her scanty quilted under petticoat.

Con. Hold thy profane tongue; for I'll hear no more.

Heart. What, you'll love on then?

Con. Yes.

Heart. Yet have no hopes at all.

Con. None.

Heart. Nay, the resolution may be discreet enough; perhaps you have found out some new philosophy, that love, like virtue, is its own reward; so you and your mistress will be as well content at a distance, as others that have less learning, are in coming together.

Con. No; but if she should prove kind at last, my dear Heartfree. [*Embracing him.*

Heart. Nay, pr'ythee don't take me for your mistress; for lovers are very troublesome.

Con. Well, who knows what time may do?

Heart. And just now he was sure time could do nothing.

Con. Yet not one kind glance in two years, is somewhat strange.

Heart. Not strange at all; she don't like you, that's all the business.

Con. Pr'ythee, don't distract me.

Heart. Nay, you are a good handsome young fellow, she might use you better.—Come, will you go see her: perhaps she may have changed her mind; there's some hopes, as long as she's a woman.

Con. O, 'tis in vain to visit her: sometimes to get a sight of her, I visit that beast her husband, but she certainly finds some pretence to quit the room as soon as I enter.

Heart. It's much she don't tell him you have made love to her too; for that's another good-natured thing usual amongst women, in which they have several ends. Sometimes 'tis to recommend their virtue, that they may be kind with the greater security. Sometimes 'tis to make their husbands fight, in hopes they may be killed, when their affairs require it should be so: but most commonly 'tis to engage two men in a quarrel, that they may have the credit of being fought for; and if the lover's killed in the business, they cry, poor fellow, he had ill luck—and so they go to cards.

Con. Thy injuries to women are not to be forgiven. Look to't, if ever you fall into their hands—

Heart. They can't use me worse than they do you, that speak well of them. O ho! here comes the knight.

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Enter SIR JOHN BRUTE.

Heart. Your humble servant, Sir John.
Sir J. Servant, Sir.
Heart. How does all your family?
Sir J. Pox o' my family.
Con. How does your lady? I ha'n't seen her abroad a good while.
Sir J. Do! I don't know how she does, not I; she was well enough yesterday: I ha'n't been at home to-night.
Con. What, were you out of town?
Sir J. Out of town! No, I was drinking.
Con. You are a true Englishman; don't know your own happiness. If I were married to such a woman, I would not be from her a night, for all the wine in France.
Sir J. Not from her?—'Oons—what a time should a man have of that?
Heart. Why, there's no division, I hope.
Sir J. No; but there's a conjunction, and that's worse; a pox of the parson—why the plague don't you too marry? I fancy I look like the devil to you.
Heart. Why, you don't think you have horns, do you?
Sir J. No, I believe my wife's religion will keep her honest.
Heart. And what will make her keep her religion?
Sir J. Persecution; and therefore she shall have it.
Heart. Have a care, knight; women are tender things.
Sir J. And yet, methinks, 'tis a hard matter to break their hearts.
Con. Fy, fy! you have one of the best wives in the world, and yet you seem the most uneasy husband.
Sir J. Best wives! the woman is well enough; she has no vice that I know of, but she's a wife; and—damn a wife; if I were married to a hogshead of claret, matrimony would make me hate it.
Heart. Why did you marry, then; you were old enough to know your own mind.
Sir J. Why did I marry! I married because I had a mind to lay with her, and she would not let me.
Heart. Why did you not ravish her?
Sir J. Yes, and so have hedged myself into forty quarrels with her relations, besides buying my pardon: but more than all that, you must know I was afraid of being damned in those days: for I kept sneaking cowardly company, fellows that went to church, said grace to their meat, and had not the least tincture of quality about them.
Heart. But I think you have got into a better gang now.
Sir J. Zoons, Sir, my Lord Rake and I are hand and glove: I believe we may get our bones broke together to-night. Have you a mind to share a frolic?
Con. Not I, truly; my talents lie in softer exercises.
Sir J. What, a down bed and strumpet?—A pox of venery, I say. Will you come and drink with me this afternoon?
Con. I can't drink to-day; but we'll come and sit an hour with you if you will.
Sir J. Pough, pox, sit an hour! Why can't you drink?
Con. Because I'm to see my mistress.
Sir J. Who's that?
Con. Why, do you use to tell?
Sir J. Yes.
Con. So wont I.
Sir J. Why?
Con. Because it is a secret.
Sir J. Would my wife knew it, 'twould be no secret long.
Con. Why, do you think she can't keep a secret?
Sir J. No more than she could keep Lent.
Heart. Pr'ythee, tell it her to try, Constant.
Sir J. No pr'ythee, don't, that I mayn't be plagued with it.
Con. I'll hold you a guinea you don't make her tell it you.
Sir J. I'll hold you a guinea I do.
Con. Which way?
Sir J. Why, I'll beg her not to tell it me.
Heart. Nay, if any thing does it, that will.
Con. But do you think, Sir——
Sir J. 'Oons, Sir, I think a woman and a secret are the two impertinentest themes in the universe: therefore pray let's hear no more of my wife nor your mistress. Damn them both with all my heart, and every thing else that daggles a petticoat, except four generous whores who are drunk with my Lord Rake and I ten times in a fortnight. [*Exit*.
Con. Here's a dainty fellow for you! and the veriest coward too. But his usage of his wife makes me ready to stab the villain.
Heart. Lovers are short-sighted: all their senses run into that feeling. This proceeding of his is the only thing on earth can make you fortunate. If any thing can prevail upon her to accept a gallant, 'tis his usage of her.—Pr'ythee, take heart, I have great hopes for you; and since I can't bring you quite off her, I'll endeavour to bring you quite on; for a whining lover is the damnest companion upon earth.
Con. My dear friend, flatter me a little more with these hopes; for whilst they prevail, I have Elysium within me, and could melt with joy.
Heart. Pray, no melting yet; let things go farther first. This afternoon, perhaps, we shall make some advance. In the mean while, let's go dine at Locket's, and let hope get you a stomach. [*Exeunt*.

SCENE II.—LADY FANCYFUL'S *House*.

Enter LADY FANCYFUL *and* MADEMOISELLE.

Lady F. Did you ever see any thing so importune, Mademoiselle?
Mad. Indeed, Matam, to say de trute, he want leetel good-breeding.
Lady F. Good breeding! he wants to be caned, Mademoiselle. An insolent fellow! and yet let me expose my weakness, 'tis the only man on earth I could resolve to dispense my favours on, were he but a fine gentleman. Well, did men but know how deep an impression a fine gentleman makes in a lady's heart, they would reduce all their studies to that of good breeding alone.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Will your ladyship please to dine yet?
Lady F. Yes, let them serve. [*Exit* SERV.] Sure this Heartfree has bewitched me, Mademoiselle. You can't imagine how oddly he mixt himself in my thoughts during my rapture e'en now. I vow 'tis a thousand pities

he is not more polished; don't you think so?

Mad. Matam, I think it so great pity, that if I was in your ladyship's place, I take him home in my house, I lock him up in my closet, and I never let him go, till I teach him every ting dat fine lady expect from fine gentleman.

Lady F. Why truly, I believe I should soon subdue his brutality; for, without doubt, he has a strange penchant to grow fond of me, in spite of his aversion to the sex, else he would ne'er have taken so much pains about me. Lord, how proud would some poor creatures be of such a conquest! But I, alas! I don't know how to receive as a favour, what I take to be so infinitely my due. But what shall I do to new mould him, Mademoiselle, for till then, he's my utter aversion.

Mad. Matam, you must laugh at him in all de places dat you meet him, and turn into de ridicule all he say, and all he do.

Lady F. Why, truly, satire has ever been of wondrous use to reform ill-manners. Besides, 'tis my particular talent to ridicule folks. I can be severe, strangely severe, when I will, Mademoiselle—Give me the pen and ink—I find myself whimsical—I'll write to him—Or I'll let it alone, and be severe upon him that way. [*Sitting down to write, rising up again.*]—Yet active severity is better than passive. [*Sitting down.*]—'Tis as good to let it alone too; for every lash I give him perhaps he'll take for a favour. [*Rising.*]—Yet 'tis a thousand pities so much satire should be lost. [*Sitting.*]—But if it should have a wrong effect upon him, 'twould distract me. [*Rising.*]—Well, I must write though, after all. [*Sitting.*—Or I'll let it alone, which is the same thing. [*Rising.*]

Mad. *La voilà determinée.* [Exeunt.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—Opens and discovers SIR JOHN, LADY BRUTE, *and* BELINDA, *rising from the table.*

Sir J. Here; take away the things: I expect company. But first bring me a pipe: I'll smoke. [*To a* SERVANT.

Lady B. Lord, Sir John, I wonder you wont leave that nasty custom.

Sir J. Pr'ythee, don't be impertinent.

Bel. [*To* LADY B.] I wonder who those are he expects this afternoon.

Lady B. I'd give the world to know. Perhaps 'tis Constant, he comes here sometimes; if it does prove him, I'm resolved I'll share the visit.

Bel. We'll send for our work and sit here.

Lady B. He'll choke us with his tobacco.

Bel. Nothing will choke us when we are doing what we have a mind to. Lovewell—

Enter LOVEWELL.

Love. Madam.

Lady B. Here; bring my cousin's work and mine hither.

[*Exit* LOVE. *and re-enters with their work.*

Sir J. Why, pox can't you work somewhere else?

Lady B. We shall be careful not to disturb you, Sir.

Bel. Your pipe would make you too thoughtful, uncle, if you were left alone; our prittle prattle will cure your spleen.

Sir J. Will it so, Mrs. Pert! Now I believe it will so increase it; [*Sitting and smoking.*] I shall take my own house for a paper-mill.

Lady B. [*To* BEL. *aside.*] Don't let's mind him; let him say what he will.

Sir J. A woman's tongue a cure for the spleen! 'oons—[*Aside.*] If a man had got the head-ach, they'd be for applying the same remedy.

Lady B. You have done a great deal, Belinda, since yesterday.

Bel. Yes, I have work'd very hard; how do you like it?

Lady B. O! 'tis the prettiest fringe in the world. Well, cousin, you have the happiest fancy: pr'ythee advise me about altering my crimson petticoat.

Sir J. A pox o' your petticoat; here's such a pratting, a man can't digest his own thoughts for you.

Lady B. Don't answer him. [*Aside.*]—Well, what do you advise me?

Bel. Why, really, I would not alter it at all. Methinks 'tis very pretty as it is.

Lady B. Ay, that's true; but you know one grows weary of the prettiest things in the world, when one has had them long.

Sir J. Yes, I have taught her that.

Bel. Shall we provoke him a little?

Lady B. With all my heart. Belinda, don't you long to be married?

Bel. Why there are some things in it which I could like well enough.

Lady B. What do you think you should dislike?

Bel. My husband, a hundred to one else.

Lady B. O ye wicked wretch! Sure you don't speak as you think!

Bel. Yes, I do: especially if he smoked tobacco. [*He looks earnestly at them.*

Lady B. Why, that many times takes off worse smells.

Bel. Then he must smell very ill indeed.

Lady B. So some men will, to keep their wives from coming near them.

Bel. Then those wives should cuckold them at a distance.

[*He runs in a fury, throws his pipe at them, and drives them out. As they run off, enter* CONSTANT *and* HEARTFREE, LADY BRUTE *runs against* CONSTANT.

Sir J. 'Oons, get you gone up stairs, you confederating strumpets you, or I'll cuckold you with a vengeance.

Lady B. O lord! he'll beat us, he'll beat us. Dear, dear Mr. Constant, save us.

[*Exeunt* LADY B. *and* BEL.

Sir J. I'll cuckold you with a pox.

Con. Heaven! Sir John, what's the matter?

Sir J. Sure, if women had been ready created, the devil, instead of being kicked down into hell, had been married.

Heart. Why, what new plagues have you found now?

Sir J. Why, these two gentlewomen did but hear me say I expected you here this afternoon: upon which they presently resolved to take up the room o' purpose to plague me and my friends.

Con. Was that all? Why, we should have been glad of their company.

Sir J. Then I should have been weary of yours; for I can't relish both together. They found fault with my smoking tobacco too, and

said men stunk. But I have a good mind—to say something.

Con. No, nothing against the ladies, pray.

Sir J. Split the ladies. Come, will you sit down?—Give us some wine, fellow.—You wont smoke?

Con. No, nor drink neither, at this time; I must ask your pardon.

Sir J. What, this mistress of yours runs in your head! I'll warrant it's some such squeamish minx as my wife, that's grown so dainty of late, she finds fault even with a dirty shirt.

Heart. That a woman may do, and not be very dainty neither.

Sir J. Pox o' the women, let's drink. Come, you shall take one glass, though I send for a box of lozenges, to sweeten your mouth after it.

Con. Nay, if one glass will satisfy you, I'll drink it, without putting you to that expense.

Sir J. Why, that's honest. Fill some wine, sirrah. So, here's to you, gentlemen.—A wife's the devil.—To your both being married. [*They drink.*

Heart. O, your most humble servant, Sir.

Sir J. Well, how do you like my wine?

Con. 'Tis very good, indeed.

Heart. 'Tis admirable.

Sir J. Then give us t'other glass.

Con. No, pray excuse us now: we'll come another time, and then we won't spare it.

Sir J. This one glass, and no more. Come, it shall be your mistress's health, and that's a great compliment from me, I assure you.

Con. And 'tis a very obliging one to me: so give us the glasses.

Sir J. So; let her live— [*He coughs in the glass.*

Heart. And be kind.

Con. What's the matter? Does it go the wrong way?

Sir J. If I had love enough to be jealous, I should take this for an ill omen; for I never drank my wife's health in my life, but I puked in my glass.

Con. O, she's too virtuous to make any reasonable man jealous.

Sir J. Pox of her virtue! If I could catch her adulterating, I might be divorced from her by law.

Heart. And so pay her a yearly pension, to be a distinguished cuckold.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Sir, there's my Lord Rake, Colonel Bully, and some other gentlemen, at the Blue Posts, desire your company.

Sir J. God's so, we are to consult about playing the devil to-night.

Heart. Well, we wont hinder business.

Sir J. Methinks I don't know how to leave you two? but for once I must make bold. Or, look you—may be the conference mayn't last long; so, if you'll wait here half an hour, or an hour; if I don't come then—why then—I wont come at all.

Heart. [*To* CONSTANT.] A good modest proposition truly! [*Aside.*

Con. But let's accept on't, however. Who knows what may happen?

Heart. Well, Sir, to show you how fond we are of your company, we'll expect your return as long as we can.

Sir J. Nay, may be I mayn't stay at all; but business, you know, must be done. So, your servant. Or, hark you, if you have a mind to take a frisk with us, I have an interest with my lord, I can easily introduce you.

Con. We are much beholden to you; but for my part, I'm engaged another way.

Sir J. What! to your mistress, I'll warrant. Pr'ythee leave your nasty punk to entertain herself with her own wicked thoughts, and make one with us to-night.

Con. Sir, 'tis business that is to employ me.

Heart. And me; and business must be done, you know.

Sir J. Ay, women's business, though the world were consumed for't. [*Exit.*

Con. Farewell, beast; and now, my dear friend, would my mistress be but as complaisant as some men's wives, who think it a piece of good breeding to receive the visits of their husband's friends in his absence!

Heart. Why, for your sake, I could forgive her, though she should be so complaisant to receive something else in his absence. But what way shall we invent to see her?

Con. O, ne'er hope it: invention will prove as vain as wishes.

Enter LADY BRUTE *and* BELINDA.

Heart. What do you think now, friend?

Con. I think I shall swoon.

Heart. I'll speak first, then, while you fetch breath.

Lady B. We think ourselves obliged, gentlemen, to come and return you thanks for your knight-errantry. We were just upon being devoured by the fiery dragon.

Bel. Did not his fumes almost knock you down, gentlemen?

Heart. Truly, ladies, we did undergo some hardships; and should have done more, if some greater heroes than ourselves, hard by, had not diverted him.

Con. Though I am glad of the service you are pleased to say we have done you, yet I'm sorry we could do it in no other way, than by making ourselves privy to what you would perhaps have kept a secret.

Lady B. For Sir John's part, I suppose he designed it no secret, since he made so much noise: and for myself, truly, I'm not much concerned, since 'tis fallen only into this gentleman's hand and yours; who, I have many reasons to believe, will neither interpret, nor report any thing to my disadvantage.

Con. Your good opinion, Madam, was what I feared I never could have merited.

Lady B. Your fears were vain, then, Sir; for I'm just to every body.

Heart. Pr'ythee, Constant, what is't you do to get the ladies' good opinions; for I'm a novice at it.

Bel. Sir, will you give me leave to instruct you?

Heart. Yes, that I will, with all my soul, Madam.

Bel. Why then, you must never be a sloven, never be out of humour; never smoke tobacco; nor drink but when you are dry.

Heart. That's hard.

Con. Nay, if you take his bottle from him, you break his heart, Madam.

Bel. Why, is it possible the gentleman can love drinking.

Heart. Only by way of antidote.

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Bel. Against what, pray?

Heart. Against love, Madam.

Lady B. Are you afraid of being in love, Sir?

Heart. I should, if there were any danger of it.

Lady B. Pray, why so?

Heart. Because I always had an aversion to being used like a dog.

Bel. Why, truly, men in love are seldom used better.

Lady B. But was you never in love, Sir?

Heart. No, I thank Heaven, Madam.

Bel. Pray, where got you your learning then?

Heart. From other people's experience.

Bel. That's being a spunger, Sir, which is scarce honest: if you'd buy some experience with your own money, as 'twould be fairlier got, so 'twould stick longer by you.

Enter FOOTMAN.

Foot. Madam, here's my Lady Fancyful, to wait upon your ladyship.

Lady B. Shield me, kind Heaven! What an inundation of impertinence is here coming upon us!

Enter LADY FANCYFUL, *who runs first to* LADY BRUTE, *then to* BELINDA, *kissing them.*

Lady F. My dear Lady Brute, and sweet Belinda, methinks 'tis an age since I saw you.

Lady B. Yet 'tis but three days; sure you have passed your time very ill, it seems so long to you.

Lady F. Why really, to confess the truth to you, I am so everlastingly fatigued with the addresses of unfortunate gentlemen, that were it not for the extravagancy of the example, I should e'en tear out these wicked eyes with my own fingers, to make both myself and mankind easy. What think you on't, Mr. Heartfree, for I take you to be my faithful adviser?

Heart. Why, truly, Madam—I think every project that is for the good of mankind ought to be encouraged.

Lady F. Then I have your consent, Sir?

Heart. To do whatever you please, Madam.

Lady F. You had a much more limited complaisance this morning, Sir. Would you believe it, ladies? the gentleman has been so exceeding generous, to tell me of above fifty faults in less time than it was well possible for me to commit two of them.

Con. Why, truly, Madam, my friend there is apt to be something familiar with the ladies.

Lady F. He is indeed, Sir; but he's wondrous charitable with it: he has had the goodness to design a reformation, e'en down to my fingers' ends.——'Twas thus, I think, Sir, [*Opening her fingers in an awkward manner.*] you'd have them stand——My eyes too he did not like: How was't you would have directed them; thus, I think. [*Staring at him.*]—Then there was something amiss in my gait too; I don't know well how 'twas! but as I take it, he would have me walk like him. Pray, Sir, do me the favour to take a turn or two about the room, that the company may see you. He's sullen, ladies, and wont. But to make short, and give you as true an idea as I can of the matter, I think it was much about this figure in general, he would have moulded me to: but I was an obstinate woman, and could not resolve to make myself mistress of his heart, by growing as awkward as his fancy.

[*She walks awkwardly about, staring and looking ungainly, then changes on a sudden to the extremity of her usual affectation.*

Heart. Just thus women do, when they think we are in love with them, or when they are so with us.

[CONSTANT *and* LADY BRUTE *talk together apart.*

Lady F. 'Twould, however, be less vanity for me, to conclude the former, than you the latter, Sir.

Heart. Madam, all I shall presume to conclude is, that if I were in love, you'd find the means to make me soon weary on't.

Lady F. Not by over-fondness, upon my word, Sir. But pr'ythee let's stop here; for you are so much governed by instinct, I know you'll grow brutish at last.

Bel. [*Aside.*] Now am I sure she's fond of him: I'll try to make her jealous. Well, for my part, I should be glad to find somebody would be so free with me, that I might know my faults, and mend them.

Lady F. Then pray let me recommend this gentleman to you: I have known him some time, and will be surety for him, that upon a very limited encouragement on your side, you shall find an extended impudence on his.

Heart. I thank you, Madam, for your recommendation; but hating idleness, I'm unwilling to enter into a place where I believe there would be nothing to do. I was fond of serving your ladyship, because I knew you'd find me constant employment.

Lady F. I told you he'd be rude, Belinda.

Bel. O, a little bluntness is a sign of honesty, which makes me always ready to pardon it. So, Sir, if you have no other objection to my service, but the fear of being idle in it, you may venture to list yourself: I shall find you work, I warrant you.

Heart. Upon those terms I engage, Madam: and this, with your leave, I take for earnest.

[*Offers to kiss her hand.*

Bel. Hold there, Sir; I'm none of your earnest givers. But if I'm well served, I give good wages, and pay punctually.

[HEARTFREE *and* BELINDA *seem to continue talking familiarly together.*

Lady F. [*Aside.*] I don't like this jesting between them—Methinks the fool begins to look as if he were in earnest, but then he must be a fool indeed—Lard, what a difference there is between me and her. [*Looking at* BELINDA *scornfully.*] How should I despise such a thing if I were a man!——What a nose she has——What a chin——What a neck——Then her eyes——And the worst kissing lips in the universe——No, no, he can never like her, that's positive—Yet I can't suffer them together any longer. Mr. Heartfree, do you know that you and I must have no quarrel for all this? I can't forbear being a little severe now and then: but women, you know, may be allowed any thing.

Heart. Up to a certain age, Madam.

Lady F. Which I'm not yet past, I hope.

Heart. [*Aside.*] Nor never will, I dare swear.

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Lady F. [*To* Lady B.] Come, Madam, will your ladyship be witness to our reconciliation?

Lady B. You are agreed then at last.

Heart. [*Slightingly.*] We forgive.

Lady F. [*Aside.*] That was a cold, ill-natured reply.

Lady B. Then there's no challenges sent between you?

Heart. Not from me, I promise. [*Aside to* Con.] But that's more than I'll do for her; for I know she can as well be hanged as forbear writing to me.

Con. That I believe. But I think we had best be going, lest she should suspect something, and be malicious.

Heart. With all my heart.

Con. Ladies, we are your humble servants. I see Sir John is quite engaged; 'twould be in vain to expect him. Come, Heartfree. [*Exit.*

Heart. Ladies, your servant. [*To* Bel.] I hope, Madam, you wont forget our bargain; I'm to say what I please to you. [*Exit.*

Bel. Liberty of speech entire, Sir.

Lady F. [*Aside.*] Very pretty, truly—But how the blockhead went out languishing at her; and not a look towards me—Well, people may talk, but miracles art not ceased. For 'tis more than natural such a rude fellow as he, and such a little impertinent as she, should be capable of making a woman of my sphere uneasy. But I can bear her sight no longer—methinks, she is grown ten times uglier than Cornet. I must home and study revenge. [*To* Lady B.] Madam, your humble servant; I must take my leave.

Lady B. What, going already, Madam?

Lady F. I must beg you'll excuse me this once; for really I have eighteen visits to return this afternoon: so you see I'm importuned by the women, as well as the men.

Bel. [*Aside.*] And she's quits with them both.

Lady F. [*Going.*] Nay, you sha'n't go one step out of the room.

Lady B. Indeed I'll wait upon you down.

Lady F. No, sweet Lady Brute, you know I swoon at ceremony.

Lady B. Pray give me leave.

Lady F. You know I wont.

Lady B. Indeed I must.

Lady F. Indeed you sha'n't.

Lady B. Indeed I will.

Lady F. Indeed you sha'n't.

Lady B. Indeed I will.

Lady F. Indeed you sha'n't. Indeed, indeed, indeed, you sha'n't. [*Exit running, they follow.*

Re-enter Lady Brute.

Lady B. This impertinent woman has put me out of humour for a fortnight—What an agreeable moment has her foolish visit interrupted! Lord, what a pleasure there is in doing what we should not do!

Re-enter Constant.

Ha! here again!

Con. Though the renewing my visit may seem a little irregular, I hope I shall obtain your pardon for it, Madam, when you know I only left the room, lest the lady who was here should have been as malicious in her remarks, as she is foolish in her conduct.

Lady B. He who has discretion enough to be tender of a woman's reputation, carries a virtue about him that may atone for a great many faults.

Con. If it has a title to atone for any, its pretensions must needs be strongest, where the crime is love. I therefore hope I shall be forgiven the attempt I have made upon your heart, since my enterprize has been a secret to all the world but yourself.

Lady B. Secrecy, indeed, in sins of this kind, is an argument of weight to lessen the punishment; but nothing's a plea for a pardon entire, without sincere repentance.

Con. If sincerity in repentance consists in sorrow for offending, no cloister ever inclosed so true a penitent as I should be. But I hope it cannot be reckoned an offence to love, where it is a duty to adore.

Lady B. 'Tis an offence, a great one, where it would rob a woman of all she ought to be adored for—her virtue.

Con. Virtue;—that phantom of honour, which men in every age have so condemned; they have thrown it amongst the women to scramble for.

Lady B. If it be a thing of so very little value, why do you so earnestly recommend it your wives and daughters?

Con. We recommend it to our wives, Madam, because we would keep them to ourselves; and to our daughters, because we would dispose of them to others.

Lady B. 'Tis then of some importance, it seems, since you can't dispose of them without it.

Con. That importance, Madam, lies in the humour of the country, not in the nature of the thing. Pray what does your ladyship think of a powdered coat for deep mourning?

Lady B. I think, Sir, your sophistry has all the effect that you can reasonably expect it should have; it puzzles, but don't convince.

Con. I'm sorry for it.

Lady B. I'm sorry to hear you say so.

Con. Pray why?

Lady B. Because if you expected more from it, you have a worse opinion of my understanding than I desire you should have.

Con. [*Aside.*] I comprehend her: she would have me set a value upon her chastity, that I might think myself the more obliged to her, when she makes me a present of it. [*To her.*] I beg you will believe I did but rally, Madam; I know you judge too well of right and wrong, to be deceived by arguments like those. And I hope you will have so favourable an opinion of my understanding too, to believe the thing called virtue has worth enough with me, to pass for an eternal obligation where'er 'tis sacrificed.

Lady B. It is, I think, so great a one, as nothing can repay.

Con. Yes; the making the man you love your everlasting debtor.

Lady B. When debtors once have borrowed all we have to lend, they are very apt to grow shy of their creditors' company.

Con. That, Madam, is only when they are forced to borrow of usurers, and not of a generous friend. Let us choose our creditors, and we are seldom so ungrateful as to shun them.

Lady B. What think you of Sir John, Sir? I was his free choice.

Con. I think he's married, Madam.

Lady B. Does marriage then exclude men from your rule of constancy?

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Con. It does. Constancy's a brave, free, haughty, generous agent, that cannot buckle to the chains of wedlock.

Lady B. Have you no exceptions to this general rule, as well as t'other?

Con. Yes, I would, after all, be an exception to it myself, if you were free in power and will to make me so.

Lady B. Compliments are well placed, where 'tis impossible to lay hold on them.

Con. I would to Heaven 'twere possible for you to lay hold on mine, that you might see it is no compliment at all. But since you are already disposed of, beyond redemption, to one who does not know the value of the jewel you have put into his hands, I hope you would not think him greatly wronged, though it should sometimes be looked on by a friend who knows how to esteem it as he ought.

Lady B. If looking on't alone would serve his turn, the wrong perhaps might not be very great.

Con. Why, what if he should wear it now and then a day, so he gave good security to bring it home again at night?

Lady B. Small security, I fancy, might serve for that. One might venture to take his word.

Con. Then where's the injury to the owner?

Lady B. 'Tis an injury to him, if he thinks it is one. For if happiness be seated in the mind, unhappiness must be so too.

Con. Here I close with you, Madam, and draw my conclusive argument from your own position: if the injury lie in the fancy, there needs nothing but secrecy to prevent the wrong.

Lady B. [*Going.*] A surer way to prevent it, is to hear no more arguments in its behalf.

Con. [*Following her.*] But, Madam——

Lady B. But, Sir, 'tis my turn to be discreet now, and not suffer too long a visit.

Con. [*Catching her hand.*] By Heaven, you shall not stir, till you give me hopes that I shall see you again at some more convenient time and place.

Lady B. I give you just hopes enough—— [*Breaking from him.*] to get loose from you: and that's all I can afford you at this time.

[*Exit running.*

Con. Now, by all that's great and good, she's a charming woman. In what ecstacy of joy she has left me! For she gave me hope. Did she not say she gave me hope?——Hope! Ay, what hope?—enough to make me let her go——Why, that's enough in conscience. Or no matter how 'twas spoke; hope was the word; it came from her, and it was said to me.

Enter HEARTFREE.

Ha, Heartfree! thou hast done me noble service in prattling to the young gentlewoman without there; come to my arms thou venerable bawd, and let me squeeze thee [*Embracing him eagerly.*] as a new pair of stays does a fat country girl, when she's carried to court to stand for maid of honour.

Heart. Why, what the devil's all this rapture for?

Con. Rapture! there's ground for rapture, man! There's hopes, my Heartfree—hopes, my friend.

Heart. Hopes! of what?

Con. Why, hopes that my lady and I together, (for 'tis more than one body's work) should make Sir John a cuckold.

Heart. Pr'ythee, what did she say to thee?

Con. Say! What did she not say? she said that—says she—she said—Zoons, I don't know what she said; but she looked as if she said every thing I'd have her; and so, if thou'lt go to the tavern, I'll treat thee with any thing that gold can buy; I'll give all my silver among the drawers, make a bonfire before the doors; swear that the Pope's turned protestant, and that all the politicians in England are of one mind. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

LORD RAKE, SIR JOHN, *&c. discovered at a table drinking.*

All. Huzza!

Lord R. Come, boys, charge again——so, confusion to all order. Here's liberty of conscience.

All. Huzza!

Lord R. Come, sing the song I made this morning, to this purpose.

Sir J. 'Tis wicked, I hope.

Lord R. Don't I tell you that I made it?

Sir J. My lord, I beg your pardon for suspecting you of any virtue. Come, begin.

SONG.—*By* COLONEL BULLY.

We're gaily yet, we're gaily yet,
And we're not very fow, but we're gaily yet,
Then sit ye awhile and tipple a bit,
For we's not very fow, but we're gaily yet,
And we're gaily yet, &c.

There was a lad, and they cau'd him Dicky,
He ga' me a kiss, and I bit his lippy,
Then under my apron he show'd me a trick;
And we's not very fow, but we're gaily yet,
And we're gaily yet, &c.

There were three lads, and they were clad,
There were three lasses, and them they had.
Three trees in the orchard are newly sprung,
And we's a' git geer enough, we're but young,
And we're gaily yet, &c.

Then up went Ailey, Ailey, up went Ailey now;
Then up with Ailey quo' Crumma, we's get a' roaring fow.
And one was kiss'd in the barn, another was kiss'd on the green,
And t'other behind the pease stack, till the mow flew up to her e'en.
Then up went Ailey, Ailey, &c.

Now, fy, John Thompson, run,
Gin ever you run in your life,
De'il get ye; but hye, my dear Jack,
There's a mon got to bed with your wife,
Then up went Ailey, &c.

Then away John Thompson ran,
And egad he ran with speed;
But before he had run his length
The false loon had done the deed.
Then up went Ailey, &c.

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Lord R. Well, how do you like it, gentlemen?

All. O, admirable.

Sir J. I would not give a fig for a song that is not full of sin and impudence.

Lord R. Then my muse is to your taste. But drink away; the night steals upon us: we shall want time to be lewd in. Hey, page! sally out, sirrah, and see what's doing in the camp; we'll beat up the quarters presently.

Page. I'll bring your lordship an exact account. [*Exit.*

Lord R. Now let the spirit of Clara go round, Here's to our forlorn hope. Courage, knight! victory attends you.

Sir J. And laurels shall crown me. Drink away, and be damned.

Lord R. Again, boys: t'other glass, and no morality.

Sir J. [*Drunk.*] Ay—no morality—and damn the watch. And let the constable be married.

All. Huzza!

Re-enter PAGE.

Lord R. How are the streets inhabited, sirrah?

Page. My lord, it's Sunday night, they are full of drunken citizens.

Lord R. Along then, boys, we shall have a feast.

Col. Along, noble knight.

Sir J. Ay—along, Bully; and he that says Sir John Brute is not as drunk, and as religious as the drunkenest citizen of them all—is a liar and the son of a whore.

Col. Why, that was bravely spoke, and like a free-born Englishman.

Sir J. What's that to you, Sir, whether I am an Englishman or a Frenchman?

Col. Zoons, you are not angry, Sir?

Sir J. Zoons, I am angry, Sir—for if I am a free-born Englishman, what have you to do, even to talk of my privileges.

Lord R. Why, pr'ythee, knight, don't quarrel here; leave private animosities to be decided by day-light; let the night be employed against the public enemy.

Sir J. My lord, I respect you, because you are a man of quality. But I'll make that fellow know I am within a hair's breadth as absolute by my privileges, as the king of France is by his prerogative. He, by his prerogative, takes money where it is not his due: I, by my privilege, refuse paying it where I owe it. Liberty and property, and Old England. Huzza!

All. Huzza!

[*Exit* SIR JOHN, *reeling, all following.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Bed-Chamber.

Enter LADY BRUTE *and* BELINDA.

Lady B. Sure it's late, Belinda, I begin to be sleepy.

Bel. Yes, 'tis near twelve. Will you go to bed?

Lady B. To bed, my dear! and by that time I am fallen into a sweet sleep, (or perhaps a sweet dream, which is better and better) Sir John will come home roaring drunk, and be overjoyed he finds me in a condition to be disturbed.

Bel. O, you need not fear him, he's in for all night. The servants say he's gone to drink with my Lord Rake.

Lady B. Nay, 'tis not very likely, indeed, such suitable company should part presently. What hogs men turn to, Belinda, when they grow weary of women.

Bel. And what owls they are whilst they are fond of them.

Lady B. But that we may forgive well enough, because they are so upon our accounts. But, pr'ythee, one word of poor Constant before we go to bed, if it be but to furnish matter for dreams. I dare swear he's talking of me now, or thinking of me at least.

Bel. So he ought, I think; for you were pleased to make him a good round advance, to-day, Madam.

Lady B. Why, I have e'en plagued him enough to satisfy any reasonable woman: he has besieged me these twe years to no purpose.

Bel. And if he besieged you two years more, he'd be well enough paid, so he had the plundering of you at last.

Lady B. That may be; but I'm afraid the town wont be able to hold out much longer: for, to confess the truth to you, Belinda, the garrison begins to grow mutinous.

Bel. Then the sooner you capitulate the better.

Lady B. Yet methinks I would fain stay a little longer, to see you fixed too, that we might start together, and see who could love longest. What think you, if Heartfree should have a month's mind to you.

Bel. Why, I could almost be in love with him for despising that foolish, affected, Lady Fancyful; but I'm afraid he's too cold, ever to warm himself by my fire.

Lady B. Then he deserves to be frozen to death. Would I were a man for your sake, dear rogue! [*Kissing her.*

Bel. You'd wish yourself a woman for your own, or the men are mistaken. But if I could make a conquest of this son of Bacchus, and rival his bottle, what shall I do with him? He has no fortune, I can't marry him; and sure you would not have me do I don't know what with him.

Lady B. Why, if you did, child, 'twould be but a good friendly part; if 'twere only to keep me in countenance, whilst I play the fool with Constant.

Bel. Well, if I can't resolve to serve you that way; I may perhaps some other as much to your satisfaction. But, pray how shall we contrive to see these blades again quickly?

Lady B. We must e'en have recourse to the old way; make them an appointment 'twixt jest and earnest; 'twill look like a frolic, and that you know is a very good thing to save a woman's blushes.

Bel. You advise well, but where shall it be?

Lady B. In Spring-Garden. But they sha'n't know their women till they pull off their masks; for a surprize is the most agreeable thing in the world: and I find myself in a very good humour, ready to do them any good turn I can think on.

Bel. Then pray write the necessary billet without farther delay.

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Lady B. Let's go into your chamber then, and whilst you undress, I'll do it, child.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—Covent-Garden.

Enter LORD RAKE, SIR JOHN, *and* COLONEL BULLY, *with their swords drawn.*

Lord R. Is the dog dead?

Col. No, damn him, I heard him wheeze.

Lord R. How the witch his wife howled.

Col. Ay, she'll alarm the watch presently.

Lord R. Appear, knight, then; come, you have a good cause to fight for; there's a man murdered.

Sir J. Is there? then let his ghost be satisfied; for I'll sacrifice a constable to it presently, and burn his body upon his wooden chair.

Enter a TAILOR, *with a bundle under his arm.*

Col. How now! what have we got here? a thief!

Tai. No, an't please you, I'm no thief.

Lord R. That we'll see presently. Here, let the general examine him.

Sir J. Ay, ay, let me examine him, and I'll lay a hundred pounds I find him guilty in spite of his teeth—for he looks—like a sneaking rascal. Come, sirrah, without equivocation, or mental reservation, tell me of what opinion you are, and what calling; for by them—I shall guess at your morals.

Tai. An't please you, I'm a dissenting journeyman woman's tailor.

Sir J. Then, sirrah, you love lying by your religion, and theft by your trade; and so, that your punishments may be suitable to your crimes—I'll have you first gagged, and then hanged.

Tai. Pray, good worthy gentlemen, don't abuse me; indeed, I'm an honest man, and a good workman, though I say it, that should not say it.

Sir J. No words, sirrah, but attend your fate.

Lord R. Let me see what's in that bundle.

Tai. An't please you, it's my lady's short cloak and wrapping-gown.

Sir J. What lady, you reptile, you?

Tai. My Lady Brute, an't please your honour.

Sir J. My Lady Brute! my wife! the robe of my wife!—with reverence let me approach it. The dear angel is always taking care of me in danger, and has sent me this suit of armour to protect me in this day of battle;—on they go.

All. O brave knight!

Lord R. Live, Don Quixote the second.

Sir J. Sancho, my 'squire, help me on with my armour.

Tai. O dear gentleman! I shall be quite undone, if you take the sack.

Sir J. Retire, sirrah! and since you carry off your skin, go home, and be happy——So! how do you like my shapes now?

Lord R. To a miracle! he looks like a queen of the Amazons—But to your arms, gentlemen! the enemy's upon their march—here's the watch.

Sir J. Oons! if it were Alexander the Great, at the head of his army, I would drive him into a horse-pond.

All. Huzza! O brave knight!

Enter WATCHMAN.

Sir J. See! here he comes, with all his Greeks about him—follow me, boys.

Watch. Hey-day!—who have we got here?—stand.

Sir J. May-hap not.

Watch. What are you all doing here in the streets at this time o'night? And who are you, Madam, that seems to be at the head of this noble crew?

Sir J. Sirrah! I am Bonduca, queen of the Welchmen; and with a leek as long as my pedigree, I will destroy your Roman legions in an instant.——Britons, strike home.

[*Snatches a Watchman's staff, strikes at the* WATCH, *and falls down, his party drove off.*

Watch. So! we have got the queen however; we'll make her pay well for her ransom.—Come, Madam, will your majesty please to walk before the constable?

Sir J. The constable's a rascal, and you are a son of a whore.

Watch. A most noble reply, truly! If this be her royal style, I'll warrant her maids of honour prattle prettily: but we'll teach you some of our court dialect before we part with you, princess.—Away with her to the round house.

Sir J. Hands off, you ruffians! My honour's dearer to me than my life; I hope you wont be so uncivil.

Watch. Away with her. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—A Bed-Chamber.

Enter HEARTFREE.

Heart. What the plague ails me?—Love! No, I thank you for that, my heart's rock still—Yet 'tis Belinda that disturbs me, that's positive—Well, what of all that! Must I love her for being troublesome? At that rate I might love all the women I meet, egad. But hold!—though I don't love her for disturbing me, yet, she may disturb me because I love her.——Ay, that may be, faith. I have dream't of her, that's certain——Well, so I have of my mother; therefore what's that to the purpose? Ay, but Belinda runs in my head waking—and so does many a damned thing that I don't care a farthing for—Methinks though, I would fain be talking to her, and yet I have no business—Well, am I the first man that has had a mind to do an impertinent thing?

Enter CONSTANT.

Con. How now, Heartfree! What makes you up and dressed so soon? I thought none but lovers quarrelled with their beds; I expected to have found you snoring, as I used to do.

Heart. Why, faith, friend, 'tis the care I have of your affairs, that makes me so thoughtful; I have been studying all night how to bring your matter about with Belinda.

Con. With Belinda!

Heart. With my lady, I mean; and faith, I have mighty hopes on't. Sure you must be very well satisfied with her behaviour to you yesterday.

Con. So well, that nothing but a lover's fears can make me doubt of success. But what can this sudden change proceed from?

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Heart. Why, you saw her husband beat her, did you not?

Con. That's true: a husband is scarce to be borne upon any terms, much less when he fights with his wife. Methinks, she should e'en have cuckolded him upon the spot, to show, that after the battle she was master of the field.

Heart. A council of war of women would infallibly have advised her to it. But, I confess, so agreeable a woman as Belinda deserves better usage.

Con. Belinda again!

Heart. My lady, I mean. What a pox makes me blunder so to-day? [*Aside.*] A plague of this treacherous tongue!

Con. Pr'ythee, look upon me seriously, Heartfree.—Now answer me directly: is it my lady, or Belinda, employs your careful thoughts thus?

Heart. My lady, or Belinda!

Con. In love, by this light; in love.

Heart. In love.

Con. Nay, ne'er deny; for thou'lt do it so awkwardly, 'twill but make the jest sit heavier about thee. My dear friend, I give you much joy.

Heart. Why, pr'ythee, you wont persuade me to it, will you?

Con. That she's mistress of your tongue, that's plain; and I know you are so honest a fellow, your tongue and heart always go together. But how—but how the devil! Pha, ha, ha, ha, ha—

Heart. Hey-day! why sure you don't believe it in earnest?

Con. Yes, I do because I see you deny it in jest.

Heart. Nay, but look you, Ned—a—deny in jest—a—gadzooks, you know I say—a—when a man denies a thing in a jest—a—

Con. Pha, ha, ha, ha, ha—

Heart. Nay, then we shall have it: what, because a man stumbles at a word—Did you never make a blunder?

Con. Yes, for I am in love, I own it.

Heart. Then so am I—Now laugh till thy soul's glutted with mirth. [*Embracing him.*]—But, dear Constant, don't tell the town on't.

Con. Nay, then, 'twere almost a pity to laugh at thee, after so honest a confession. But tell us a little, Jack, by what new invented arms has this mighty stroke been given?

Heart. E'en by that unaccountable weapon called *Je-ne-sçai-quoi;* for every thing that can come within the verge of beauty, I have seen it with indifference.

Con. So, in a few words, then; the *Je-ne-sçai-quoi* has been too hard for the quilted petticoat.

Heart. I'gad, I think the *Je-ne-scai-quoi* is in the quilted petticoat; at least 'tis certain I never think on't without—a—a *Je-ne-sçai-quoi* in every part about me.

Con. Well, but have all your remedies lost their virtue? Have you turned her inside out yet?

Heart. I dare not so much as think on't.

Con. But don't the two years fatigue I have had discourage you?

Heart. Yes, I dread what I foresee; yet cannot quit the enterprize: like some soldiers, whose courage dwells more in their honour than their nature, on they go, though the body trembles at what the soul makes it undertake.

Con. Nay, if you expect your mistress will use you, as your profanations against her sex deserve, you tremble justly. But how do you intend to proceed, friend?

Heart. Thou know'st I am but a novice; be friendly, and advise me.

Con. Why, look you then; I'd have you—serenade and a—write a song—go to church—look like a fool—be very officious; ogle, write, and lead out; and who knows, but in a year or two's time, you may be—called a troublesome puppy, and sent about your business.

Heart. That's hard.

Con. Yet thus it falls out with lovers, Sir.

Heart. Pox on me for making one of the number.

Con. Have a care! Say no saucy things; 'twill but augment your crime; and if your mistress hears on't, increase your punishment.

Heart. Pr'ythee, say something then to encourage me; you know I helped you in your distress.

Con. Why then, to encourage you to perseverance, that you may be thoroughly ill-used for your offences; I'll put you in mind, that even the coyest ladies of them all are made up of desires, as well as we: and though they do hold out a long time, they will capitulate at last; for that thundering engineer, nature, does make such havoc in the town, they must surrender at long run, or perish in their own flames.

Enter FOOTMAN.

Foot. Sir, there's a porter without, with a letter; he desires to give it into your own hands.

Con. Call him in.

Enter PORTER.

What, Joe! Is it thee?

Port. An't please you, Sir, I was ordered to deliver this into your hands, by two well-shaped ladies, at the New Exchange. I was at your honour's lodgings, and your servants sent me hither.

Con. 'Tis well—are you to carry any answer?

Port. No, my noble master. They gave me my orders, and whip they are gone, like a maidenhead at fifteen.

Con. Very well; there. [*Gives him money.*

Port. God bless your honour. [*Exit.*

Con. Now let's see what honest, trusty Joe has brought us. [*Reads.*] "If you and your playfellow can spare time from your business and devotions, don't fail to be at Spring Garden about eight in the evening. You'll find nothing there but women, so you need bring no other arms than what you usually carry about you."—So, playfellow, here's something to stay your stomach, till your mistress's dish is ready for you.

Heart. Some of our old battered acquaintance. I wont go, not I.

Con. Nay, that you can't avoid, there's honour in the case; 'tis a challenge, and I want a second.

Heart. I doubt I shall be but a very useless one to you; for I'm so disheartened by this wound Belinda has given me, I do not think I shall have courage enough to draw my sword.

Con. O, if that be all, come along; I'll warrant you'll find sword enough for such enemies as we have to deal withal. [*Exeunt.*

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SCENE IV.—A Street.

Enter CONSTABLE *and* WATCHMEN *with* SIR JOHN.

Const. Come, forsooth, come along if you please! I once in compassion thought to have seen you safe home this morning; but you have been so rampant and abusive all night, I shall see what the justice of peace will say to you.

Sir J. And you shall see what I'll say to the justice of peace, sirrah.

[*Watchman knocks at the door.*

Enter SERVANT.

Const. Is Mr. Justice at home?

Serv. Yes.

Const. Pray acquaint his worship we have got an unruly woman here, and desire to know what he'll please to have done with her.

Serv. I'll acquaint my master. [*Exit.*

Sir J. Hark you, constable, what cuckoldy justice is this.

Const. One that knows how to deal with such romps as you are, I'll warrant you.

Enter JUSTICE.

Just. Well, Mr. Constable, what is the matter there?

Const. An't please your worship, this here comical sort of a gentlewoman has committed great outrages to-night. She has been frolicking with my Lord Rake and his gang; they attacked the watch, and I hear there has been a man killed, I believe 'tis they have done it.

Sir J. Sir, there may have been murder for aught I know; and 'tis a great mercy there has not been a rape too—that fellow would have ravished me.

1st Watch. Ravish! ravish! O lud! O lud! O lud! ravish her! Why, please your worship, I heard Mr. Constable say he believed she was little better than a maphrodite.

Just. Why truly, she does seem a little masculine about the mouth.

2d Watch. Yes, and about the hands too, an't please your worship. I did but offer in mere civility, to help her up the steps into our apartment, and with her gripen fists thus—

[SIR JOHN *knocks him down.*

Sir J. Ay, just so, Sir, I fell'd him to the ground like an ox.

Just. Out upon this boisterous woman! out upon her!

Sir J. Mr. Justice, he would have been uncivil; it was in defence of my honour, and I demand satisfaction.

2d Watch. I hope your worship will satisfy her honour in Bridewell: that fist of her's will make an admirable hemp-beater.

Sir J. Sir, I hope you will protect me against that libidinous rascal; I am a woman of quality, and virtue too, for all I am in an undress this morning.

Just. Why, she really has the air of a sort of a woman, a little somethingish out of the common. Madam, if you expect I should be favourable to you, I desire I may know who you are.

Sir J. Sir, I am any body, at your service.

Just. I desire to know your name.

Sir J. Sir, my name's Mary.

Just. Ay, but your surname, Madam.

Sir J. Sir, my surname's the very same with my husband's.

Just. A strange woman this! Who is your husband, pray?

Sir J. Sir John——

Just. Sir John who?

Sir J. Sir John Brute.

Just. Is it possible, Madam, you can be my Lady Brute?

Sir J. That happy woman, Sir, am I; only a little in my merriment to-night.

Just. I am concerned for Sir John.

Sir J. Truly, so am I.

Just. I have heard he's as honest gentleman.

Sir J. As ever drank.

Just. Good lack! Indeed, lady, I am sorry he has such a wife.

Sir J. I am sorry he has any wife at all.

Just. And so perhaps may he—I doubt you have not given him a very good taste of matrimony.

Sir J. Taste, Sir! Sir I have scorned to stint him to a taste, I have given him a full meal of it.

Just. Indeed I believe so. But pray, fair lady, may he have given you any occasion for this extraordinary conduct—does he not use you well?

Sir J. A little upon the rough sometimes.

Just. Ay, any man may be out of humour now and then.

Sir J. Sir, I love peace and quiet, and when a woman don't find that at home, she's apt sometimes to comfort herself with a few innocent diversions abroad.

Just. I doubt he uses you but too well. Pray how does he as to that weighty thing, money? Does he allow you what is proper of that?

Sir J. Sir, I have generally enough to pay the reckoning, if this son of a whore of a drawer would but bring his bill.

Just. A strange woman this!—Does he spend a reasonable portion of his time at home to the comfort of his wife and children?

Sir J. He never gave his wife cause to repine at his being abroad in his life.

Just. Pray, Madam, how may he be in the grand matrimonial point.—Is he true to your bed?

Sir J. Chaste! Oons! This fellow asks so many impertinent questions! Egad I believe it is the Justice's wife in the Justice's clothes.

Just. 'Tis a great pity he should have been thus disposed of. Pray, Madam, (and then I have done) what may be your ladyship's common method of life? If I may presume so far.

Sir J. Why, Sir, much that of a woman of quality.

Just. Pray how may you generally pass your time, Madam? Your morning for example.

Sir J. Sir, like a woman of quality——I wake about two o'clock in the afternoon—I stretch and make a sign for my chocolate—When I have drank three cups, I slide down again upon my back, with my arms over my head, while my two maids put on my stockings—Then hanging upon their shoulders, I am trailed to my great chair, where I sit and yawn for my breakfast—If it don't come presently, I lie down upon my couch to say my prayers, while my maid reads me the playbills.

Just. Very well, Madam.

Sir J. When the tea is brought in, I drink

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twelve regular dishes, with eight slices of bread and butter.—And half an hour after, I send to the cook to know if the dinner is almost ready.

Just. So, Madam!

Sir J. By that time my head is half dressed, I hear my husband swearing himself into a state of perdition, that the meat's all cold upon the table; to amend which, I come down in an hour more, and have it sent back to the kitchen, to be all dressed over again.

Just. Poor man!

Sir J. When I have dined, and my idle servants are presumptuously set down at their ease, to do so too, I call for my coach, to go visit fifty dear friends, of whom I hope I never shall find one at home, while I shall live.

Just. So! there's the morning and afternoon pretty well disposed of—Pray how, Madam, do you pass your evenings?

Sir J. Like a woman of spirit, Sir; a great spirit. Give me a box and dice——Seven's the main, oons! Sir, I set you a hundred pound! Why, do you think women are married now a days, to sit at home and mend napkins! Oh, the Lord help your head!

Just. Mercy upon us, Mr. Constable! What will this age come to?

Const. What will it come to, indeed, if such women as these are not set in the stocks!

Sir J. Sir, I have a little urgent business calls upon me; and therefore I desire the favour of you to bring matters to a conclusion.

Just. Madam, if I were sure that business were not to commit more disorders, I would release you.

Sir J. None—by my virtue.

Just. Then, Mr. Constable, you may discharge her.

Sir J. Sir, your very humble servant. If you please to accept of a bottle——

Just. I thank you kindly, Madam; but I never drink in a morning. Good-by-t'ye, Madam, good-by-t'ye.

Sir J. Good-by-t'ye, good Sir.

[*Exit* JUSTICE.

So now, Mr. Constable, shall you and I go pick up a whore together.

Const. No, thank you, Madam; my wife's enough to satisfy any reasonable man.

Sir J. [*Aside.*] He, he, he, he, he—the fool is married then. Well, you wont go?

Const. Not I, truly.

Sir J. Then I'll go by myself; and you and your wife may go to the devil. [*Exit.*

Const. [*Gazing after him.*] Why, God-a-mercy, lady! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—Spring Garden.

CONSTANT *and* HEARTFREE *cross the Stage. As they go off, enter* LADY FANCYFUL *and* MADEMOISELLE *masked, and dogging them.*

Con. So; I think we are about the time appointed, let us walk up this way. [*Exeunt.*

Lady F. Good: thus far I have dogged them without being discovered. 'Tis infallibly some intrigue that brings them to Spring-Garden. How my poor heart is torn and racked with fear and jealousy! Yet let it be any thing but that flirt Belinda, and I'll try to bear it. But if it proves her, all that's woman in me shall be employed to destroy her.

[*Exit after* CONSTANT *and* HEARTFREE.

Re-enter CONSTANT *and* HEARTFREE. LADY FANCYFUL *and* MADEMOISELLE *still following at a distance.*

Con. I see no females yet, that have any thing to say to us. I'm afraid we are bantered.

Heart. I wish we were, for I'm in no humour to make either them or myself merry.

Con. Nay, I'm sure you'll make them merry enough, if I tell them why you are dull. But pr'ythee, why so heavy and sad before you begin to be ill-used?

Heart. For the same reason, perhaps, that you are so brisk and well-pleased; because both pains and pleasures are generally more considerable in prospect, than when they come to pass.

Enter LADY BRUTE *and* BELINDA *masked and poorly dressed.*

Con. How now, who are these? Not our game, I hope.

Heart. If they are, we are e'en well enough served, to come a hunting here, when we had so much better game in chase elsewhere.

Lady F. [*To* MADEMOISELLE.] So those are their ladies without doubt. But I'm afraid that Doiley stuff is not worn for want of better clothes. They are the very shape and size of Belinda and her aunt.

Mad. So dey be inteed, Matam.

Lady F. We'll slip into this close harbour, where we may hear all they say.

[*Exeunt* LADY F. *and* MAD.

Lady B. What, are you afraid of us, gentlemen?

Heart. Why, truly I think we may, if appearances don't lie.

Bel. Do you always find women what they appear to be, Sir?

Heart. No, forsooth: but I seldom find them better than they appear to be.

Bel. Then the outside's best, you think?

Heart. 'Tis the honestest.

Con. Have a care, Heartfree; you are relapsing again.

Lady B. Why, does the gentleman use to rail at women?

Con. He has done formerly.

Bel. I suppose he had very good call for't. They did not use you so well, as you thought you deserved, Sir?

Lady B. They made themselves merry at your expense, Sir?

Bel. Laughed when you sighed?

Lady B. Slept while you were waking?

Bel. Had your porter beat?

Lady B. And threw your billet-doux into the fire?

Heart. Hey-day, I shall do more than rail presently.

Bel. What, you wont beat us, will you?

Heart. I don't know but I may.

Con. What the devil's coming here? Sir John—and drunk, i'faith.

Enter SIR JOHN.

Sir J. What a pox—here's Constant, Heartfree—and two whores egad—O, you covetous rogues!—What, have you ne'er a spare punk for your friend? But I'll share with you.

Heart. Why, what the plague have you been doing, knight? [*He seizes both the women.*

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Sir J. Why, I have been beating the watch, and scandalizing the women of quality.

Heart. A very good account, truly.

Sir J. And what do you think I'll do next?

Con. Nay, that no man can guess.

Sir J. Why, if you'll let me sup with you, I'll treat both your strumpets.

Lady B. [*Aside.*] O Lord! we are undone.

Heart. No, we can't sup together, because we have some affairs elsewhere. But if you'll accept of these two ladies, we'll be so complaisant to you, to resign our right in them.

Bel. [*Aside.*] Lord, what shall we do?

Sir J. Let me see, their clothes are such damned clothes, they wont pawn for the reckoning.

Heart. Sir John, your servant. Raptures attend you.

Con. Adieu. ladies, make much of the gentleman.

Lady B. Why, sure you wont leave us in the hands of a drunken fellow to abuse us.

Sir J. Who do you call a drunken fellow, you slut you? I'm a man of quality; the king has made me a knight.

Heart. Ay, ay, you are in good hands; adieu, adieu. [*Runs off.*

Lady B. The devil's hands! Let me go, or I'll—For Heaven's sake protect us.

[*She breaks from him, runs to* CONSTANT, *twitching off her mask and clapping it on again.*

Sir J. I'll devil you, you jade you. I'll demolish your ugly face.

Re-enter HEARTFREE. BELINDA *runs to him and shows her face.*

Heart. Hold, thou mighty man! Look ye, Sir, we did but jest with you. These are ladies of our acquaintance that we had a mind to frighten a little, but now you must leave us.

Sir J. Oons, I wont leave you, not I.

Heart. Nay, but you must though; and therefore make no words on't.

Sir J. Then you are a couple of damned uncivil fellows—and I hope your punks will give you sauce to your mutton. [*Exit.*

Lady B. Oh, I shall never come to myself again, I'm so frightened!

Con. 'Tis a narrow 'scape, indeed.

Bel. Women must have frolics, you see, whatever they cost them.

Heart. This might have proved a dear one, though.

Lady B. You are the more obliged to us for the risk we run upon your accounts.

Con. And I hope you'll acknowledge something due to our knight-errantry, ladies. This is the second time we have delivered you.

Lady B. 'Tis true; and since we see fate has designed you for our guardians, 'twill make us the more willing to trust ourselves in your hands. But you must not have the worse opinion of us for our innocent frolic.

Heart. Ladies, you may command our opinion in every thing that is to your advantage.

Bel. Then, Sir, I command you to be of opinion that women are sometimes better than they appear to be.

[LADY B. *and* CONSTANT *talk apart.*

Heart. Madam, you have made a convert of me in every thing. I'm grown a fool. I could be fond of a woman.

Bel. I thank you, Sir, in the name of the whole sex.

Heart. Which sex nothing but yourself could ever have atoned for.

Bel. Now has my vanity a devilish itch to know in what my merit consists.

Heart. In your humility, Madam, that keeps you ignorant it consists at all.

Bel. One other compliment with that serious face, and I hate you for ever after.

Heart. Some women love to be abused: is it that you would be at?

Bel. No, not that neither: but I'd have men talk plainly what's fit for women to hear, without putting them to a real or an affected blush.

Heart. Why then in as plain terms as I can find to express myself, I could love you even to matrimony itself I'gad.

Bel. Just as Sir John did her ladyship there ——What think you? Don't you believe one month's time might bring you down to the same indifference, only clad in a little better manner, perhaps? Well, you men are unaccountable things, mad till you have your mistresses, and then stark mad till you are rid of them again. Tell me honestly, is not your patience put to a much severer trial after possession than before?

Heart. With a great many, I must confess it is, to our eternal scandal; but I——dear creature, do but try me.

Bel. That's the surest way indeed to know, but not the safest. [*To* LADY BRUTE.] Madam, are you not for taking a turn in the great walk? It's almost dark; nobody will know us.

Lady B. Really I find myself something idle, Belinda: besides I doat upon this little odd private corner. But don't let my lazy fancy confine you.

Con. [*Aside.*] So she would be left alone with me: that's well.

Bel. Well we'll take one turn, and come to you again. [*To* HEARTFREE.] Come, Sir, shall we go pry into the secrets of the garden? Who knows what discoveries we may make.

Heart. Madam, I am at your service.

Con. [*To* HEARTFREE *aside.*] Don't make too much haste back; for d'ye hear—I may be busy.

Heart. Enough.

[*Exeunt* BELINDA *and* HEARTFREE.

Lady B. Sure you think me scandalously free, Mr. Constant, I'm afraid I shall lose your good opinion of me.

Con. My good opinion, Madam, is like your cruelty, never to be removed.

Lady B. Indeed, I doubt you much. Why, suppose you had a wife, and she should entertain a gallant?

Con. If I gave her just cause, how should I justly condemn her?

Lady B. Ah; but you differ widely about just causes.

Con. But blows can bear no dispute.

Lady B. Nor ill-manners much, truly.

Con. Then no woman on earth has so just a cause as you have.

Lady B. But can a husband's faults release my duty?

Con. In equity, without doubt. And where laws dispense with equity, equity should dispense with laws.

Lady B. Pray, let us leave this dispute; for you men have as much witchcraft in your arguments, as women have in their eyes.

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Con. But whilst you attack me with your charms, 'tis but reasonable I assault you with mine.

Lady B. The case is not the same. What mischief we do we can't help, and therefore are to be forgiven.

Con. Beauty soon obtains pardon for the pain that it gives, when it applies the balm of compassion to the wound: but a fine face and a hard heart is almost as bad as an ugly face and a soft one; both very troublesome to many a poor gentleman.

Lady B. Yes, and to many a poor gentlewoman too, I can assure you. But pray, which of them is it that most afflicts you?

Con. Your glass and conscience will inform you, Madam. But for Heaven's sake (for now I must be serious) if pity, or if gratitude can move you; [*Taking her hand.*] if constancy and truth have power to tempt you; if love, if adoration can affect you, give me at least some hopes, that time may do, what you perhaps mean never to perform; 'twill ease my sufferings, though not quench my flame.

Lady B. Your sufferings eased, your flame would soon abate: and that I would preserve, not quench it, Sir.

Con. Would you preserve it, nourish it with favours, for that's the food it naturally requires.

Lady B. Yet on that natural food 'twould surfeit soon, should I resolve to grant all you would ask.

Con. And in refusing all, you starve it. Forgive me, therefore, since my hunger rages, if I at last grow wild, and in my frenzy force at least this from you. [*Kissing her hand.*] Or if you'd have my flame soar higher still, then grant me this, and this, and thousands more! [*Kissing first her hand and then her neck.*] —For now's the time she melts into compassion. [*Aside.*

Lady B. Oh Heavens! Let me go.

Con. Ay, go, ay: where shall we go, my charming angel—into this private arbour—— Nay, let's lose no time—moments are precious—

Lady B. And lovers wild. Pray let us stop here; at least for this time.

Con. 'Tis impossible; he that has power over you, can have none over himself.

[*As he is forcing her into the arbour,* LADY FANCYFUL *and* MADEMOISELLE *bolt out upon them, and run over the stage.*

Lady B. Ah! I'm lost.

Lady F. Fe, fe, fe, fe, fe.

Mad. Fe, fe, fe, fe, fe.

Con. Death and furies! who are these?

Lady B. O Heavens! I'm out of my wits: If they should know me, I am ruined.

Con. Don't be frightened: ten thousand to one they are strangers to you.

Lady B. Whatever they are, I wont stay here a moment longer.

Con. Whither will you go?

Lady B. Home, as if the devil were in me. Lord, where's this Belinda now?

Enter BELINDA *and* HEARTFREE.

O! 'tis well you are come; I'm so frightened, my hair stands on end. Let's begone, for Heaven's sake.

Bel. Lord, what's the matter?

Lady B. The devil's the matter; here's a couple of women have done the most impertinent thing. Away, away, away, away, away. [*Exeunt running.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—LADY FANCYFUL'S *House.*

Enter LADY FANCYFUL *and* MADEMOISELLE.

Lady F. Well, Mademoiselle, did you dodge the filthy things?

Mad. *O que ouy, Madame.*

Lady F. And where are they?

Mad. *Au logis.*

Lady F. What, men and all?

Mad. *Tous ensemble.*

Lady F. O confidence! What, carry their fellows to their own house?

Mad. *C'est que le mari n'y est pas.*

Lady F. No, so I believe, truly. But he shall be there, and quickly too, if I can find him out. Well, 'tis a prodigious thing, to see when men and women get together, how they fortify one another in their impudence. But if that drunken fool her husband, be to be found in e'er a tavern in town, I'll send him amongst them; I'll spoil their sport.

Mad. *En vérité, Madame, ce seroit domage.*

Lady F. 'Tis in vain to oppose it, Mademoiselle; therefore never go about it. For I am the steadiest creature in the world—when I am determined to do mischief. So, come a-long. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—SIR JOHN BRUTE'S *House.*

Enter CONSTANT, HEARTFREE, LADY BRUTE, BELINDA, *and* LOVEWELL.

Lady B. But are you sure you don't mistake, Lovewell?

Love. Madam, I saw them all go into the tavern together, and my master so drunk he could scarce stand. [*Exit.*

Lady B. Then, gentlemen, I believe we may venture to let you stay, and play at cards with us an hour or two; for they'll scarce part till morning.

Bel. I think 'tis pity they should ever part.

Con. The company that's here, Madam.

Lady B. Then, Sir, the company that's here must remember to part itself in time.

Con. Madam, we don't intend to forfeit your future favours, by an indiscreet usage of this. The moment you give us the signal, we sha'n't fail to make our retreat.

Lady B. Upon those conditions, then, let us sit down to cards.

Enter LOVEWELL.

Love. O Lord, Madam! here's my master just staggering in upon you; he has been quarrelsome yonder, and they have kicked him out of the company.

Lady B. Into the closet, gentlemen, for Heaven's sake; I'll wheedle him to bed, if possible.

[CONSTANT *and* HEARTFREE *run into the closet.*

Enter SIR JOHN, *all dirt and bloody.*

Lady B. Ah—Ah—he's all over blood.

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Sir J. What the plague does the woman squall for? Did you never see a man in pickle before?

Lady B. Lord, where have you been?

Sir J. I have been at—cuffs.

Lady B. I fear that is not all. I hope you are not wounded.

Sir J. Sound as a roach, wife.

Lady B. I'm mighty glad to hear it.

Sir J. You know—I think you lie.

Lady B. You do me wrong to think so—for Heaven's my witness, I had rather see my own blood trickle down than yours.

Sir J. Then will I be sacrificed.

Lady B. 'Tis a hard fate I should not be believed.

Sir J. 'Tis a damned atheistical age, wife.

Lady B. I am sure I have given you a thousand tender proofs how great my care is of you. But, spite of all your cruel thoughts, I still persist; and at this moment, if I can, persuade you to lie down and sleep a little.

Sir J. Why—do you think I am drunk, you slut you.

Lady B. Heaven forbid I should: but I'm afraid you are feverish. Pray let me feel your pulse.

Sir J. Stand off, and be damned.

Lady B. Why, I see your distemper in your eyes. You are all on fire. Pray go to bed; let me intreat you.

Sir J. Come—kiss me, then.

Lady B. [*Kissing him.*] There: now go.—[*Aside.*] He stinks like poison.

Sir J. I see it goes damnably against your stomach—and therefore—kiss me again.

Lady B. Nay, now you fool me.

Sir J. Do't, I say.

Lady B. [*Aside.*] Ah, Lord have mercy upon me. Well—there: Now will you go?

Sir J. Now, wife, you shall see my gratitude. You gave me two kisses,—I'll give you——two hundred. [*Kisses and tumbles her.*

Lady B. O Lord! pray, Sir John, be quiet. Heavens! what a pickle am I in.

Bel. [*Aside.*] If I were in her pickle, I'd call my gallant out of the closet, and he should cudgel him soundly.

Sir J. So, now you being as dirty and as nasty as myself, we may go pig together. But first I must have a cup of your cold tea, wife. [*Going to the closet.*

Lady B. O, I'm ruined!—There's none there, my dear.

Sir J. I'll warrant you I'll find some, my dear.

Lady B. You can't open the door, the lock's spoiled; I have been turning and turning the key this half hour to no purpose. I'll send for the smith to-morrow.

Sir J. There's ne'er a smith in Europe can open a door with more expedition than I can do—As for example—pou. [*He bursts the door open with his foot.*]—How now? what the devil have we got here?—Constant—Heartfree——and two whores again, egad. This is the worst cold tea—that ever I met with in my life.

Enter CONSTANT *and* HEARTFREE.

Lady B. [*Aside.*] O Lord, what will become of us?

Sir J. Gentlemen—I am your very humble servant—I give you many thanks—I see you take care of my family—I shall do all I can to return the obligation.

Con. Sir, how oddly soever this business may appear to you, you'd have no cause to be uneasy if you knew the truth of all things. Your lady is the most virtuous woman in the world, and nothing has past but an innocent frolic.

Heart. Nothing else, upon my honour, Sir.

Sir J. You are both very civil gentlemen—and my wife there is a very civil gentlewoman; therefore I don't doubt but many civil things have past between you.—Your very humble servant.

Lady B. [*Aside to* CON.] Pray begone; he's so drunk he can't hurt us to-night, and to-morrow morning you shall hear from us.

Con. I'll obey you, Madam.——Sir, when you are cool, you'll understand reason better. So then I shall take the pains to inform you. If not, I wear a sword, Sir, and so good-bye t'ye. Come along, Heartfree. [*Exeunt.*

Sir J. Wear a sword, Sir—And what of all that, Sir? He comes to my house; eats my meat; lies with my wife; dishonours my family; gets a bastard to inherit my estate——And when I ask a civil account of all this—Sir, says he, I wear a sword.—Wear a sword, Sir?—Yes, Sir, says he, I wear a sword.—It may be a good answer at cross purposes; but 'tis a damned one to a man in my whimsical circumstances—Sir, says he, I wear a sword—[*To* LADY B.] And what do you wear now? Ha! tell me. [*Sitting down in a great chair.*]—What, you are modest, and can't—Why then I'll tell you, you slut, you. You wear—an impudent lewd face—A damned designing heart—and a tail—and a tail full of—[*He falls fast asleep, snoring.*

Lady B. So, thanks to kind Heaven, he's fast for some hours.

Bel. 'Tis well he is so, that we may have time to lay our story handsomely; for we must lie like the devil to bring ourselves off.

Lady B. What shall we say, Belinda?

Bel. [*Musing.*]—I'll tell you; it must all light upon Heartfree and I. We'll say he has courted me, some time, but for reasons unknown to us, has ever been very earnest the thing might be kept from Sir John. That therefore hearing him upon the stairs, he run into the closet, though against our will, and Constant with him, to prevent jealousy. And to give this a good impudent face of truth, (that I may deliver you from the trouble you are in) I'll e'en, if he pleases, marry him.

Lady B. I'm beholden to you, cousin; but that would be carrying the jest a little too far, for your own sake: you know he's a younger brother, and has nothing.

Bel. 'Tis true, but I like him, and have fortune enough to keep above extremity: I can't say I would live with him in a cell, upon love and bread and butter: but I'd rather have the man I love and a middle state of life, than that gentleman in the chair there, and twice your ladyship's splendour.

Lady B. In truth, niece, you are in the right on't: but 'tis late: let's end our discourse for to-night, and out of an excess of charity, take a small care of that nasty drunken thing there—Do but look at him, Belinda.

Bel. Ah—'tis a savoury dish.

Lady B. As savoury as 'tis, I'm cloyed with it. Pr'ythee call the butler to take it away.

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Bel. Call the butler!—call the scavenger. [*To a Servant within.*] Who's there?—Call Rasor; let him take away his master; scour him clean with a little soap and sand, and so put him to bed.

Lady B. Come, Belinda, I'll e'en lie with you to-night, and in the morning we'll send for our gentlemen to set this matter even.

Bel. With all my heart.

Lady B. Good-night, my dear.

[*Making a low courtesy to* SIR J.

Both. Ha, ha, ha! [*Exeunt.*

Enter RASOR.

Rasor. My lady there's a wag—my master there's a cuckold. Marriage is a slippery thing—Women have depraved appetites—My lady's a wag—I have heard all; I have seen all; I understand all; and I'll tell all—for my little Frenchwoman loves news dearly. This story will gain her heart, or nothing will. [*To his master.*] Come, Sir, your head's too full of fumes at present, to make room for your jealousy; but I reckon we shall have rare work with you, when your pate's empty. Come to your kennel, you cuckoldy, drunken sot you.

[*Carries him on his back.*

My master's asleep in his chair and a snoring,
My lady's abroad,—and Oh, rare matrimony. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—LADY FANCYFUL'S *House.*

Enter LADY FANCYFUL *and* MADEMOISELLE.

Lady F. But why did not you tell me before, Mademoiselle, that Rasor and you were fond?

Mad. De modesty hinder me, Matam.

Lady F. Why truly, modesty does often hinder us from doing things we have an extravagant mind to. But does he love you well enough yet, to do any thing you bid him? Do you think, to oblige you, he would speak scandal?

Mad. Matam, to oblige your ladyship, he shall speak any thing.

Lady F. Why then, Mademoiselle, I'll tell you what you shall do. You shall engage him to tell his master all that passed at Spring-Garden. I have a mind he should know what a wife and a niece he has got.

Mad. *Il le fera, Madame.*

Enter a FOOTMAN, *who speaks to* MADEMOISELLE *apart.*

Foot. Mademoiselle, yonder's Mr. Rasor desires to speak with you.

Mad. Tell him I come presently. [*Exit* FOOT.]—Rasor be dere, Matam.

Lady F. That's fortunate: Well, I'll leave you together; and, if you find him stubborn, Mademoiselle—hark you—don't refuse him a few reasonable little liberties to put him in humour.

Mad. *Laissez moi faire.* [*Exit* LADY F.

RASOR *peeps in; and seeing* LADY FANCYFUL *gone, turns to* MADEMOISELLE, *takes her about the neck and kisses her.*

Mad. How now, confidence!

Rasor. How now, modesty!

Mad. Who make you so familiar, sirrah?

Rasor. My impudence, hussy.

Mad. Stand off, rogue-face.

Rasor. Ah, Mademoiselle—great news at our house.

Mad. Why, vat be de matter?

Rasor. The matter!—why, uptails all's the matter.

Mad. *Tu te mocque de moi.*

Rasor. Now do you long to know the particulars—the time when—the place where—the manner how: but I wont tell you a word more.

Mad. Nay, den dou kill me, Rasor.

Rasor. Come, kiss me, then.

Mad. Nay, pridee tell me.

[*Clapping his hands behind.*

Rasor. Good bye t'ye. [*Going.*

Mad. Hold, hold—I will kiss dee.

[*Kissing him.*

Rasor. So, that's civil:—Why now, my pretty Poll—my goldfinch—my little water-wagtail, you must know that—Come, kiss me again.

Mad. I wont kiss dee no more.

Rasor. Good bye t'ye. [*Going.*

Mad. *Doucement; dere; es tu content?*

[*Kissing him.*

Rasor. So: now I'll tell thee all. Why, the news is, that cuckoldom in folio is newly printed, and matrimony in quarto is just going into the press. Will you buy any books, Mademoiselle?

Mad. *Tu parle comme un libraire;* de devil, no understand dee.

Rasor. Why then, that I make myself intelligible to a waiting woman, I'll speak like a valet de chambre. My lady has cuckolded my master.

Mad. *Bon.*

Rasor. Which we take very ill from her hands, I can tell her that. We can't yet prove matter of fact upon her.

Mad. *N' importe.*

Rasor. But we can prove that matter of fact had like to have been upon her.

Mad. *Ouy-da.*

Rasor. For we have such terrible circumstances.

Mad. *Sans doute.*

Rasor. That any man of parts may draw tickling conclusions from them.

Mad. *Fort bein.*

Rasor. We found a couple of tight well-built gentlemen stuft into her ladyship's closet.

Mad. *Le diable.*

Rasor. And I, in my particular person, have discovered a most damnable plot, how to persuade my poor master, that all this hide and seek, this Will in the Whisp, has no other meaning than a Christian marriage for sweet Mrs. Belinda.

Mad. *Une* marriage! Ah, *les droles.*

Rasor. Don't you interrupt me, hussy; 'tis agreed, I say; and my innocent lady, to wriggle herself out at the back door of the business, turns marriage bawd to her niece, and resolves to deliver up her fair body to be tumbled and mumbled by that young liquorish whipster, Heartfree. Now are you satisfied?

Mad. No.

Rasor. Right woman—always gaping for more.

Mad. Dis be all den, dat you know?

Rasor. All!—Ay, and a great deal too, I think.

Mad. Dou be fool, dou know nothing.—*Ecoute, mon pauvre Rasor.*—Dou see des two eyes? Des two eyes have see de devil.

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Rasor. The woman's mad.

Mad. In Spring Garden, dat rogue Constant meet dy lady.

Rasor. *Bon.*

Mad.—I'll tell dee no more.

Rasor. Nay, pr'ythee, my swan.

Mad. Come, kiss me, den. [*Clapping her hands behind her, as he did before.*

Rasor. I wont kiss you, not I.

Mad. Adieu. [*Going.*

Rasor. Hold—Now proceed. [*Gives her a hearty kiss.*

Mad. *A ça*—I hide myself in one cunning place, where I hear all, and see all. First dy drunken master come *mal à propos;* but de sot no know his own dear wife, so he leave her to her sport.—Den de game begin. De lover say soft ting; de lady look upon de ground. [*As she speaks,* Rasor *still acts the man, and she the woman.*] He take her by de hand; she turn her head on oder way. Den he squeeze very hard; den she pull—very softly. Den he take her in his arms: den she give him little pat. Den he kiss her *tettons;* den she say—pish, nay fy. Den he tremble; den she sigh. Den he pull her into the arbour; den she pinch him.

Rasor. Ay, but not so hard, you baggage you.

Mad. Den he grow bold; she grow weak: he tro her down, *il tombe dessu, le diable* assist, *il emport tout.* [Rasor *struggles with her, as if he would throw her down.*]—Stand off, sirrah.

Rasor. You have set me a fire, you jade, you.

Mad. Den go to de river, and quench dyself.

Rasor. What an unnatural harlot this!

Mad. Rasor. [*Looking languishingly on him.*

Rasor. *Mademoiselle.*

Mad. Dou no love me?

Rasor. Not love thee!—More than a Frenchman does soup.

Mad. Den you will refuse nothing dat I bid dee?

Rasor. Don't bid me hang myself then.

Mad. No, only tell dy master all I have tell dee of dy laty.

Rasor. Why, you little malicious strumpet you, should you like to be served so?

Mad. Dou dispute den?—Adieu.

Rasor. Hold—But why wilt thou make me be such a rogue, my dear?

Mad. *Viola un vrai Anglois! il est amourex, et cependant il veut raisonner. Va t'en au diable.*

Rasor. Hold, once more—in hopes thou'lt give me up thy body, I'll make a present of my honesty.

Mad. *Bon, ecoute donc;* if dou fail me—I never see dee more. If dou obey me—*je m'abandonne à toy à toy.* [*She takes him about the neck, and gives him a smacking kiss, and exit.*]

Rasor. [*Licking his lips.*] Not be a rogue!—*Amor vincit omnia.* [*Exit.*

Enter Lady Fancyful *and* Mademoiselle.

Lady F. Marry, say ye? Will the two things marry?

Mad. On le va faire, Madame.

Lady F. Look you, Mademoiselle—in short, I can't bear it—no, I find I can't. If once I see them a bed together, I shall have ten thousand thoughts in my head, will make me run distracted. Therefore, run and call Rasor back immediately, for something must be done to stop this impertinent wedding. If I can but defer it four and twenty hours, I'll make such work about town, with that little pert slut's reputation, he shall as soon marry a witch.

Mad. [*Aside.*] La voilà bien intentionée. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—Constant's *Lodgings.*

Enter Constant *and* Heartfree.

Con. But what dost think will become of this business?

Heart. 'Tis easier to think what will not become on't.

Con. What's that?

Heart. A challenge. I know the knight too well for that; his dear body will always prevail upon his noble soul to be quiet.

Con. But though he dare not challenge me, perhaps he may venture to challenge his wife.

Heart. Not if you whisper him in the ear, you wont have him do't, and there's no other way left that I see. For as drunk as he was, he'll remember you and I were where we should not be; and I don't think him quite blockhead enough yet, to be persuaded we were got into his wife's closet only to peep into her prayer-book.

Enter a Servant *with a Letter.*

Serv. Sir, here's a letter—a porter brought it.

Con. O ho, here's instructions for us. [*Reads.*] "The accident that has happened has touched our invention to the quick. We would fain come off without your help, but find that's impossible. In a word, the whole business must be thrown upon a matrimonial intrigue between your friend and mine. But if the parties are not fond enough to go quite through with the matter, 'tis sufficient for our turn, they own the design. We'll find pretences enough to break the match. Adieu."——Well, women for invention! How long would my blockhead have been producing this! Hey, Heartfree! What, musing, man? Pr'ythee be cheerful. What sayest thou, friend, to this matrimonial remedy?

Heart. Why, I say, it's worse than the disease.

Con. Here's a fellow for you. There's beauty and money on her side, and love up to the ears on his; and yet——

Heart. And yet, I think, I may reasonably be allowed to boggle at marrying the niece, in the very moment that you are deluding the aunt.

Con. Why, truly, there may be something in that. But have not you a good opinion enough of your own parts, to believe you could keep a wife to yourself?

Heart. I should have, if I had a good opinion enough of hers, to believe she could do as much by me. But, pr'ythee advise me in this good and evil, this life and death, this blessing and curse that is set before me. For to do them right, after all, the wife seldom rambles till the husband shows her the way.

Con. 'Tis true, a man of real worth scarce ever is a cuckold but by his own fault. Women are not naturally lewd; there must be something to urge them to it. They'll cuckold a

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churl out of revenge; a fool, because they despise him; a beast, because they loath him: but when they make bold with a man they once had a well-grounded value for, 'tis because they first see themselves neglected by him.

Heart. Shall I marry, or die a maid?

Con. Why, faith, Heartfree, matrimony is like an army going to engage. Love's the forlorn hope, which is soon cut off; the marriage-knot is the main body, which may stand buff a long time; and repentance is the rear-guard, which rarely gives ground as long as the main body has a being.

Heart. Conclusion then; you advise me to rake on as you do.

Con. That's not concluded yet. For though marriage be a lottery, in which there are wondrous many blanks; yet there is one inestimable lot, in which the only heaven on earth is written. Would your kind fate but guide your hand to that, though I were wrapped in all that luxury itself could clothe me with, I should envy you.

Heart. And justly too; for to be capable of loving one, doubtless, is better than to possess a thousand. But how far that capacity's in me, alas, I know not.

Con. But you would know.

Heart. I would so.

Con. Matrimony will inform you. Come, one flight of resolution carries you to the land of experience; where, in a very moderate time, you'll know the capacity of your soul and your body both, or I'm mistaken.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—Sir John Brute's *House.*

Enter Lady Brute *and* Belinda.

Bel. Well, Madam, what answer have you from them?

Lady B. That they'll be here this moment. I fancy 'twill end in a wedding: I'm sure he's a fool if it don't. Ten thousand pounds, and such a lass as you are, is no contemptible offer to a younger brother. But are not you under strange agitations. Pr'ythee, how does your pulse beat?

Bel. High and low; I have much a-do to be valiant; is it not very strange to go to bed with a man?

Lady B. Um——it is a little odd at first, but it will soon grow easy to you.

Enter Constant *and* Heartfree.

Good morrow, gentlemen: how have you slept after your adventure?

Heart. Some careful thoughts, ladies, on your accounts, have kept us waking.

Bel. And some careful thoughts of your own, I believe, have hindered you from sleeping. Pray, how does this matrimonial project relish with you?

Heart. Why, faith, e'en as storming towns does with soldiers, where the hopes of delicious plunder banishes the fear of being knocked on the head.

Bel. Is it then possible, after all, that you dare think of downright lawful wedlock?

Heart. Madam, you have made me so foolhardy, I dare do any thing.

Bel. Then, Sir, I challenge you, and matrimony's the spot where I expect you.

Heart. 'Tis enough; I'll not fail. [*Aside.*] So, now I am in for Hobbe's voyage, a great leap in the dark.

Lady B. Well, gentlemen, this matter being concluded, then, have you got your lessons ready; for Sir John is grown such an atheist of late, he'll believe nothing upon easy terms.

Con. We'll find means to extend his faith, Madam. But pray how do you find him this morning?

Lady B. Most lamentably morose, chewing the cud after last night's discovery, of which, however, he has but a confused notion even now. But I'm afraid the valet de chambre has told him all; for they are very busy together at this moment. When I told him of Belinda's marriage, I had no other answer but a grunt; from which you may draw what conclusion you think fit. But to your notes, gentlemen, he's here.

Enter Sir John *and* Rasor.

Con. Good-morrow, Sir.

Heart. Good-morrow, Sir John; I'm very sorry my indiscretion should cause so much disorder in your family.

Sir J. Disorders generally come from indiscretion, Sir; 'tis no strange thing at all.

Lady B. I hope, my dear, you are satisfied there was no wrong intended you.

Sir J. None, my dove.

Bel. If not, I hope my consent to marry Mr. Heartfree will convince you. For, as little as I know of amours, Sir, I can assure you, one intrigue is enough to bring four people together, without further mischief.

Sir J. And I know too that intrigues tend to procreation of more kinds than one. One intrigue will beget another, as soon as beget a son or a daughter.

Con. I am very sorry, Sir, to see you still seem unsatisfied with a lady, whose more than common virtue, I am sure, were she my wife, should meet a better usage.

Sir J. Sir, if her conduct has put a trick upon her virtue, her virtue's the bubble, but her husband's the loser.

Con. Sir, you have received a sufficient answer already, to justify both her conduct and mine. You'll pardon me for meddling in your family affairs; but I perceive I am the man you are jealous of, and therefore it concerns me.

Sir J. Would it did not concern me, and then I should not care who it concerned.

Con. Well, Sir, if truth and reason wont content you, I know but one way more, which if you think fit, you may take.

Sir J. Lord, Sir, you are very hasty: if I had been found at prayers in your wife's closet, I should have allowed you twice as much time to come to yourself in.

Con. Nay, Sir, if time be all you want, we have no quarrel.

Heart. I told you how the sword would work upon him. [Sir J. *muses.*

Con. Let him muse; however, I'll lay fifty pounds our foreman brings us in, not guilty.

Sir J. [*Aside.*] 'Tis very well—'tis very well—In spite of that young jade's matrimonial intrigue, I am a downright stinking cuckold—

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Here they are—Boo—[*Putting his hand to his forehead.*] Methinks I could butt with a bull. What the plague did I marry for? I knew she did not like me; if she had, she would have lain with me; for I would have done so because I liked her; but that's past, and I have her. And now what shall I do with her?—If I put my horns into my pocket she'll grow insolent—if I don't, that goat there, that stallion, is ready to whip me through the guts—the debate then is reduced to this; shall I die a hero, or live a rascal? Why, wiser men than I have long since concluded, that a living dog is better than a dead lion. [*To* CON. *and* HEART.] Gentlemen, now my wine and my passion are governable, I must own, I have never observed any thing in my wife's course of life, to back me in my jealousy of her; but jealousy's a mark of love; so she need not trouble her head about it, as long as I make no more words on't.

LADY FANCYFUL *enters disguised, and addresses* BELINDA *apart.*

Con. I'm glad to see your reason rule at last. Give me your hand: I hope you'll look upon me as you used to do.

Sir J. Your humble servant. [*Aside.*] A wheedling son of a whore!

Heart. And that I may be sure you are friends with me too, pray give me your consent to wed your niece.

Sir J. Sir you have it with all my heart; damn me if you ha'n't. [*Aside.*] 'Tis time to get rid of her; a young pert pimp: she'll make an incomparable bawd in a little time.

Enter a Servant, who gives HEARTFREE *a letter.*

Bel. Heartfree your husband, say you?—'Tis impossible!

Lady F. Would to kind Heaven it were; but 'tis too true; and in the world there lives not such a wretch. I'm young; and either I have been flattered by my friends, as well as glass, or nature has been kind and generous to me. I had a fortune too was greater far than he could ever hope for; but with my heart I am robbed of all the rest. I am slighted and I'm beggared both at once; I have scarce a bare subsistence from the villain, yet dare complain to none; for he has sworn, if ever 'tis known I am his wife, he'll murder me. [*Weeping.*

Bel. The traitor.

Lady F. I accidentally was told he courted you; charity soon prevailed upon me to prevent your misery; and, as you see I am still so generous even to him, as not to suffer he should do any thing, for which the law might take away his life. [*Weeping.*

Bel. Poor creature! How I pity her.

[*They continue talking aside.*

Heart. [*Aside.*] Death and the devil—Let me read it again. [*Reads.*] "Though I have a particular reason not to let you know who I am till I see you; yet you'll easily believe 'tis a faithful friend that gives you this advice. I have lain with Belinda—[*Good.*]—I have a child by her—[*Better and better.*]—which is now out at nurse—[*Heaven be praised.*]—and I think the foundation laid for another—[*Ha!—old true-penny.*]—no rack could have tortured this story from me; but friendship has done it. I heard of your design to marry her, and could not see you abused. Make use of my advice, but keep my secret till I ask you for't again." [*Exit* LADY F.

Con. [*To* BELINDA.] Come, Madam, shall we send for the parson? I doubt here's no business for the lawyers; younger brothers have nothing to settle but their hearts, and that I believe my friend here has already done very faithfully.

Bel. [*Scornfully.*] Are you sure, Sir, there are no old mortgages upon it?

Heart. [*Coldly.*] If you think there are, Madam, it mayn't be amiss to defer the marriage till you are sure they are paid off.

Bel. We'll defer it as long as you please, Sir.

Heart. The more time we take to consider on't, Madam, the less apt we shall be to commit oversights: therefore, if you please, we will put it off for just nine months.

Bel. Guilty consciences make men cowards.

Heart. And they make women desperate.

Bel. I don't wonder you want time to resolve.

Heart. I don't wonder you are so quickly determined.

Bel. What does the fellow mean?

Heart. What does the lady mean?

Sir J. Zoons, what do you both mean?

[HEART. *and* BEL. *walk chafing about.*

Rasor. [*Aside.*] Here is so much sport going to be spoiled it makes me ready to weep again. A pox o' this impertinent Lady Fancyful, and her plots, and her Frenchwoman too; she's a whimsical, ill-natured bitch, and when I have got my bones broke in her service, 'tis ten to one but my recompence is a clap; I hear them tittering without still. I-cod, I'll e'en go lug them both in by the ears, and discover the plot, to secure my pardon. [*Exit.*

Con. Pr'ythee explain, Heartfree.

Heart. A fair deliverance; thank my stars and my friend.

Bel. 'Tis well it went no farther; a base fellow!

Lady B. What can be the meaning of all this?

Bel. What's his meaning, I don't know; but mine is, that if I had married him, I had had no husband.

Heart. And what's her meaning, I don't know; but mine is, that if I had married her I had had wife enough.

Sir J. Your people of wit have got such cramp ways of expressing themselves, they seldom comprehend one another. Pox take you both, will you speak that you may be understood?

Enter RASOR *in sackcloth, pulling in* LADY FANCYFUL *and* MADEMOISELLE.

Rasor. If they wont, here comes an interpreter.

Lady B. Heavens! What have we here?

Rasor. A villain—but a repenting villain.

All. Rasor.

Lady B. What means this?

Rasor. Nothing without my pardon.

Lady B. What pardon do you want?

Rasor. *Imprimis*, your ladyship's, for a damnable lie made upon your spotless virtue and set to the tune of Spring Garden. [*To* SIR JOHN.] Next at my generous master's feet I bend for interrupting his more noble thoughts with phantoms of disgraceful cuckoldom. [*To*

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CONSTANT.] Thirdly, I to this gentleman apply for making him the hero of my romance.—[*To* HEARTFREE.] Fourthly, your pardon, noble Sir, I ask for clandestinely marrying you, without either bidding of banns, bishop's licence, friends' consent, or your own knowledge. [*To* BELINDA.] And lastly to my good young lady's clemency I come, for pretending the corn was sowed in the ground, before ever the plough had been in the field.

Sir J. [*Aside.*] So that, after all, 'tis a moot point whether I am a cuckold or not.

Bel. Well, Sir, upon condition you confess all, I'll pardon you myself, and try to obtain as much from the rest of the company. But I must know then who 'tis has put you upon all this mischief.

Rasor. Satan and his equipage; woman tempted me; vice weakened me—and so the devil overcame me: as fell Adam, so fell I.

Bel. Then pray, Mr. Adam, will you make us acquainted with your Eve?

Rasor. [*To* MAD.] Unmask, for the honour of France.

All. Mademoiselle!

Mad. Me ask ten tousand pardon of all de good company.

Sir J. Why this mystery thickens instead of clearing up. [*To* RASOR.] You son of a whore you, put us out of our pain.

Rasor. One moment brings sunshine. [*Showing* MAD.] 'Tis true, this is the woman that tempted me, but this is the serpent that tempted the woman; and if my prayers might be heard, her punishment for so doing should be like the serpent's of old—[*Pulls off* LADY F.'s *mask.*] she should lie upon her face all the days of her life.

All. Lady Fancyful!

Bel. Impertinent!

Lady B. Ridiculous!

All. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

Bel. I hope your ladyship will give me leave to wish you joy, since you have owned your marriage yourself.——[*To* HEART.] I vow 'twas strangely wicked in you to think of another wife, when you have one already so charming as her ladyship.

All. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

Lady F. [*Aside.*] Confusion seize them, as it seizes me!

Mad. *Que le diable etouffe ce marant de Rasor.*

Bel. Your ladyship seems disordered: a breeding qualm, perhaps, Mr. Heartfree: your bottle of Hungary water to your lady. Why, Madam, he stands as unconcerned as if he were your husband in earnest.

Lady F. Your mirth's as nauseous as yourself. Belinda, you think you triumph over a rival now; *helas! ma pauvre fille.* Where'er I'm a rival, there's no cause for mirth. No, my poor wretch, 'tis from another principle I have acted. I knew that thing there would make so perverse a husband, and you so impertinent a wife, that lest your mutual plagues should make you run both mad, I charitably would have broke the match. He, he, he, he, he! [*Exit laughing affectedly,* MAD. *following her.*

Mad. He, he, he, he, he!

All. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Sir J. [*Aside.*] Why now, this woman will be married to somebody too.

Bel. Poor creature! what a passion she is in! but I forgive her.

Heart. Since you have so much goodness for her, I hope you'll pardon my offence too, Madam.

Bel. There will be no great difficulty in that, since I am guilty of an equal fault.

Heart. So, Madam, now had the parson but done his business——

Bel. You'd be half weary of your bargain.

Heart. No, sure, I might dispense with one night's lodging.

Bel. I'm ready to try, Sir.

Heart. Then let's to church;

And if it be our chance to disagree——

Bel. Take heed—the surly husband's fate you see.

Sir J. Surly I may be, stubborn I am not,
For I have both forgiven and forgot;
If so, be these our judges, Mrs. Pert,
'Tis more by my goodness, than your desert.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

EPILOGUE.

SPOKEN BY LADY BRUTE AND BELINDA.

Lady B. No Epilogue!
Bel. I swear I know of none.
Lady B. Lord! How shall we excuse it to the town?
Bel. Why we must e'en say something of our own.
Lady B. Our own! Ay, that must needs be precious stuff.
Bel. I'll lay my life they'll like it well enough.
Come, faith, begin——
Lady B. Excuse me, after you.
Bel. Nay, pardon me for that, I know my cue.
Lady B. O for the world I would not have precedence.
Bel. O lord!
Lady B. I swear——
Bel. O fy!
Lady B. I'm all obedience.
First then know all, before our doom is fixt,
The third day is for us——
Bel. Nay, and the sixth.
Lady B. We speak not from the poet now, nor is it
His cause—(I want a rhyme.)
Bel. That we solicit.
Lady B. Then sure you cannot have the hearts to be severe,
And damn us—
Bel. Damn us! Let them, if they dare.
Lady B. Why, if they should, what punishment remains?
Bel. Eternal exile from behind our scenes.
Lady B. But if they're kind, that sentence we'll recall.
We can be grateful——
Bel. And have wherewithal.
Lady B. But as grand treaties hope not to be trusted,
Before preliminaries are adjusted.
Bel. You know the time, and we appoint this place,
Where, if you please, we'll meet and sign the peace.

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ALZIRA:

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY AARON HILL.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DON CARLOS, Governor of Peru, for the Spaniards.
DON ALVAREZ, Father of Don Carlos, and former Governor.
ZAMOR, Indian Sovereign of one part of the country.
EZMONT, Indian Sovereign of another part.

ALZIRA, Daughter of Ezmont.
EMIRA, } Alzira's Women.
CEPHANIA, }

Spanish and American Captains and Soldiers.

SCENE.—In the City of Lima.

PROLOGUE.

WHEN some raw paddler from the waded shore,
First dares the deep'ning stream, and ventures o'er,
Light on his floating cork the wave he skims,
And, wanton in his safety, thinks he swims.
So shall Alzira's fame our faults protect,
And from your censure screen each fear'd defect.
For should we act, unskill'd, the player's parts,
We act such scenes——as force us to your hearts.
What floods of tears a neighbouring land saw flow,
When a whole people wept Alzira's wo!
The loveliest eyes of France, in one pleased night,
Twice charm'd, renew'd, and lengthen'd out delight;
Twice charm'd, review'd the sad, the melting strain,
Yet hung, insatiate, on the willing pain!
Thrice thirty days, all Paris sighed for sense!
Tumblers stood still—and thought—in wit's defence;
Even power despotic felt how wrongs can move;
And nobly wept for liberty and love.
Can it be fear'd then, that our generous land,
Where justice blooms, and reason holds command;
This soil of science! where bold truth is taught,
This seat of freedom, and this throne of thought;
Can pour applause on foreign song and dance,
Yet leave the praise of solid sense to France;
No—that's impossible—'tis Britain's claim,
To hold no second place in taste or fame.
In arts and arms alike victorious known,
Whate'er deserves her choice she makes her own.
Nor let the conscious power of English wit
Less feel the force, because a Frenchman writ.
Reason and sentiment, like air and light,
Wherever found, are Nature's common right.
Since the same sun gives northern climes their day,
After the east has first received its ray,
Why should our pride repel the muse's smile,
Because it dawn'd not first upon our isle?
Fraternal art adopts each alien fame;
The wise and brave are every where the same.
From hostile sentiments let discord flow;
But they who think like friends, should have no foe.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Enter DON ALVAREZ *and* DON CARLOS.

Alv. At length the council, partial to my prayer,

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Has to a son I love, transfer'd my power.
Carlos, rule happy; be a viceroy long;
Long for thy prince, and for thy God, maintain
This younger, richer, lovelier, half the globe;
Too fruitful, heretofore, in wrongs and blood;
Crimes, the lamented growths of powerful gold!
Safe to thy abler hand devolve, resign'd,
Those sovereign honours which oppress'd my years,
And dimm'd the feeble lamp of wasted age.
Yet had it long, and not unuseful, flamed.
I first o'er wondering Mexico in arms
March'd the new horrors of a world unknown!
I steer'd the floating towers of fearless Spain
Through the plough'd bosom of an untried sea.
Too happy had my labours been so bless'd,
To change my brave associates' rugged souls,
And soften stubborn heroes into men.
Their cruelties, my son, eclipsed their glory:
And I have wept a conqueror's splendid shame,
Whom Heaven not better made, and yet made great.
Wearied at length, I reach my life's last verge;
Where I shall peaceful veil my eyes in rest;
If, ere they close, they but behold my Carlos
Ruling Potosi's realm by Christian laws,
And making gold more rich by gifts from Heaven.

Car. Taught and supported by your great example,
I learn'd beneath your eye to conquer realms,
Which, by your counsels, I may learn to govern;
Giving those laws I first receive from you.

Alv. Not so.—Divided power is power disarm'd.
Outworn by labour, and decay'd by time,
Pomp is no more my wish. Enough for me
That, heard in council, age may temper rashness.
Trust me, mankind but ill rewards the pains
Of over-prompt ambition.——'Tis now time
To give my long-neglected God those hours,
Which close the languid period of my days.
One only gift I ask; refuse not that;
As friend I ask it, and as father claim.
Pardon those poor Americans, condemn'd
For wandering hither, and this morning seized.
To my disposal give them kindly up,
That liberty, unhoped, may charm the more.
A day like this should merit smiles from all;
And mercy, softening justice, mark it bless'd.

Car. Sir, all that fathers ask, they must command.
Yet condescend to recollect how far
This pity, undeserved, might hazard all.
In infant towns like ours, methinks, 'twere safe
Not to familiarize these savage spies.
If we accustom foes to look too near,
We teach them, at our cost, to slight those swords
They once flew trembling from, whene'er they saw.
Frowning revenge, and awe of distant dread,
Not smiling friendship, tames these sullen souls.
The sour American, unbroke, and wild,
Spurns with indignant rage, and bites his chain:
Humble when punish'd; if regarded, fierce.
Power sickens by forbearance: rigid men,
Who feel not pity's pangs, are best obey'd.
Spaniards 'Tis true, are ruled by honour's law,
Submit unmurmuring, and unforced to right.
But other nations are impell'd by fear,
And must be rein'd, and spurr'd with hard control.
The gods themselves in this ferocious clime,
Till they look grim with blood, excite no dread.

Alv. Away, my son, with these detested schemes!
Perish such politic reproach of rule!
Are we made captains in our Maker's cause
O'er these new Christians call'd to stretch his name,
His peaceful name! and shall we unprovoked,
Bear murders which our holy cheats presume
To mispronounce his injured altar's due?
Shall we dispeople realms, and kill to save?
Such if the fruits of Spain's religious care,
I, from the distant bounds of our old world,
Have to this new one stretch'd a Saviour's name,
To make it hateful to one half the globe,
Because no mercy graced the other's zeal.
No, my misguided Carlos, the broad eye
Of one Creator takes in all mankind:
His laws expand the heart; and we, who thus
Would by destruction propagate belief,
And mix with blood and gold religion's growth,
Stamp in these Indians' honest breasts a scorn
Of all we teach, from what they see we do.

Car. Yet the learn'd props of our unerring church,
Whom zeal for saving souls deprives of rest,
Taught my late youth, committed to their care,
That ignorance, averse, must be compell'd.

Alv. Our priests are all for vengeance, force, and fire;
And only in his thunder act their God.
Hence we seem thieves; and what we seem we are.
Spain has robb'd every growth of this new world,
Even to its savage nature!—Vain, unjust,
Proud, cruel, covetous, we, we alone
Are the barbarians here!—An Indian heart
Equals, in courage, the most prompt of ours;
But in simplicity of artless truth,
And every honest native warmth, excels us.
Had they, like us, been bloody; had they not
By pity's power been moved, and virtue's love,
No son of mine had heard a father now
Reprove his erring rashness.—You forget,
That when a prisoner in these people's hands,
Gall'd and provoked by cruelty and wrongs,
While my brave followers fell on every side,
Till I alone survived, some Indians knew me,
Knew me, and suddenly pronounced my name.
At once they threw their weapons to the ground,
And a young savage chief, whom yet I know not,
[knees.
Graceful approach'd, and, kneeling, press'd my
Alvarez—is it you? he cried—Live long!
Ours be your virtue, but not ours your blood!
Live, and instruct oppressors to be loved.
Bless'd be those tears, my son!—I think you weep.
Joy to your softening soul! Humanity
Has power, in nature's right, beyond a father.
But from what motive sprung this late decline
From clemency of heart to new-born rigour?
Had you been always cruel, with what brow

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Could you have hoped to charm the loved Alzira?
Heiress to realms dispeopled by your sword?
And though your captive, yet your conqueror too.
Trust me,—with women worth the being won,
The softest lover ever best succeeds.
Car. Sir, I obey—your pleasure breaks their chains;
Yet 'tis their duty to embrace our faith:
So runs the king's command:——To merit life,
Quit they their idol worship, and be free.
So thrives religion, and compels the blind;
So draws our holy altar souls by force,
Till opposition dies, and sleeps in peace;
So links a govern'd world in faith's strong chain;
And but one monarch serves, and but one God.
Alv. Hear me, my son.—That, crown'd in this new world,
Religion may erect her holy throne,
Is what, with ardent zeal, my soul desires;
Let Heaven and Spain find here no future foe!
Yet ne'er did persecution's offspring thrive:
For the forced heart, submitting, still resists.
Reason gains all men by compelling none.
Mercy was always Heaven's distinguish'd mark;
And he who bears it not, has no friend there.
Car. Your reasons, like your arms, are sure to conquer.
I am instructed and ennobled by them!
Indulgent virtue dwells in all you say,
And softens, while you speak, the listening soul!
Since Heaven has bless'd you with this powerful gift,
To breathe persuasion and uncharm resolves,
Pronounce me favour'd, and you make me so.
Warm my Alzira's coldness; dry her tears;
And teach her to be mine.—I love that maid,
Spite of my pride! blush at it——but still love her!
Yet will I ne'er, to sooth unyielding scorn,
Unman the soldier in the lover's cause.
I cannot stoop to fan a hopeless flame,
And be in vain her slave.—You, Sir, might aid me:
You can do all things with Alzira's father.
Bid him command his daughter to be kind;
Bid him—But whither would my love mislead me!
Forgive the blind presumption of a hope,
That to my interest stoops my father's rank;
And sends him beggar to an Indian's door!
Alv. 'Tis done already. I have urged it to him.
Ezmont has moved his daughter in your cause.
Wait the prepared event. Heaven has been kind;
Since these illustrious captives both are Christians;
Ezmont my convert, and his daughter his.
Alzira governs a whole people's minds;
Each watchful Indian reads her studied eye,
And to her silent heart confirms his own.
Your marriage shall unite two distant worlds:
For when the stern repiner at our law
Sees in your arms the daughter of his king,
With humbler spirit, and with heart less fierce,
His willing neck shall court the yoke he scorn'd.
But look, where Ezmont comes!—Retire, my son;
And leave me to complete the task begun.
[*Exit* CAR.

Enter EZMONT.

Welcome, my friend; your counsel, or command,
Has left, I hope, Alzira well resolved.
Ezm. Great father of the friendless!—Pardon yet,
If one, whose sword seem'd fatal to her race,
Keeps her heart cold, with some remains of horror.
We move with lingering steps to those we fear.
But prejudice will fly before your voice,
Whose winning manners consecrate your laws.
To you who gave us heaven, our earth is due.
Yours our new being, our enlighten'd souls;
Spain may hold realms by purchase of her sword;
And worlds may yield to power—but we to virtue.
Your bloody nation's unsucceeding pride
Had made their God disgustful as their crimes!
We saw him hateful in their murderous zeal;
But loved him in your mercy.—From your heart [crown,
His influence stream'd accepted; and my
My daughter, and my soul, became your slaves.
Father alike of Carlos and of me,
I give him my Alzira for your sake;
And with her all Potosi and Peru.
Summon the reverend choir; prepare the rites;
And trust my promise for my daughter's will.
Alv. Bless'd be the long-wish'd sound!——this great work past,
I shall go down in peace, and hail my grave.
Oh, though great leader! whose almighty hand
Drew the dark veil aside that hid new worlds;
Smile on this union, which, confirm'd by thee,
Shall in one empire grasp the circled globe,
And task the sun's whole round to measure Spain!
Ezmont, farewell,—I go to greet my son,
With welcome news, how much he owes my friend. [*Exit.*
Ezm. Thou, nameless Power, unequall'd and alone!
Whose dreadful vengeance overwhelm'd, at once,
My country and her gods, too weak to save!
Protect my failing years from new distress.
Robb'd of my all: but this one daughter left me: [bless'd!
Oh, guard her heart, and guide her to be

Enter ALZIRA.

Daughter, be happy, while good fortune courts thee;
And in thy blessing cheer thy country's hope.
Protect the vanquish'd: rule the victor's will;
Seize the bent thunder in his lifted hand;
And from despair's low seat, remount a throne.
Lend the loved public thy reluctant heart;
And in the joy of millions find thy own.
Nay, do not weep, Alzira: tears will now
Seem insults, and reproach thy father's care.
Alz. Sir, my whole soul, devoted, feels your power.
Yet, if Alzira's peace was ever dear,
Shut not your ear to my despairing grief;
But, in my nuptials, read my certain doom.
Ezm. Urge it no more: it is an ill-timed sorrow.
Away! I had thy kind consent before.

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Alz. No,—you compell'd the frightful sacrifice: [time!
And, ah, remorseless Heaven!—at what a
When the raised sword of this all-murdering lover
Hangs o'er my people's heads with threatening sway,
To strike the trembling remnant from my sight,
And mark my nuptial day a day of death!
Omens on omens have pronounced it cursed.
Ezm. Quit these vain fears, these superstitious dreams
Of unconfiding ignorance! What day?
What omens? We ourselves, who choose our acts,
Make our own days, or happy, or accursed.
Alz. 'Twas on this day, the pride of all our state,
Zamor the great, the warlike Zamor fell;
Zamor, my lover, and your purposed son.
Ezm. Zamor was brave; and I have mourn'd his fall.
But the cold grave dissolves even lovers' vows.
Bear to the altar then a heart resolved;
And let thy summon'd virtue check thy weakness.
Was not thy soul enroll'd a christian lately?
The awful Power that lent those christians name, [won.
Speaks in my voice; commands thee to be
Hear him; and learn obedience to his will.
Alz. Alas, my father! spare this dreadful zeal. [God?
Has not the parent spoke? Why speaks the
I know, and I confess, a father's power;
At his command to sacrifice the life
He gave me, is a duty nature taught.
But my obedience passes nature's bounds;
Whate'er I see, is with my father's eyes;
Whate'er I love, is for my father's sake;
I changed my very gods, and took my father's:
Yet has this father, piously severe, [me.
Wrong'd my believing weakness, and undone
He told me, to compose my troubled heart,
Peace held her dwelling at the altar's foot.
He told me, that religion cured despair,
And soften'd every pang that pierced the soul:
But, ah, 'twas all deceit! all dear delusion!
Mix'd with the image of an awful God,
A human image struggles in my heart,
And checks my willing virtue in its rising.
Zamor, though dead to nature, lives to love.
Zamor still triumphs in Alzira's breast,
Lord of her soul, and holds back all her wishes. [caused.
You frown.—Alas! you blame a guilt you
Quench then this flame, too hard for death and time;
And force me to be his whom most I hate.
If my loved country bids, I must obey.
Yet, while by force you join unsocial hands,
Tremble whene'er you drag me to the altar,
Tremble to hear my tongue deceive my God:
To hear me to this hated tyrant vow
A heart, that beats, unchanged, another's due.
Ezm. Alas, my child, what unweigh'd words are these!
Pity my age, unfit for lengthening woes:
Nature asks rest: pity these falling tears.
By all our fates, that all depend on thee,
Let me conjure thee to be blessed thyself,
Nor close in misery my life's last scene.
Why do I live, but to redeem thy hopes?
For thy own sake, not mine, assist my care.
Blast not the ripening prospect of thy peace,
Hard, and with labour'd patience, slowly grown.
Now, on thy instant choice, depends thy fate!
Nor only thine, but a whole people's fate!
Wilt thou betray them? Have they other help?
Have they a hope, but thee?—Think, think, Alzira;
And nobly lose thyself to save a state. [*Exit.*
Alz. Cruel accomplishment! sublime defect!
So feign we virtues to become a throne,
Till public duty drowns our private truth.

Enter Don Carlos.

Car. Princess, you give a lover cause to doubt,
That this long labour of your slow consent
Springs from a heart too cold to feel his flame.
While, for your sake, suspended law forbears
To punish rebels, whom you wish to save,
Ungrateful, you compel a nation's freedom,
And bind, in recompence, my chains more close!
Yet misconceive me not.—I would not owe
A softened sentiment to having served you;
That were to bribe a heart my pride would win. [you,
I should with mingled joy and blushes gain
If, as my perquisite of power you fell. [you
Let me attract, not force you.——I would owe
All to yourself; nor could I taste a joy,
That, in your giving it, might cost you pain.
Alz. Join, Sir, my fruitless prayers to angry Heaven!
This dreadful day comes charged with pains for both.
—No wonder you detect my troubled soul:
It bursts unveil'd from my disclosing eyes,
And glows on every feature's honest air.
Such is the plainness of an Indian heart,
That it disdains to skulk behind the tongue;
But throws out all its wrongs, and all its rage.
She who can hide her purpose, can betray;
And that's a christian virtue I've not learn'd.
Car. I love your frankness, but reproach its cause.
Zamor, remember'd Zamor, speaks in this.
With hatred stretch'd beyond th' extent of life, [will],
He crosses from the tomb, his conqueror's
And felt, through death, revenges rival love.
Cease to complain, and you may learn to bear.
My fame, your duty, both require a change;
And I must wish it were from tears to joy.
Alz. A rival's grave should bury jealousy.
But whence your right to censure sorrow for him?
I loved him; I proclaim it. Had I not,
I had been blind to sense, and lost to reason.
Zamor was all the prop of our fall'n world:
And, but he loved me much, confessed no weakness!
Had I not mourn'd a fate he not deserved,
I had deserved the fate he felt unjustly.
For you, be proud no more; but dare be honest.
Far from presuming to reproach my tears,
Honour my constancy, and praise my virtue:
Cease to regret the dues I pay the dead;
And merit, if you can, a heart thus faithful. [*Exit.*
Car. Spite of my fruitless passion, I confess,
Her pride, thus starting its sincere disdain,
Astonishes my thought, and charms my anger.
—What then shall I resolve?—Must it cost more
To tame one female heart than all Peru!
Nature, adapting her to suit her climate

Left her all savage, yet all shining too!
But 'tis my duty to be master here;
Where, she alone excepted, all obey.
Since then too faintly I her heart incline,
I'll force her stubborn hand, and fix her mine.
[*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter ZAMOR, *and four* INDIAN CAPTAINS, *in chains.*

Zam. Friends, who have dared beyond the strength of mortals;
Whose courage scorn'd restraint, and grew in danger;
Associates in my hopes and my misfortunes!
Since we have lost our vengeance, let death find us!
Why should we longer be condemn'd to life,
Defenceless to our country and Alzira?
Yet why should Spanish Carlos 'scape our swords?
Why thrive beneath a weight of uncheck'd crimes?
And why has Heaven forsaken us and virtue?
Ye strengthless powers! whose altars smoked in vain!
Gods of a faithful, yet a cheated people!
Why have you thus betray'd us to the foe?
Why had six hundred Spanish vagrants power
To crush my throne, your temples, rites, and you?
Where are your altars? where my glories now?
Where is Alzira? more herself a god,
Than your collected queens of fancied Heaven!
Helpless once more thou seest me,—lost Peru!
O'er shifting sands, through desarts, cross'd in vain!
From forests' wilds, impervious to the sun;
From the world's wastes, beneath the burning zone,
I brought thee unhoped aid! the wondering stars
Beheld me gathering from remotest wilds,
New strength, new prospects, and new means to die! [port,
Your arms, your furtherance, your vast sup-
New-furnish'd my desires, and wing'd my hope.
Vengeance and love once more had mann'd my heart.
But, ah, how vain that hope! how lost that vengeance!
The slaves of avarice are honour's masters?
Ind. Capt. Why left we in the neighbouring woods our forces?
Why dared we pass too bold their guarded gates,
Alone, and unsupported,—rash discoverers?
Zam. Seized but this morning from our dungeon's depth,
Th' infernal murderers have hither brought us,
Unknowing to what death, though sure to die.
Yet it o'erjoys me, we have met once more.
But where? what place is this? Has none yet heard
Who governs here? what fate Alzira found?
Whether her father is, like us, their slave?
Dear, wretched friends, who share a death my due,
Can none instruct me what I wish to know?
Ind. Capt. From separate prisons hither led, like you,
Through different streets we came, the cause not known:
All uninform'd of what you seek to learn.
Great, but unhappy prince! deserving long
A nobler fate! our silent souls lament
Our want of power to save so loved a leader.
Now to die with you is our noblest claim,
Since to die for you was a choice denied us.
Zam. Next the wish'd glory of success in war,
The greatest is to die, and die renown'd.
But to die noteless, in the shameful dark,
To die, and leave in chains our suffering country!
To fall, undignified, by villains' hands;
The sacrifice of Europe's outcast blood-hounds!
Horrid with others' wounds, and poorly rich
With others' plunder'd treasure; die by butchers!
Blood-stain'd insulters of a yielded world!
Riflers, who gave me up to tire their tortures,
But for discovery of the gold I scorn'd,
As dross, less valued, and less wish'd than they!
To be in death the cause of my friends' dying!
To die, and leave Alzira to my murderers!
This is a death of horror, not of fame!
This is the body's death—but shakes the soul!

Enter ALVARES, *with a Guard of Spaniards.*

Alv. Live, and be free.
[*Spanish Soldiers unfetter the Indians.*
Zam. Ye gods of lost Peru!
What do I hear?——said he, Be free, and live?
What vast mysterious accident of virtue?
Some power divine, in sport, deceives my wonder!
Thou seem'st a Spaniard!—and—but thou forgivest,
I could have sworn thee Christian!—Who? what art thou?
Art thou some god? or this new city's king?
Alv. Christian I am, and Spaniard; but no king. [tress'd.
Yet serves my power to save the weak, dis-
Zam. What thy distinction then? thou generous wonder!
Alv. The love of pity, when the wretched want it.
Zam. Pity! and Christian!—what inspired thy greatness?
Alv. My memory, my duty, and my God.
Zam. Thy God!—perhaps then these insatiate wasters,
These human seemers, with but forms of men;
These thirsters after only gold and blood:
From some coarse, lawless part of Europe came;
And serve some bloodier god that wars with thine?
Alv. Their faith the same with mine, but not their nature:
Christians by birth, by error made unchristian,
In power grown giddy, they disgrace command.
Thou know'st their faults too well: now know my duty. [globe,
Twice has the sun's broad traverse girt the
Twice wheel'd the summer round your world and ours,
Since a brave Indian, native of your land,
To whom surprise in ambush made me captive,

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Gave me the forfeit life his sword had won.
The unexpected mercy forced my blushes;
For, I perceived, compassion of your woes
Was but a duty, when I thought 'twas virtue.
Thenceforth, your countrymen became my brothers;
And I have now but one complaint against them, [me.
—That I must never know his name who saved

Zam. He has Alvarez' voice! He has his features;
His age the same too; and the same his story!
'Tis he!—there is no other honest Christian.
Look on us all; and recollect his face,
Who wisely spared thy life to spread thy virtues.

Alv. Come nearer, noble youth.——By Heaven, 'tis he!
Now, my dim eyes, you teach me my decay,
That could not let me see my wish indulged,
But clouded ev'n my gratitude!——my son!
My benefactor! Saviour of my age!
What can I do? Instruct me to deserve thee.
Dwell in my sight; and I will be thy father.
Thou wilt have lost the merit of thy gift,
If, from the power it gave, thou claim'st no payment.

Zam. Trust me, my father, had thy Spanish sons
Shown but a glimmering of thy awful virtue,
Grateful Peru, now desolately theirs,
Had been a peopled world of willing slaves,
But cruelty, and pride, and plunder claim them.
Rather than live among that felon race,
Hide, hide me, silent death; and screen my soul
From the reliefless rage of unfelt curses.
All I would ask, all I will take from Spain,
Is but to be inform'd, if Ezmont lives?
Or has his blood new-stain'd their hands with murder?
Ezmont?—perhaps you knew him not?—That Ezmont
Who was Alzira's father?——I must stop,
And weep——before I dare go on to ask——
Whether—that father—and that daughter——live?

Alv. Hide not thy tears: weep boldly—and be proud
To give the flowing virtue manly way;
'Tis nature's mark to know an honest heart by.
Shame on those breasts of stone that cannot melt,
In soft adoption of another's sorrow,
But be thou comforted; for both thy friends
Live, and are happy here.

Zam. And shall I see them?

Alv. Ezmont, within this hour, shall teach his friend
To live, and hope—and be as bless'd as he.

Zam. Alzira's Ezmont?—

Alv. From his mouth not mine,
Thou shalt, this moment, learn whate'er thou seek'st;
He shall instruct thee in a smiling charge,
That has united Spain with saved Peru.
I have a son to bless with this new joy:
He will partake my happiness, and love thee.
——I quit thee——but will instantly return,
To charm thee with this union's happy story,
That nothing now on earth has power to sever—
Yet which, once closed, shall quiet warring worlds. [*Exit, with Guards.*

Zam. At length th' awakening gods remember Zamor,
And to atone my wrongs by working wonders,
Have made a Spaniard honest to reward me!
Alvarez is himself the Christian's god;
Who, long provoked, and blushing at their crimes,
In his own right descends, to veil their shame.
He says he has a son; that son shall be
My brother, if at least he does but prove
Worthy (could man be so) of such a father!
Oh, day! oh dawn of hope, on my sad heart!
Ezmont, now, after three long years of wo,
Ezmont, Alzira's father, is restored me!
Alzira too, the dear, the generous maid,
She, whom my sighing soul has been at work for! [wretched!
She, who has made me brave, and left me
Alzira too is here! and lives to thank me.—

Enter EZMONT.

Oh, ye profuse rewarders of my pain! [hopes,
He comes! my Ezmont comes!—Spring of my
Thou father of my labouring mind's inspirer!
Hard let me press thee to a heart that loves thee.
Escaped from death, behold returning Zamor.
He will not, cannot die, while there is hope,
That he may live to serve a suffering friend.
Speak, speak; and be thy first soft word Alzira!
Say, she is here; and bless'd as Heaven can make her.

Ezm. Unhappy prince!—She lives, nor lives remote.
Words cannot reach description of her grief,
Since first the news of thy sad death was brought her.
Long dwelt she, sorrowing, o'er an empty tomb,
Which, for thy fancied form, she raised to weep on, [liv'st!
But thou still liv'st—amazing chance!—thou
Heaven grant some doubtful means to bless thee long,
And make thy life as happy—as 'tis strange.
—What brought thee hither, Zamor?

Zam. Cruel question!
Colder than all the deaths I have escaped from! [hoped
Why dost thou ask? Where else could I have
To find and to redeem thyself and daughter?

Ezm. Say that no more—'tis misery to hear thee.

Zam. Bethink thee of the black, the direful day, [name!
When that vile Spaniard, Carlos, curse the
Invulnerable, or to sword or shame,
O'erturn'd those walls, which time, when young, saw built,
By earth attracted, children of the sun.
Perish his name! and oh, be cursed my fate,
Who yet no nearer brought him than to thought,
In horror of his murders! 'Twas the wretch,
Who bears that name of Carlos blasted all.
'Twas in that name pillage and slaughter spread! [me!
'Twas in that name they dragg'd Alzira from
Buried in dust the temples of our gods;
And stain'd with the surrounding offerer's blood,
Their violated altars! the shock'd power,
That smiled expectant on our marriage vow.
Rush'd back, and press'd in vain his brother gods,
To vindicate their empire.—Spain's dark power
Prevail'd; and I was captive led to Carlos.
I will not terrify thy pitying breast,
I will not tell thee to what torturing pain,

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That villain Spaniard's avarice condemn'd me.
Condemn'd me, Ezmont, for the sake of gold!
Gold, the divinity of beggar Spain;
And our neglected refuse!——'Tis enough
To tell thee, that amidst their tortures left,
And seeming dead, they, tired, not satisfied,
Forbore, because I felt not.——I revived,
To feel, once more, but never to forget,
The grindings of their insult. Three long years
Have lent me friends, and hopes, and arms, for vengeance.
Close ambush'd in the neighbouring woods they lie,
Sworn the revengers of their bleeding country.

Ezm. Alas, my heart compassionates thy wrongs:
But do not seek a ruin that would shun thee.
What can thy flint-arm'd Indians' courage do?
What their weak arrows, spoils of fishes' bones? [quer?
How can thy naked, untrain'd warriors con-
Unequally opposed to iron-men:
To woundless bosoms, coated o'er with safety!
And arm'd with missive thunders in their hand, [winds!
That stream deaths on us, swifter than the
No—since the world, they say, has yielded to them,
Yield Zamor and Peru, and let them reign.

Zam. Let the world yield—Zamor will always find
Some generous corner in it, fit for freedom.
Had I been born to serve, obedience claims
Returns of benefit and due protection:
Outrage and wrongs require correction only.
These lightnings and these thunders; these safe shells,
Cases for fear, which guard their iron war;
These fiery steeds, that tear the trampled earth,
And hurl their headlong riders on the foe;
These outward forms of death, that fright the world,
I can look steadfast on, and dare despise:
The novelty once lost, the force will fail.
Curse on our feeble gold, it calls in foes,
Yet helps not to repel the wrongs it draws!
Oh, had but steel been ours!—but partial Heaven
Has with that manly wealth enrich'd our foe!
Yet, not to leave our vengeance quite disarm'd,
Depriving us of steel, it gave us virtue.

Ezm. Virtue was bless'd of old:—but times are changed.

Zam. No matter—let us keep our hearts the
Alzira cannot change—Alzira's just. [same.
Alzira's faithful to her vows and me.
Save me, ye gods! from a friend's downcast
Whence are those sighs and tears? [eye!

Ezm. Too wretched Zamor!

Zam. I thought myself Alzira's father's son;
But find these tyrants have unhinged thy soul;
And taught thee, on the grave's last edge, to wrong me.

Ezm. They cannot. 'Tis an art I will not learn. [know,
Nor are our conquerors all unjust;——for,
'Twas Heaven induced these christians to our clime,
Less to subdue, and rule us, than instruct.
Know, they brought with them virtues, here unfound:
Secrets, immortal, that preserve the soul!
The science of salvation by belief!
The art of living bless'd and dying safe!

Zam. Or I am deaf: or, would to Heaven I were! [praise
But, if I heard thee right, thou seem'st to
These pilfering zealots, who usurp thy throne,
And would convert thy daughter to a slave!

Ezm. Alzira is no slave.

Zam. Ah!——Royal Ezmont!
Pardon some transport which despair inflamed;
And, to great woes, indulge a little warmth.
Remember, she was mine by solemn vow:
By thy own oath, before our altars sworn;
Honour and perjury can never meet.

Ezm. What are our altars? what our idol gods?
Phantoms of human coinage, fear'd no more!
I would not wish to hear thee cite their name.

Zam. What! was our fathers' altars vain deceit?

Ezm. It was; and I have happily disclaim'd it. [Heaven,
May the great single Power, that rules whole
Lend thy dark heart one ray of truth divine!
May'st thou, unhappy Zamor, learn to know,
And, knowing, to confess, in Europe's right,
Her God should be adored, her sons obey'd!

Zam. Obey'd! Hell blast them!—What! these sons of rapine?
They have not robb'd thee of thy faith alone,
But pilfer'd even thy reason!——Yet, 'twas wise, [gods.
When thou wouldst keep no vows, to own no
But tell me;——is Alzira too forsworn?
True to her father's weakness has she fallen?
Serves she the gods of christians?

Ezm. Hapless youth!
Though bless'd in my own change, I weep for thine.

Zam. He who betrays his friend has cause for weeping.
Yet tears, they say, show pity:—if they do,
Pity this torment, which thy shame has cost me.
Pity my heart, at once alarm'd, for Heaven,
For Heaven betrayed, like me; and torn at once, [Carlos;
By love, and zeal, and vengeance. Take me,
Drag me to die at my Alzira's feet;
And I will sigh away a soul she saves not.
But have a care——be cautious, ere I fall,
Of urging me too rashly to despair.
Resume a human heart! and feel some virtue.

Enter ALONZO.

Alon. My lord, the ceremonies wait your presence.

Ezm. Farewell——I follow thee.

Zam. No, by my wrongs!
I will not quit this hold, till I have learnt
What ceremony, what black purpose, waits thee.

Ezm. Away—be counsell'd—fly this fatal city.

Zam. Not though the christian power that blasts my love,
Should rain down lightnings on my destined head,
And my own gods cried, Stay, I still would follow thee.

Ezm. Forgive the force of an unwish'd refusal.— [man.
Guards, to your care I must commit this mad-
Restrain him——He would violate our altar.
These pagans, obstinate in idol zeal,
Malign our holy mysteries; and profane
The church's solemn service.——Guard the doors.

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'Tis not in right of my own power I speak;
But Carlos, in my voice, commands your care.
[*Exit with Guards, after they have freed him from* ZAMOR.
Zam. Did I not hear him, friends!—or am I mad?
Did I not hear him use the name of Carlos?
Oh, treachery! Oh, baseness! Oh, my wrongs!
Oh, last uncredited reproach of nature
Ezmont commands for Carlos!—'Twas not Ezmont: [cowards,
'Twas that black devil, that scares the Christian
Lied, in his shape, to scandalize Peru!
Oh, virtue! thou art banish'd from mankind:
Even from Alzira's heart, thou now art fled.
—These villain bart'rers rob us not of gold;
They pay its fatal price, in morals ruin'd.
Detested Carlos then is here!—Oh, friends!
What counsel? what resource? to stop despair.
Ind. Capt. Let not my prince condemn the faithful zeal,
That would advise his sorrows.——Old Alvarez
Will strait return, and bring, perhaps, that son, [hasten'd:
With whom, to share his joy, the good man
Urge him to see you safe without their gates:
Then suddenly rejoin your ambush'd friends,
And march, more equal, to your purposed vengeance.
Let us not spare a life, but good Alvarez,
And this loved son! I, near the wall, remark'd
Their arts, and modes of structure: mark'd their angles,
Deep ditch, broad bulwarks, and their sleeping thunders.
I saw, and weigh'd it all: and found hope strongest. [friends,
Our groaning fathers, brothers, sons, and
In fetter'd labour toil, to house their spoilers.
These, when we march to their unhoped relief,
Will rise, within the town, behind their masters:
While you, meanwhile, without, advance against them:
And, o'er our dying bodies, proudly heap'd,
Bridge a bold entrance o'er their bloody rampart.
There may we turn, against their tyrant heads,
Those fiery mouths of death, those storms of murder, [bravery,
Those forms that frightening honest, artless
Build, on our ignorance, a throne for wrongs.
Zam. Illustrious wretchedness! by Heaven, it charms me, [tune.
To see those soaring souls out-tower their for-
Shall we?—yes, still we shall—recover empire;
Carlos shall feel Peru, despised Peru,
Knock at his trembling heart, and claim atonement.
Come, dire revenge! thou melancholy god!
Thou comfort'st the distress'd with shadowy hopings!
Strengthen our willing hands: let Carlos die!
Let but that Spanish murderer, Carlos, die,
And I am half repaid my kingdom's losses!
But we are wretches, indolently brave;
We talk of vengeance; and we sleep in chains!
Alvarez has forgot me: Ezmont slights me:
And she I love is theirs, whom most I hate.
All the poor comfort of my heart is doubting.
Hark! what surprising noise! [*Shout.*] It rises louder,
And sudden fires, high-flaming, double day!
Hark!—from their iron throats, [*Guns.*] yon roaring mischiefs
Pour their triumphant insult. [*Trumpets, &c.*]
What new feast,
Or what new crime, demands this swell of joy?
Now, in their heedless mirth, descend some god,
And teach us to be free; or, failing, die.
'Tis liberty alone that makes life dear:
He does not live at all, who lives to fear.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Alz. Shade of my murder'd lover! shun to view me: [sweeter;
Rise to the stars, and make their brightness
But shed no gleam of lustre on Alzira.
She has betray'd her faith, and married Carlos!
The sea, that roll'd its watery world betwixt us, [me!
Fail'd to divide our hands—and he has reach'd
The altar trembled at the unhallow'd touch;
And Heaven drew back, reluctant at our meeting.
Oh, thou soft-hovering ghost, that haunt'st my fancy! [me!
Thou dear and bloody form, that skims before
Thou never-dying, yet thou buried Zamor!
If sighs and tears have power to pierce the grave;
If death, that knows no pity, will but hear me;
If still thy gentle spirit loves Alzira;
Pardon, that even in death she dared forsake thee!
Pardon her rigid sense of nature's duties:
A parent's will!——a pleading country's safety!
At these strong calls, she sacrificed her love,
To joyless glory, and to tasteless peace;
And to an empty world, in which thou art not!
Oh, Zamor! Zamor! follow me no longer.
Drop some dark veil, snatch some kind cloud before thee,
Cover that conscious face, and let death hide thee! [me:
Leave me to suffer wrongs that Heaven allots
And teach my busy fancy to forget thee.

Enter EMIRA.

Where are those captives? Are they free, Emira? [country?
Where those sad children of my mournful
Will they not suffer me to see, to hear them?
To sit and weep, and mingle with their mournings?
Emi. Ah, rather dread the rage of angry Carlos, [horror.
Who threatens them with some new stroke of
Some cruel purpose hangs this moment o'er them! [play'd,
For, through this window look, and see, dis-
The broad red standard, that betokens blood:
Loud bursts of death roar from their iron prisons,
And answer dreadful to each other's call! [*Guns.*
The council hastes, alarm'd, and meets in uproar. [*Shouts.*
All I have heard besides is, that the prince,
Your father, has been summon'd to attend.
Alz. Immortal guardian of the endanger'd just!
Have I for this, in vain, betray'd my peace?
Dares the dire husband, recent from the altar,
New to my forced consent, and scarce yet lord
Of my repenting hand, so soon let loose

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His recommission'd murders! Must my nuptials
Serve as the prelude to my people's blood!
Oh, marriage! marriage! what a curse is thine,
Where hands alone consent, and hearts abhor!

Enter CEPHANIA.

Ceph. One of the captive Indians, just set free,
In honour of the joy that crowns this day,
Prays your permission, Madam, to be heard,
And at your princely feet disclose some secret.
Alz. Let him, with firmness, and with freedom enter.
For him, and for his friends, he knows I live,
Dear to my eyes, I mark them with delight,
And love, alas, in them, their poor lost country.
——But why alone?——Why one?
Ceph. It is that captain,
To whose victorious hand, I heard but now,
Alvarez, your new lord's illustrious father,
Owed his remitted life, from Indians saved.
Emi. With earnest pressure he has sought your presence:
He met me entering, and with trembling haste,
Implored me to befriend th' important prayer.
He told me, further that the prince your father,
For some strange cause, this Indian seems to know,
Had charged the guards he 'scaped from to prevent
His access to your ear—Methinks, there sits
A kind of sullen greatness on his brow,
As if it veil'd in grief some awful purpose.
Ceph. I watch'd him—and he walks, and turns, and weeps:
Then starts, and looks at Heaven; and to the gods
Pours up an ardent sigh that breathes your name!
I pitied him—but gather'd, from this freedom,
That he's a stranger to your rank and greatness.
Alz. What rank? What greatness?—Perish all distinction,
That, from the wrong'd unhappy, bars the great?
Who knows but this was once some generous friend,
Some brave companion of my Zamor's arms!
Who knows but he was near him when he fell;
And brings some message from his parting soul!
How dare I then receive him?—Can my heart
Be proof against the last kind words of Zamor?
Will not the half-lull'd pain, rekindling fresh,
Burn with increase of smart, and wring my soul?
—No matter—let him enter.— [*Exit* CEPH.
—Ha, what means
This sudden chillness, saddening round my heart,
In short, faint flutterings never felt before!
Ah, fatal residence!—From the first hour
These hated walls became Alzira's prison,
Each different moment brought some different pain.

Enter ZAMOR.

Zam. Art thou, at length restored me?—Cruel! tell me?
Art thou, indeed, Alzira?
Alz. Gentle spirit!——
Forgive me.—Do not come to chide the unhappy:
I have been wrong'd; but— [*Faints into his arms.*
Zam. Thine, she would have said;
And her imperfect purpose fully bless'd me.
Revive thou dearest, loveliest, lost Alzira!
Zamor will live no longer, shouldst thou die.
Alz. The kind, forgiving shade is still before me!
It waked me, by a sound, that seem'd his name.
Zam. I am no shadow, if Alzira's mine;
I am thy living lover, at thy feet [*Kneeling.*
Reclaiming thee, thou noblest half himself!
Alz. Can it be possible thou shouldst be Zamor?
Zam. Thy Zamor——thine.
Alz. But—art thou sure thou livest?
Zam. 'Tis in thy power
To make that truth undoubted.——Do but say
Thou wouldst not have me die,—and I will live
To thank thee, thus, with everlasting love.
[*Rises, and catches her in his arms.*
Alz. Oh, days of softness!—Oh, remembered years
Of ever-vanish'd happiness!—Oh, Zamor!
Why has the grave been bountiful too late?
Why sent thee back in vain? to make joy bitter;
By mix'd ideas of distracting horror!
Ah, Zamor!—What a time is this,—to charm in!
Thy every word, and look, shoots daggers through me.
Zam. Then mourn'st thou my return?
Alz. I do—I do.
Because,—it was no sooner.
Zam. Generous tenderness!
Alz. Where hast thou been, thus long, unknown, till now?
Zam. A wandering vagabond, that trod the world,
In fruitless search of means to save Alzira.
Not all the torturing racks of villain Carlos,
Could from my panting heart expel Alzira.
The bloody spoiler tired his rage in vain:
I braved his wounds and insults.—Life had yet
No leisure to forsake me. Thou requirest me.
The groans of suffering nations reach'd my soul,
And bade it struggle to revenge mankind.
Alas, thou tremblest! Thy soft nature shrinks,
At bare recital of these Spanish virtues.
Doubtless, the guardian god that smiles on love,
Knew thy kind wish; and, for thy sake, sustain'd me.
And thou wilt thank, I know, his gentle goodness.
Thy pious heart disdains to quit thy gods,
Because they suffer with thee, and have fail'd
To stem th' invading host of Spain's new heaven!
Thou hast too little falsehood for a Spaniard.
—Hast thou e'er heard of a base wretch call'd Carlos? [ster!
A birth that blackens nature! a taught monSent, in our shape, from some far distant world,
To humble ours, with sense of human baseness!
They tell me he is here.—Grant Heaven thou know'st him!
Thou then shalt guide my vengeance,—to this first,
And vilest of its victims.

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Alz. Find him here—
Black in my breast, he lives: strike, strike, and reach him!
Zam. Hold, heart—and break not yet—This may be—pity.
Alz. Strike—for—I merit neither life,—nor thee.
Zam. Ezmont, I feel thee; and believe thee all!
Alz. Did he then tell thee?—Had my father power
To dwell so sadly on my hopeless woes,
As to describe them to thee?—Did he name
The dreadful husband—his lost daughter owes him?
Zam. No—but thou may'st: for that will harden Zamor,
That he shall never be astonish'd more!
Alz. Yes——I will tell it thee—Prepare to tremble:
Not for thyself to tremble,—but for me.
I will lay open the vast horror to thee:
Then thou wilt weep and live:—and bid me—die.
Zam. Alzira!—Oh!
Alz. This Carlos——
Zam. Carlos!
Alz. He.
I was this morning sworn for ever——his!
Zam. Sworn whose?——not Carlos?
Alz. I have been betray'd.
I was too weak alone,—against my country—
Even on this fatal, this foreboding day,
Almost within thy sight, Christian Alzira
Plighted in presence of the Christian God,
Her hapless hand to Carlos.——'Tis a crime,
That hopes no pardon!——All my gods renounced!
My lover wrong'd! my country's fame betray'd! [me:
All, all, demand revenge.—Do thou then kill
Thou wilt strike tenderly—and my glad blood
Shall meet thy dear-loved hand, and that way join thee.
Zam. Carlos, Alzira's husband!——'tis impossible!
Alz. Were I disposed to mitigate my crime,
I could allege a father's awful power;
I could remind thee of our ruin'd state;
And plead my tears, my struggles, and distraction, [dead.
Till three long wretched years confirm'd thee
I could, with justice, charge my faith renounced [Zamor.
On hatred of those gods, who saved not
But I disclaim excuse,—to shun remission.
Love finds me guilty; and that guilt condemns me.
Since thou art safe, no matter what I suffer.
When life has lost the joys that make it bless'd,——
The shortest liver is the happiest always.
Why dost thou view me with so kind an eye?
Thou shouldst look sternly, and retract all pity.
Zam. No—if I still am loved, thou art not guilty.—— [so.
Wishing me bless'd, methinks thou makest me
Alz. When by my father urged, and by Alvarez,
And inly too impell'd, perhaps, to fate,
By some forsaken god, who meant revenge:
When by the Christian fears, and my touch'd heart,
At once beset, they dragg'd me to the temple;
Even in the moment when advancing Carlos
Sought my escaping hand, though I then thought thee
Dead, and for ever lost to my fond hopes:
Yet then beneath the altar's sacred gloom,
I bow'd my soul to Zamor: memory
Relieved me with thy image.——Indians, Spaniards,
All, all have heard, how ardently I loved thee.
'Twas my heart's pride to boast it to the world!
To earth, to heaven,—to Carlos, I proclaim'd it! [ment,
And now, even now, in this distressful mo-
For the last time,——I tell thyself, I love thee.
Zam. For the last time! Avert the menace Heaven!
Art thou at once restored—and lost again!
'Tis not love's language, this!—Alas, Alzira!
Alz. Oh, Heaven!—Alvarez comes, and with him Carlos.

Enter Don Alvarez, *followed by* Don Carlos.

Alv. See! with Alzira there, my life's restorer!
Approach, young hero! 'tis my son who seeks thee; [preme:
Spain's delegate, who here holds power su-
My Carlos bids thee share his bridal joy.
—Meet and embrace: divide your father's love:
My son, of nature, one—and one of choice.
Zam. Named he not Carlos?—Perish such a son
As the detested Carlos!
Alz. Heaven avert
The rising tempest that o'erwhelms my soul!
Alv. What means this wonder?
Zam. 'Tis not possible!—
No—I would disbelieve attesting gods,
Should they, from Heaven, assert this shock to nature;
That such a father—can—have such a son!
Car. [*To* Zam.] Slave!—from what spring does thy blind fury rise?
Know'st thou not who I am?
Zam. Thou art—a villain.
My country's horror—and whole nature's shame!
Among the scourges whom just Heaven has left thee,
Know me for Zamor.
Car. Thou, Zamor?
Alv. Zamor!
Zam. Yes——the tortured Zamor.
Blush to be told it; and remember, with it,
The bloody rage of thy remorseless cruelty;
That basely dared insult a yielded captive!
Now he returns——triumphant in distress,
To look thee into shame: to see those eyes
Fall their stretch'd fierceness, and decline before him.
Thou waster of the world! Thou licensed robber!
Thou, whose last spoil was my Alzira's glory!
Win her against this sword: [*Draws.*]—The sole good gain
Zamor can boast he owes thy haughty country! [life,
Now the same hand that gave the father
Claims, in return, the son's devoted blood:
And, so revenged, atones a dying realm.
Alv. Confounded and amazed, I hear him speak; [not
And every word grows stronger!—Carlos can-
Be guilty——or, if guilty, cannot answer.

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Car. To answer, is a poorness I despise.
Where rebels dare accuse, should power reply,
'Twould but forget to punish.—With this sword
I might, but that I know the reverence due
To your protecting presence, well have answer'd.
—Madam, [*To* ALZIRA.] your heart should have instructed you,
Why you offend me, while I see you here.
If not my peace, at least your fame, demands
That you now drive this outlaw from your thoughts.
You weep then! and insult me with your tears?
And yet I love, and can be jealous of you?
Als. Cruel! [*To* CAR.] and you, [*To* ALV.] my father and protector!
And thou! [*To* ZAM.] my soul's past hope, in happier times!
Mark—and condole my fate.—Mix your due pity
And tremble at the horror of my woes.
Behold this lover, which my father chose me,
Before I knew there was a world but ours.
With his reported death our empire fell:
And I have lived to see my father's throne
O'erturn'd; and all things changed in earth and heaven!
By every human help, alas, forsaken,
At length, my father, from the Christian's God
Sought help, and screen'd a state, behind his name.
Compell'd before this unknown power to kneel,
A dreadful oath has bound my backward soul,
To love the murderer of my real lover.
In my new faith, I own myself unskill'd,
But all that virtue taught me, that I know.
Zamor, I love thee justly:—I confess it.
What duty calls for, can deserve no shame.
Yet, where my soul is bound my heart obeys:
And I can now be thine, alas, no more.
Let me be wretched, rather than unjust.
Carlos, for you——I am your wife, and victim:
Yet, in abhorrence of your cruel heart,
I hold my hand divorced;——and hence abjure you.
One way to either, I submit, with joy:
If your swords claim me, I am due to both.
Which will reward me with the death I wish?
Carlos, thou hast a hand already stain'd:
Thy practised poignard need not start at blood.
Strike, then, for due revenge of slighted love;
And, punishing the guilty,——once be just.
Car. I find then, Madam, you would brave my weakness?
Proud of offending one who must forgive.
But you invoke my vengeance, and it comes.
Your fate is ready——for your minion dies.
Who waits?——a guard there.

Enter Soldiers.

Alz. Cruel christian insult!
Alv. My son! what mean you? What rash transport this?
Think whom you sentence.—Is his person hateful,
Yet reverence his virtue and his name.
He who is helpless, in his hater's hands,
Claims safety from his weakness.—Why, why, Carlos,
Must I, a second time, remind your mercy?
I gave you life:—but Zamor gave it me.
Be warn'd—nor forfeit honour to revenge.

Enter DON ALONZO, *with Spanish Soldiers.*

Alon. Pardon an entrance, Sir, thus unprepared.
The woods, that border on the neighbouring plain,
Pour out a sudden swarm of Indian foes.
Arm'd they advance, as if to scale our walls:
And Zamor's name, resounded, rings to heaven.
Gleamings, from golden bucklers, meet the sun;
And in firm line, and close compacted march,
The stretch'd battalions move, in martial justness,
They hold such discipline, such order'd motion,
As ne'er was known before to savage foes.
As if from us they caught the lights of war,
And turn'd the burning lessons on their teachers.
Car. Away, then: let us think them worth our meeting.
—Heroes of Spain! ye favourite sons of war!
All corners of the world are yours to shine in.
Help me to teach these slaves to know their masters.
Bring him along by force.
Zam. Tyrant, they dare not.
Or, are they gods, who cannot be repell'd?
And proof against the wounds they seek to give?
Car. Surround him.
Alz. Spare him, save him!
Alv. Son, be cool; [him.
And still remember what your father owes
Car. Sir, I remember, 'tis a soldier's duty
To bear down opposition: so you taught me.
[ALONZO, *and Spanish Soldiers, surround and seize* ZAMOR.
Your pardon, Sir——I go, where honour calls me. [*Exit with* ZAMOR, *and all the Spanish Soldiers.*
Alz. [*To* ALV.] Low, at your feet I fall; your virtue's claim.
'Tis the first homage fortune yet has taught me.
Grant me the wish'd release of death's kind hand,
From miseries, I cannot live to see.
But, dying, let me leave this witness with you,
That, true to my first vows, I change not lightly.
Two different claimers cannot both possess
One faithful heart, that can but once be given.
Zamor is mine; and I am only Zamor's.
Zamor is virtuous as a fancied angel.
'Twas Zamor gave his life to good Alvarez!
Alv. I feel the pity of a father for thee.
I mourn afflicted Zamor: I will guard him:
I will protect you both, unhappy lovers!
Yet, ah, be mindful of the marriage tie,
That, but this morning, bound thy days to Carlos.
Thou art no longer thine, my mournful daughter.
Carlos has been too cruel; but repents it:
And this once-cruel Carlos is thy husband.
He is my son too; and he loves us both.
Pity soon softens hearts, where love has enter'd.
Alz. Ah, why did Heaven not make you Zamor's father?
Greatness with sweetness join'd, like fire with light,
Each aiding other, mingle warm with bright.
What the kind wants, th' associate strong supplies,
And from the gentle, peace and calmness rise.
[*Exeunt.*

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ACT IV.

SCENE I.

Enter DON ALVAREZ *and* DON CARLOS. *Shouts, Trumpets, a long and lofty flourish.*

Alv. Deserve, my son, this triumph of your arms. [vail'd;
Your numbers, and your courage have pre-
And of this last best effort of the foe,
Half are no more; and half are yours in chains.
Disgrace not due success, by undue cruelties:
But call in mercy to support your fame.
I will go visit the afflicted captives,
And pour compassion on their aching wounds.
Meanwhile, remember, you are man and christian.
Bravely, at once, resolve to pardon Zamor.
——Fain would I soften this indocile fierceness, [hearts.
And teach your courage how to conquer
Car. Your words pierce mine,—freely devote my life,
But leave at liberty my just revenge.
Pardon him——Why, the savage brute is loved!
Alv. The unhappily beloved most merit pity.
Car. Pity!—Could I be sure of such reward,
I would die pleased,——and she should pity me.
Alv. How much to be lamented is a heart,
At once by rage of headlong will oppress'd,
And by strong jealousies and doubtings torn!
Car. When jealousy becomes a crime——Guard, Heaven, [loves!
That husband's honour, whom his wife not
Your pity takes in all the world—but me.
Alv. Mix not the bitterness of distant fear
With your arrived misfortunes.—Since Alzira
Has virtue, it will prove a wiser care [ness,
To soften her, for change, by patient tender-
Than, by reproach, confirm a willing hate.
Her heart is, like her country, rudely sweet;—
Repelling force, but gentle to be kind.
Softness will soonest bend the stubborn will.
Car. Softness!—by all the wrongs of woman's hate,
Too much of softness but invites disdain.
Flatter'd too long, beauty at length grows wanton,
And, insolently scornful, slights its praiser.
Oh, rather, Sir, be jealous for my glory;
And urge my doubting anger to resolve.
Too low already, condescension bow'd,
Nor blush'd, to match the conqueror with the slave! [owes,
But, when this slave, unconscious what she
Proudly repays humility with scorn,
And braves, and hates the unaspiring love,
Such love is weakness:—and submission, there,
Gives sanction to contempt, and rivets pain.
Alv. Thus, youth is ever apt to judge in haste,
And lose the medium in the wild extreme,
Do not repent, but regulate your passion:
Though love is reason, its excess is rage.
Give me, at least, your promise to reflect,
In cool, impartial solitude, and still,
No last decision till we meet again.
Car. It is my father asks—and, had I will,
Nature denies me power to answer, No.
I will, in wisdom's right, suspend my anger.
—Yet—Spare my loaded heart: nor add more weight; [sure.
Lest my strength fail beneath th' unequal pres-
Alv. Grant yourself time, and all you want comes with it. [*Exit.*
Car. And—must I coldly then, to pensive piety,
Give up the livelier joys of wish'd revenge?
Must I repel the guardian cares of jealousy,
And slacken every rein, to rival love?
Must I reduce my hopes beneath a savage,
And poorly envy such a wretch as Zamor?
A coarse luxuriance of spontaneous virtue;
A shoot of rambling, fierce, offensive freedom!
Nature's wild growth,—strong, but unpruned, in daring;
A rough, raw woodman, of this rugged clime;
Illiterate in the arts of polish'd life:
And who, in Europe, where the fair can judge
Would hardly, in our courts, be call'd a man!
——She comes!—Alzira comes!—unwish'd—yet charming.

Enter ALZIRA.

Alz. You turn, and shun me! So, I have been told,
Spaniards, by custom, meet submissive wives.
—But, hear me, Sir:—hear, even a suppliant wife;
Hear this unguilty object of your anger,
One, who can reverence, though she cannot love you:
One, who is wrong'd herself, not injures you:
One, who indeed is weak, and wants your pity.
I cannot wear disguise: be it th' effect
Of greatness, or of weakness, in my mind,
My tongue could ne'er be moved but by my heart:
And that was vow'd another's.——If he dies,
The honest plainness of my soul destroys him
——You look surprised:——I will, still more, surprise you.
I come to try you deeply—for I mean
To move the husband, in the lover's favour!
—I had half flatter'd my unpractised hope,
That you, who governs others, should yourself
Be temperate in the use of your own passions.
Nay, I persuaded my unchristian ignorance,
That an ambitious warrior's infelt pride
Should plead in pardon of that pride in others.
—This I am sure of—that, forgiving mercy
Would stamp more influence on our Indian hearts,
Than all our gold on those of men like you.
Who knows, did such a change endear your breast,
How far the pleasing force might soften mine?
Your right secures you my respect and faith;
—Strive for my love:—Strive for whatever else [love.
May charm: if aught there is can charm like
—Forgive me: I shall be betray'd by fear,
To promise till I overcharge my power.——
Yet try what changes gratitude can make.
A Spanish wife perhaps would promise more:
Profuse in charms, and prodigal of tears,
Would promise all things—and forget them all.
But I have weaker charms, and simpler arts.
Guileless of soul, and left as nature form'd me,
I err, in honest innocence of aim,
And, seeking to compose, inflame you more.
All I can add, is this:——Unlovely force

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Shall never bow me to reward constraint:
But to what lengths I may be led, by benefits,
'Tis in your power to try: not mine to tell.
Car. 'Tis well.—Since justice has such power to guide you,
That you may follow duty, know it first.
Count modesty among your country's virtues;
And copy, not condemn, the wives of Spain.
'Tis your first lesson, Madam, to forget.
—Become more delicate, if not more kind,
And never let me hear the name I hate.
—You should learn, next, to blush away your haste,
And wait in silence, till my will resolves
What punishment, or pity suits his crimes.
—Know, last, that (thus provoked) a husband's clemency
Out-stretches nature, if it pardons you.
Learn thence, ungrateful! that I want not pity:
And be the last to dare believe me cruel, [*Exit.*
Emi. Madam, be comforted;—I mark'd him well;
I see, he loves; and love will make him softer.
Alz. Love has no power to act, when curb'd by jealousy.
Zamor must die: for I have ask'd his life.
Why did not I foresee the likely danger?
—But has thy care been happier? Canst thou save him?
Far, far, divided from me, may he live!
—Hast thou made trial of his keeper's faith?
Emi. Gold, that with Spaniards can outweigh their god, [own.
Has bought his hand:—and so his faith's your
Alz. Then Heaven be bless'd, this metal, form'd for crimes,
Sometimes atones the wrongs 'tis dug to cause!
—But, we lose time:—Why dost thou seem to pause?
Emi. I cannot think they purpose Zamor's death.
Alvarez has not lost his power so far,
Nor can the council——
Alz. They are Spaniards all.
Mark the proud, partial guilt of these vain men:
Ours, but a county held to yield them slaves:
Who reign our kings, by right of different clime. [here,
Zamor, meanwhile, by birth, true sovereign
Weighs but a rebel in their righteous scale.
Oh, civilized ascent of social murder!—
But why, Emira, should this soldier stay?
Emi. We may expect him instantly. The night, [sign.
Methinks, grown darker, veils your bold de-
Wearied by slaughter, and unwash'd from blood,
The world's proud spoilers all lie hush'd in sleep.
Alz. Away, and find this Spaniard. Guilt's bought hand
Opening the prison, innocence goes free.
Emi. See! by Cephania led, he comes with Zamor.
Be cautious, Madam, at so dark an hour,
Lest, met, suspected honour should be lost;
And modesty, mistaken, suffer shame.
Alz. What does thy ill-taught fear mistake for shame?
Virtue, at midnight, walks as safe within,
As in the conscious glare of flaming day.
She who in forms finds virtue, has no virtue.
All the shame lies in hiding honest love.
Honour, the alien phantom, here unknown,
Lends but a lengthening shade to setting virtue.
Honour's not love of innocence, but praise;
The fear of censure, not the scorn of sin.
But I was taught, in a sincerer clime,
That virtue, though it shines not, still is virtue;
And inbred honour grows not but at home.
This my heart knows; and, knowing, bids me dare,
Should Heaven forsake the just, be bold and save him.

Enter Zamor, *with* Cephania, *and a Spanish Soldier.*

Ah, fly! thy hopes are lost; thy torturer's ready.
Escape this moment, or thou stay'st to die.
Haste—lose no time—begone: this guardian Spaniard [hope.
Will teach thee to deceive the murderer's
Reply not; judge thy fate from my despair;
Save, by thy flight, the man, I love from death; [blood;
The man whom I have sworn t' obey, from
And a lost world, that knows thy worth, from tears. [steps.
Thy country calls thee; night conceals thy
Pity thy fate, and leave me to my own.
Zam. Thou robber's property!—Thou Christian's wife!
Thou, who darest love me, yet darest bid me live! [ing.
If I must live, come thou, to make life tempt-
But 'twas a cruel wish—How could I shield thee,
Stript of my power and friends, and nothing left me,
But wrongs and misery? I have no power
To tempt reluctant love. All thou canst share
With me, will be—my desert—and my heart.
When I had more, I laid it at thy feet.
Alz. Ah, what are crowns that must no more be thine?
I loved not power, but thee: thyself once lost,
What has an empty world to tempt my stay?
Far in the depth of thy sad deserts, traced,
My heart will seek thee; fancy, there, misleads [finds,
My weary, wandering steps; there horror
And preys upon my solitude; there leaves me,
To languish life out in unheard complaints;
To waste and wither in the tearless winds;
And die with shame at breach of plighted faith.
For being only thine—and yet another's.
Go, carry with thee both my peace and life,
And leave—Ah, would thou couldst!—thy sorrows here.
I have my lover and my fame to guard,
And I will save them both—Begone for ever.
Zam. I hate this fame, false avarice of fancy;
The sickly shade of an unsolid greatness;
The lying lure of pride, that Europe cheats by: [tue!
Perish the groundless seemings of their vir-
But shall forced oaths, at hated Christian's altars, [thers,
Shall gods, who rob the gods of our forefa-
Shall these obtrude a lord, and blast a lover?

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Alz. Since it was sworn, or to your gods or theirs,
What help is left me?
Zam. None—Adieu—for ever. [*Going.*
Alz. Stay—What a farewell this!—Return, I charge thee.
Zam. Carlos, perhaps, will hear thee. [*Returning.*
Alz. Ah, pity, rather
Than thus upbraid my wretchedness!
Zam. Think, then,
On our past vows.
Alz. I think of nothing now,
But of thy danger.
Zam. Oh, thou hast undone
The tenderest, fondest lover!
Alz. Still I love;
Crime as it is, I love thee. Leave me, Zamor,
Leave me alone to die——Ha! cruel! tell me,
What horrible despair, revolving wildly,
Bursts from thy eyes, with purpose more than mortal?
Zam. It shall be so. [*Going.*
Alz. What wouldst thou? Whither goest thou? [*Holding him.*
Zam. To make a proper use of unhoped freedom.
Alz. By Heaven, if 'tis to death, I'll follow thee.
Zam. Horrors, unmix'd with love, demand me now. [calls.
Leave me—Time flies—Night blackens—Duty
Soldier, attend my steps. [*Exit hastily.*
Alz. Alas, Emira!
I faint—I die—In what ungovern'd start
Of some rash thought he left me?—Haste, Emira,
Watch his fear'd meaning; trace his fatal footsteps:
And, if thou seest him safe, return, and bless me. [*Exit* EMIRA.
A black, presaging sorrow swells my heart!
What could a day like this produce, but wo?
Oh, thou dark, awful, vast, mysterious Power,
Whom Christians worship, yet not comprehend!
If ignorant of thy new laws, I stray,
Shed from thy distant Heaven, where'er it shines,
One ray of guardian light, to clear my way:
And teach me first to find, then act thy will.
But, if my only crime is love of Zamor,
If that offends thy sight, and claims thy anger,
Pour thy due vengeance on my hopeless head;
For I am then a wretch too lost for mercy.
Yet, be the wanderer's guide amidst his deserts!
Greatly dispense thy good with equal hand;
Nor, partial to the partial, give Spain all.
Thou canst not be confined to care of parts;
Heedless of one world, and the other's father:
Vanquish'd and victors are alike to thee;
And all our vain distinctions mix before thee.
Ah, what foreboding shriek!—Again! and louder!
h, Heaven! amidst the wildness of that sound,
heard the name of Zamor!—Zamor's lost—
Hark!—a third time!—And now the mingled cries
Come quickening on my ear!

Enter EMIRA, *frighted.*

mira, save me!
What has he done?—In pity of my fears,
Speak, and bestow some comfort.
Emi. Comfort is lost:
And all the rage of death has sure possess'd him. [soldier:
First he changed habits with the trembling
Then snatch'd his weapon from him—The robb'd wretch
Flew, frighted, toward the gate—while furious Zamor,
Wild, as the fighting rage of wintery winds,
Rush'd to the public hall, where sits the council.
Following, I saw him pass the sleeping guards;
But lost him when he enter'd. In a moment,
I heard the sound of voices cry, He's dead.
Then clamorous calls from every way at once,
To arms, to arms!—Ah, Madam, stay not here;
Fly to the inmost rooms, and shun the danger.
Alz. No, dear Emira; rather let us try,
Whether our weakness may not find some means,
Late and unlikely as it is, to save him.
I, too, dare die.
Emi. They come——Protect us, Heaven!

Enter DON ALONZO.

Alon. Madam, you stir no farther—I have orders
To seize your person. 'Tis a charge unwish'd.
Alz. Whence dost thou come. What fury sent thee hither?
What is become of Zamor?
Alon. At a time
So full of danger, my respect gives way
To duty—You must please to follow me.
Alz. Oh, fortune, fortune!—This is too severe!
Zamor is dead, and I am only captive!
Why dost thou weep! What have a Spaniard's tears [cause?
To do with woes, which none but Spaniards
Come; if to death thou lead'st me, 'twill be kind:
There only, weakness wrong'd, can refuge find. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.

Enter ALZIRA, *guarded.*

Alz. Am I to die? Answer, ye dumb destroyers!
Ye wretches, who provoke, yet mock at Heaven;
And when you mean to murder, say you judge!
Why does your brutal silence leave my soul
Fluttering, 'twixt hope and fear, in torturing doubt?
Why am I not inform'd of Zamor's fate?
They will not speak—No matter—She who hopes
To hear no good, why should she hear at all?
The conduct of these watchful mutes is strange.
They seize me, guard me, and confine me here;
Yet answer nothing, but with looks of hate.
Chancing, but now, to sigh my Zamor's name.
Even these low monsters, struck with Spanish envy,
Started, turn'd pale, and trembled at the sound.

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Enter EZMONT.

Alas! my father, too!
Ezm. To what dark depth
Of sad despair hast thou reduced us all?
See now, the fruits of thy unlistening love!
Even in th. instant, while, with growing hope,
We pleaded earnest for the life of Zamor;
While we yet hung on the half-granted prayer;
Fn entering soldier drew our notice toward him.
'Twas Zamor—dreadful, in a borrow'd dress!
At once he hurl'd his furious eyes amongst us,
And his more furious person. Scarce I saw,
So rapid was his motion, that his hand
Held a drawn sword. To enter, reach our seats,
And lion-like, spring to the breast of Carlos;
Th' assault, the wound, the death, was all one moment.
Out gush'd your husband's blood, to stain your father,
As if 'twould lend me blushes for a daughter.
Zamor meanwhile, the dreadful action done,
Softening to sudden calmness, at the feet
Of sad Alvarez fell, and to his hand
Resign'd the sword, which his son's blood made horrid,
The father started into back'ning terror!
The murderer dash'd his bosom to the ground;
I but revenged (he cried) my wrongs and shame;
I but my duty knew—Know you your own:
Nature your motive, and oppression mine.
He said no more; but, prostrate, hoped his doom.
Th' afflicted father sunk upon my bosom;
The silent night grew frightful with our cries.
From every side at once in broke the swarms;
A flow of fruitless help surrounded Carlos.
To stop th' outswelling blood, and hold back life.
But what most shakes me, though 'tis told thee last,
Is, that they think thee guilty of his death;
And, insolently loud, demand thy own.
Als. Ah!—can you—
Ezm. No. Impossible. I cannot,
I know thy heart too well to wrong thee so.
I know thee too, top capable of weakness;
But not of purposed blood. I saw this danger;
But thy own eyes, even on the brink of fate,
Were blinded by thy love, and thou art fall'n.
Thy husband murder'd by thy lover's hand;
The council that accuses, will condemn thee,
And ignominious death becomes thy doom.
I came to warn thee, and prepare thy spirit.
Now, hastening back, try every hope for pardon;
Or, failing to redeem thee, share thy death.
Als. My pardon!—Pardon at these wretches' hands!
The prince, my father, stoop his prayers to them!
Death, if it hides me from that thought, is rapture.
Ah, Sir! live on! hope still some happier day,
To pay back all these pangs, and bless Peru;
Wait that due day, and love the lost Alzira;
'Tis all the prayer she makes, and all she wishes.
I pity dying Carlos; for I find
His fate too cruel: and I mourn it deeper,
Through fear he has deserved it. As for Zamor,
Whose rashness has revenged a country's wrongs,
Urged by too keen remembrance of his own,
I neither censure nor excuse his deed.
I would have staid him; but he rush'd to die;
And 'tis not in my choice to live without him.
Ezm. Shed thy wish'd mercy, here, all-powerful Heaven! [*Exit.*
Als. My weeping father call'd on Heaven to save me.
I will not task the grace of Heaven so far:
Let me no longer be, and I'm not wretched.
The Almighty Christian Power, that knows me innocent,
Exacts (they say) long life in fix'd distress;
And suffers not the brave to shorten wo.
If so, the gods, once mine, were less severe;
Why should the wretch, who hopes not, struggle on,
Through viewless lengths of circling miseries,
And dread the hand of death that points to refuge?
Sure Christians, in this tale, belie their God.
His conquering favourites, whom he arms with thunder,
Can they have right from him to waste the world,
To drive whole millions into death's cold arms!
And shall not I, for safety, claim that power
Which he permits to them for martial rage?
Ah, Zamor comes! They lead him out to die.

Enter ZAMOR *in Chains, guarded by Spaniards.*

Zam. Kind in their purposed insult, they have brought me,
Where my expiring soul shall mix with thine.
Yes, my Alzira, we are doom'd together.
Their black tribunal has condemn'd us both.
But Carlos is not dead—that wounds me deepest.
Carlos survives, to boast short triumph o'er us;
And dies so slowly, that our fate comes first.
Yet he must die: my hand not err'd so far,
But he must die: and when he does, my soul
Shall snatch th' expected moment, hovering, watchful,
And hunt him in revenge from star to star.
Pious Alvarez mournful comes behind,
Charged with our bloody sentence, sign'd in council,
That murder may be sanctified by form.
My only grief is, that thou diest for me.
Als. That, that should leave thy grief without a cause.
Since I am thus beloved, to die with Zamor,
Is happiness unhoped. Bless, bless my fate,
For this sole blow, that could have broke my chain.
Think that this period of supposed distress,
This moment, that unites us, though in death,
Is the first time my love was free from wo.
The smiling fate restores me to myself:
And I can give a heart, now all my own.
If there's a cause for tears, Alvarez claims them:
I, while he speaks our doom, shall feel but this.
Zam. See where the mourner comes, and weeps his errand.

Enter ALVAREZ.

Alv. Which of us three does fortune most distress?
What an assemblage ours of mingled woes?
Zam. Since Heaven will have it so, that, from thy tongue,
I should receive death's summons, let it come:

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'Twill have one power to please—for I shall hear thee.
Do not then pity, but condemn me boldly;
And if thy heart, though Spanish, bends beneath it,
Think thou but doom'st an unsubmitting savage, [er.
Who kill'd thy son, because unlike his father.
But what has poor Alzira done against thee?
Why must she die in whom a people lives;
In whom alone glows that collected soul,
That, in past ages, brighten'd all Peru?
Is innocence a crime where Spaniards judge?
Known, and assumed by us, for all thy virtues,
The jealous envy of thy land reclaims thee,
And crops thy Indian growth, to creep like Spain.

Als. Wondrous old virtue! obstinately kind.
Thou, singly just amidst a race of thieves!
'Twere to be base as they are, could I stoop
To deprecate a vengeance duly thine.
For thy son's blood he mine the willing sacrifice.
All I require is but escape from slander;
From poor suspicion of a guilt I scorn.
Carlos, though hated, was a hated husband;
Whence, even my hatred owed his life defence.
He was Alvarez' son too; and, as such,
Call'd for that reverence which himself deserved not.
As for thy nation, let them praise or blame me;
Thy witness only can be worth my claim.
As for my death, 'tis joy to die with Zamor:
And all the pain I suffer—is for thee.

Alv. Words will have way; or grief, suppress'd in vain,
Would burst its passage with th' out-rushing soul. [scene
Whose sorrows ever match'd this mingled
Of tenderness with horror? My son's murderer
Is Zamor: he who guarded me from murder,
Is also Zamor. Hold that image fast,
Afflicted nature. Life, unwish'd by me,
Is due to Zamor. Young, beloved, untried
In hope's false failings, life might make him happy.
My taste of time is gone; and life, to me,
Is but an evening's walk in rain and darkness.
Father I am (at least I was a father;)
But every father first was form'd a man:
And, spite of nature's call, that cries for vengeance,
The voice of gratitude must still be heard.
Oh, thou, so late my daughter! thou, whom yet,
Spite of these tears, I call by that loved name!
Mistake not my pursuit. I cannot taste
Those horrible reliefs that rise from blood.
It shocks me through a soul that feels for three.
Hard stroke of justice! thus to lose at once,
My daughter, my deliverer, and my son.
The council, with misguided view to sooth me,
Ill chose my tongue to tell their dreadful will.
True, I received the charge; for I had weigh'd it.
'Twere not impossible, perhaps, to save you:
Zamor might make it easy.

Zam. Can I do it?
Can Zamor save Alzira? Quickly tell me
How, by what length of torments, and 'tis done?

Alv. Cast off thy idol gods, and be a Christian?
That single change reverses all our fates.
Kind to the courted souls of Pagan converts,
We have a law remits their body's doom.
This latent law, by Heaven's peculiar mercy,
Points out a road, and gives a right to pardon
Religion can disarm a Christian's anger.
Thy blood becomes a brother's, so converted,
And with a living son repays a dead.
Prevented vengeance, seized in her descent,
So rests suspended, and forgets to fall.
From thy new faith, Alzira draws new life;
And both are happy here, and saved hereafter.
Why art thou silent? Is the task so hard,
To add eternal life to life below?
Speak——from thy choice, determine my relief,
Fain would I owe thee yet a second being.
Yes——to restore the life thou robb'st me of,
A childless father wishes thee to live.
Alzira is a Christian; be thou so.
'Tis all the recompense my wrongs will urge.

Zam. [*To* ALZIRA.] Shall we, thou fairest, noblest boast of beauty!
Shall we so far indulge our fear to die?
Shall the soul's baseness bid the body live?
Shall Zamor's gods bow to the gods of Carlos?
Why would Alvarez bend me down to shame?
Why would he thus become the spirit's tyrant?
Into how strange a snare am I impell'd!
Either Alzira dies, or lives to scorn me!
Tell me—When fortune gave thee to my power,
Had I, at such a purchase, held thy life,
Tell me, with honest truth—would thou have bought it?

Alv. I should have pray'd the power I now implore,
To widen, for his truth, a heart like thine:
Dark as it is, yet worthy to be Christian.

Zam. [*To* ALZIRA.] Death has no pain, but what I feel for thee.
Life has no power to charm, but what thou giv'st it.
Thou, then, art my soul, vouchsafe to guide it.
But, think!—remember, ere thou bid'st me choose!
'Tis on a matter of more weight than life;
'Tis on a subject that concerns my gods:
And all those gods in one——my dear Alzira!
I trust it to thy honour——Speak——and fix me.
If thou conceiv'st it shame, thou wilt disdain it.

Als. Then, hear me, Zamor.—My unhappy father [thee:
Disposed my willing heart, 'twixt Heaven and
The God he chose was mine:—thou may'st, perhaps,
Accuse it as the weakness of my youth:
But, 'twas not so. My soul, enlarged and clear,
Took in the solemn light of Christian truth.
I saw——at least, I thought I saw, conviction.
And, when my lips abjured my country's gods,
My secret heart confirm'd the charge within.
But had I wanted that directive zeal,
Had I renounced my gods, yet still believed them;
That——had not been error, but a crime:
That had been mocking Heaven's whole host at once;

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The powers I quitted and the power I chose.
A change like that, had err'd, beyond the tongue:
And taught the silent, servile soul, to lie.
I could have wish'd that Heaven had lent thee light, [thee.
But since it did not——let thy virtue guide
Zam. I knew thy generous choice, before I heard it. [death,
Who, that can die with thee, would shun such
And live to his own infamy?——Not Zamor.
Alv. Inhuman slighters of yourselves and me!
Whom honour renders blind, and virtue cruel!
[*A dead march.*
Hark!—the time presses.—These are sounds of sorrow.

Enter Don Alonzo, *followed by a mixed crowd of Spaniards and Americans, mournfully.*

Alon. We bring, obedient to his last command,
Our dying captain, your unhappy son,
Who lives no longer, than to reach your bosom.
A furious crowd of his lamenting friends
Press to attend him, and revenge his blood.

Enter Don Carlos, *brought in by Spanish Soldiers, and surrounded by a number of followers, some of whom advance to seize* Alzira.

Zam. [*Interposing.*] Wretches! keep distance.—Let Alzira live;
Mine was the single guilt—be mine the vengeance.
Als. Be feasted, ye officious hounds of blood:
Guiltless or guilty, 'tis my choice to die.
Alv. My son, my dying son!—This silent paleness,
This look speaks for thee, and forbids all hope.
Zam. [*To* Car.] Even to the last then, thou maintain'st thy hate?
Come; see me suffer; mark my eye; and scorn me,
If my expiring soul confesses fear.
Look—and be taught, at least, to die—by Zamor.
Car. [*To* Zam.] I have no time to copy out thy virtues:
But there are some of mine I come to teach thee. [ple:
I should, in life, have given thy pride exam-
Take it, too late, in death; and mark it well.
Sir, [*To* Alv.] my departing spirit staid its journey,
First, till my eyes might leave their beams in yours;
And their dim lights expire amidst your blessing. [show,
Next, what you taught me, 'tis my task to
And die the son of your paternal virtue.
——Eager in life's warm race, I never stopp'd
To look behind me and review my way.
But, at the goal, before I judged it near,
I start——and recollect forgotten slidings.
On the grave's serious verge I turn—and see
Humanity oppress'd, to cherish pride:
Heaven has revenged the earth:—and Heaven is just!
Could my own blood but expiate what I shed,
All my rash sword has drawn from suffering innocence,
I should lie down in dust—and rest in peace.
Cheated by prosperous fortune, death deals plainly; [me.
But—I have learn'd to live, when life forsakes
Safe and forgiven be the hand I fall by.
Power is yet mine; and it absolves my murder.
Live, my proud enemy, and live in freedom.
Live——and observe, though Christians oft act ill,
They must forgive ill actions in another.
—Ezmont, my friend! and you, ye friendless Indians!
Subjects, not slaves! be ruled henceforth by law.
Be grately to my pity, though 'twas late;
And teach your country's kings to fear no longer. [gods:
—Rival, learn hence the difference 'twixt our
Thine have inspired thee to pursue revenge;
But mine, when that revenge had reach'd my life,
Command me to esteem, and give thee pardon.
Alv. Virtues like these, my son, secure thy peace,
But double the distress of us who lose thee.
Als. Of all the painful wonders thou hast caused me,
This change, this language, will afflict me most!
Zam. Die soon, or live for ever—If thou thus
Go'st on, to charm my anger into envy,
I shall repent I was not born a Christian,
And hate the justice that compell'd my blow!
Car. I will go farther yet;—I will not leave thee,
Till I have soften'd envy into friendship.
Mournful Alzira has been too unhappy.
Loved to distress, and married to misfortune!
I would do something to atone her wrongs;
And with a softer sense, imprint her pity.
Take her—and owe her to the hand she hates.
Live—and remember me without a curse.
Resume lost empire o'er your conquer'd states:
Be friends to Spain:—nor enemies to me.
—Vouchsafe my claim, Sir, [*To* Alv.] to this son, this daughter:
And be both father and protector too.
May Heaven and you be kind! and they be Christians!
Zam. I stand immoveable—confused—astonish'd!
If these are Christian virtues, I am Christian.
The faith that can inspire this generous change,
Must be divine—and glows with all its God.
—Friendship, and constancy, and right, and pity,
All these were lessons I had learn'd before.
But this unnatural grandeur of the soul
Is more than mortal; and out-reaches virtue.
It draws—it charms—it binds me to be Christian.
It bids me blush at my remember'd rashness:
Curse my revenge—and pay thee all my love.
[*Throws himself at his feet.*
Als. A widow'd wife, blushing to be thus late,
In her acknowledgment of tender pity;
Low, at your injured feet, with prostrate heart,
[*Kneels with* Zamor.
Weeps your untimely death, and thanks your goodness.
—Torn by contending passions, I want power
To speak a thousand truths, I see you merit:
But honour and confess your greatness wrong'd.
Car. Weep not, Alzira—I forgive again.

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—For the last time, my father, lend your bosom.
Live to be bless'd!—and make Alzira so!
Remember, Zamor—that a Christian!—Oh!
[*Dies.*

Alv. [*To* Ezmont.] I see the hand of Heaven in our misfortune.
But justice strikes; and sufferers must submit.
Woes are good counsellors; and kindly show,
What prosperous error never lets us know.
[*Exeunt omnes.*

EPILOGUE.

SPOKEN BY ALZIRA.

The fifth act pass'd, you'll think it strange to find
My scene of deep distress is yet behind.
Task'd for the epilogue, I fear you'll blame
My want—of what you love, behind that name.
But, for my soul, I can't from such high scening
Descend, plump down at once—to double meaning.
Judges! protect me—and pronounce it fit,
That solemn sense should end with serious wit.
When the full heart o'erflows with pleasing pain,
Why should we wish to make the impression vain?
Why, when two thinking hours have fix'd the play,
Should two light minutes laugh its use away?
'Twere to proclaim our virtues but a jest,
Should they who ridicule them please us best.
No—rather at your actor's hands require
Offerings more apt, and a sublimer fire!
Thoughts that may rivet, not efface, the scene:
Aids to the mind; not flatteries for the spleen.
When love, hate, pity—doubt, hope, grief, and rage,
With clashing influence fire the glowing stage;
When the touch'd heart, relenting into wo,
From others' fate does its own danger know:
When softening tenderness unlocks the mind,
And the stretch'd bosom takes in all mankind:
Sure, 'tis no time for the bold hand of wit
To snatch back virtues from the plunder'd pit.
Still be it ours to give you scenes thus strong,
And yours to cherish and retain them long!
Then shall the stage its general use endear;
And every virtue gather firmness here.
Power be to pardon—wealth to pity moved;
And truth be taught the art to grow beloved:
Women to charm with fast and sure effect;
And men to love them with a soft respect:
Till all alike some different motive rouses;
And tragedy, unfarced, invites full houses.

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